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Wang Xin

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lectual interactions among some of the greatest minds of China, Japan, and Korea leading to some of the most creative trends in the unfolding of Confucian thought, and will most likely trigger more scholarship in this badly neglected area. Huang’s early work inspired this reviewer to conduct an in-depth investigation on the interaction between the practical-learning (sirhak 實學) thinkers of late Chosŏn Korea and ancient-learning thinkers of Tokugawa Japan. I have little doubt that Huang’s more multifaceted comparative work in this volume will lead to a greater awareness that East Asian Confucianism is much more the result of complex international influences and confluences than the result of the slow absorption of a monolithic Chinese “Confucianism” by neighboring states.

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This monograph in the field of Neo-Confucianism by Prof. Azuma Jūji of Kansai University was recently translated and published in Mainland China.1 Prof. Azuma graduated from the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at Waseda University. During the course of his studies, he was one

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1 After the publication of the Chinese translation of the present work, Prof. Wu Zhen, in Zhonghua dushu bao, published a review titled “A Magnum Opus in the Field of Neo-Confucianism” 朱子学研究領域的一部巔峰之作. Since Prof. Wu, the editor of the Chinese translation, presented in detail the origins of the work and Prof. Azuma’s scholarly accomplishments, I will omit such details here.
of the first group of Japanese students to study in China, studying in the Philosophy Department of Peking University. While at Waseda, he studied under the well-known Daoist scholar Kusuyama Haruki, but he nevertheless decided to do research in the field of Neo-Confucianism. The thesis that he submitted in 2003 and for which he was awarded a Doctor of Letters degree was “New Research in the Field of Neo-Confucianism: The Horizon of the History of Early-Modern Scholarly Thought” (Tokyo: Sōbunsha, 2004). Within this work, Prof. Azuma already presented detailed analysis of Zhu Xi’s works and thought while also paying close attention to the development of his thought in history and practice. In the present work, Prof. Azuma, focusing on Zhu Xi’s *Family Rituals* 家禮, not only continues to produce research of the quality of his former studies, but also broadens his field of vision to include all of early-modern East Asia and more thoroughly and exactly investigates the practical and institutional developments of Zhu Xi’s thought.

I

Prof. Azuma believes that for a long time, people have understood Zhu Xi’s Neo-Confucianism as a system of philosophical thought and a program for personal cultivation. These aspects are indeed the most important part of Neo-Confucianism, but whether from the perspective of the richness of the whole of Neo-Confucianism or from the perspective of the multiple levels of the influence of Neo-Confucianism on later ages, one needs to recognize also the comprehensive cultural aspects of Neo-Confucianism. More specifically, Neo-Confucianism is an organic whole that encompasses philosophy, natural science, history, economics, literature, ethics, political theory, education, religious sacrificial rites, and decorum, and its influence has permeated many aspects of early-modern Chinese and East Asian history and social life. Taking Neo-Confucianism as a comprehensive cultural whole as his point of departure, Prof. Azuma made Zhu Xi’s thought on decorum the focus of his research. Bearing the greatest weight in the historical practice of Confucian thought was the notion of decorum 禮 as the external manifestation of humanity 仁 and as the form of heavenly principle 天理之節文. In the same way, Zhu Xi’s thought on decorum is the most faithful manifestation of Zhu Xi’s thought in practice and in institutions. Among Zhu Xi’s many studies of

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2 This view of Prof. Azuma’s is found in his essay “Zhu Xi and the Reform of Confucian Rites” 朱熹と釈奠儀礼改革, in *朱子学と近世・近代の東アジア* (Neo-Confucianism and Early-Modern and Modern East Asia), edited by Inoue Katsuhito 井上克人, Huang Junjie 黃俊傑, and Tao Demin 陶德民 (Taipei: Guoli Taiwan Daxue Chuban Zhongxin, 2012), pp. 139–154.
decorum, the work most widely disseminated and having the greatest influence on later ages was without doubt his *Family Rituals*.

Regarding *Family Rituals* as “an epochal work,” Prof. Azuma believes, “The appearance of *Family Rituals* was a great event in early-modern Chinese intellectual history, and its influence was in no way inferior to [Zhu Xi’s] *Sishu jizhu* 四書集注 (Collected Annotations on the Four Books).” There were three reasons for this. First, compared to his *Etiquette and Rites* 儀禮, a representative classic in the decorum literature, *Family Rituals* was an entirely new classic in the literature on decorum in China in the early-modern period (from the Song to Qing dynasties). Second, *Family Rituals* broke through the traditional notion that “decorum does not extend down to commoners” (*Book of Rites* 禮記, “Summary of the Rules of Propriety” 曲禮, part 1). It thus let Confucian notions of decorum enter the lives of commoners so that both gentleman and commoner might realize such norms. This truly reflected the egalitarianism of Neo-Confucianism noted in the assertion “Anyone can be a sage.” Third, as a result of the universal spread and influence of Neo-Confucianism throughout early-modern East Asia, the influence of *Family Rituals* extended beyond China’s borders to the rest of East Asia, principally Japan and Korea. Moreover, decorum became the central criterion for distinguishing the civilized from the barbarian.

This book is thus a collection of Prof. Azuma’s studies of *Family Rituals*. It is divided into two parts. The first part contains research essays, and the second part contains studies of the historical literature. But in terms of content, the book in fact covers three stages of the research. The first stage is a systematic ordering of previous studies of *Family Rituals*. Chapter 1 falls under this stage. The second stage is a textual study of *Family Rituals*. This stage includes the discussion of the printings and editions of *Family Rituals* in chapter 3 and the comparison of different versions of *Family Rituals* in part 2, chapter 8. The third stage covers monographs on *Family Rituals*. This stage includes Prof. Azuma’s explanation of the overall situation concerning the study of decorum in Tokugawa Japan, as discerned by means of bibliographic methods, in chapter 2. It also includes his detailed discussions of such key components of the decorum of *Family Rituals* as family shrines in chapter 4, memorial tablets in chapters 5 and 6, and formal *shenyi* robes in chapter 7. In contrast to studies of *Family Rituals* as a classic or as a document in the history of decorum, Prof. Azuma, in his study of *Family Rituals*, remains focused on *Family Rituals* as a development of Neo-Confucianism. Hence, below, in addition to introducing the main features of the chapters of the

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4 Azuma Jūji, 朱熹《家禮》實證研究, p. 75.
present work, I will attempt to point out the immediate explanatory value that these features have for the study of Neo-Confucianism.

II

Chapter 1 of the present work is “The Present State of, and Topics in, the Study of Confucian Rites, with a Focus on Family Rituals” 儒教儀礼研究の現状と課題 ——『家礼』を中心に. Jyukyō 儒教 is the term that Japanese Sinologists use to designate Confucianism. The character kyō 教 indicates that Confucianism is a system of education consisting of thought and training. In this chapter, Prof. Azuma not only discusses the relationship between premodern Chinese rites and Confucianism. He also examines, in detail and up to the present, some central research topics concerning Chinese Confucian rites, especially topics related to Family Rituals. For example, he examines “the issue of the identity of the author of Family Rituals,” “the connection between Family Rituals and Letters and Ceremonies 書儀, by Sima Guang 司馬光,” “the spread and elaboration of Family Rituals in East Asia,” and “family problems concerning funeral rites and sacrifices to ancestors.” Also worth mentioning is the appended “List of Research Literature on Family Rituals.” This list records nearly all the modern studies of Family Rituals by scholars from all over the world, and it also organizes them by category. One cannot help but admire the extensive collection of works in this list and the industry of the author. One can say that one of the greatest features of Prof. Azuma’s research methods is the importance he attaches to previous studies. This not only helps one to have an overall understanding of the research history. Even more important, the author can consciously place his own research in the research tradition and thus establish a dialog with previous studies. Through dialog, we can continuously discover new issues and new areas of study, and thus can continuously advance our research. The other research essays in this collection all make use of this methodology to establish their points and make their advances.

III

Chapter 3, “Printings and Editions of Zhu Xi’s Family Rituals up to the Great Compendium on Human Nature and Principle” 『家礼』の刊刻と版本: 『性理大全』まで, and chapter 8, “A Critical Version of Family Rituals” 校勘本『家礼』, are basically textual studies of Family Rituals. As the title of the present work advertises, another special feature of Prof. Azuma’s method of research is his textual criticism. As he sees matters, whether we concern ourselves with thought or institutions, in carrying out a critical study of its history, we have to rely on the written literature. Hence, for a study of Family Rituals, the primary task is to determine an authentic text of Family Rituals.
through textual criticism. In this regard, Prof. Azuma has made three contributions.

First, he has thoroughly clarified the routes of transmission of *Family Rituals* and on this basis has determined the Southern Song Zhou text to be the most authentic. Moreover, after determining the particulars of the transmitted texts, he has carried out an exhaustive critical study of the Song text. In chapter 8 he presents to scholars his final results, a reliable critical version of *Family Rituals*.

Second, he has resolved the controversy over the identity of the author of *Family Rituals*, providing us with the reliable conclusion that Zhu Xi had not finalized the text of *Family Rituals*. Zhu Xi’s *Family Rituals* had been regarded as a forgery since Wang Maohong 王懋竑 (1668–1741) first made this assertion. After the compilers of the Complete Library of the Four Branches of Literature 四庫全書 acceded to this view, it approached the status of received opinion. More recently, scholars such as Qian Mu 錢穆 (1895–1990), Ueyama Shunpei 上山春平 (b. 1921), and Chen Lai 陳來 (b. 1952) have all had serious doubts about this position. Prof. Azuma, building on previous research, studied the various editions of *Family Rituals* and ancillary materials, especially prefaces and afterwords, and has provided us with strong evidence against the forgery theory. As he points out, soon after Zhu Xi passed away, there appeared several editions of *Family Rituals*, including the Wuyang edition 五羊本, the Yuhang edition 余杭本, and the Yanzhou edition 嚴洲本. And the individuals closely connected with these editions—Chen Chun 陳淳, Huang Gan 黃榦, Liao Mingde 廖明德, and Yang Fu 楊復—were all direct disciples of Zhu Xi. Moreover, in the prefaces and afterwords that they wrote, they all regarded *Family Rituals* as Zhu Xi’s work, and they all expressed the greatest admiration of this work. If *Family Rituals* were really a forgery produced by someone else, this state of affairs certainly would not be the case. Wang Maohong thought that the prefaces of *Family Rituals* were also forgeries. Wang’s view is directly disproved by the preface in Zhu Xi’s own handwriting to a reprint of the Song edition of *Family Rituals*, by the Late Zhu Xi, Illustrated and Annotated 纂圖集注文公家禮. On Wang’s assertion that *Family Rituals* contains inconsistencies, Prof. Azuma accurately notes that this was because when *Family Rituals* was published, it was still in draft form and had not been finalized. It was a work that Chen Chun called “an unfinished code of ritual” (*Family Rituals*, with an Afterword for Chen Xian 代陳憲跋家禮) and that Huang Gan said Zhu Xi “did not have time to revise” (*A Brief Life of Zhu Xi* 朱子行狀). Hence we cannot take these inconsistencies as evidence that the work is a forgery.

Third, Prof. Azuma’s purpose in ordering the history of the editions of *Family Rituals* was not only to clarify the lineages of the editions, but also to
build on this foundation in order to look at how *Family Rituals* spread through, and had an effect on, early-modern Chinese society. This research strategy of the author’s gives us a glimpse of the true concerns lying behind his evidentiary methodology. For example, among the printings during the Yuan dynasty, the author lists the Yao Shu 姚樞 edition of *Family Rituals*. In 1235 the Yuan army captured the Dean border region in present-day Hubei. After Yao Shu, who was following the army, saved Zhao Fu, also known as Mr. Jianghan, the latter “gave him all manner of Neo-Confucian books by the Cheng brothers and Zhu Xi.” This famous story is an indication that the dissemination of Neo-Confucianism began in the North. After Yao Shu retired to Mt. Sumen in Huizhou (present-day Henan province), he printed, together with some books on Daoism, Zhu Xi’s *Elementary Learning* 小學書, *Questions and Answers on the Mengzi* 論孟或問, and *Family Rituals*. This shows that *Family Rituals* must have been included in the books that Zhao Fu gave to Yao Shu. But more important, we can infer that from the beginning when Neo-Confucianism spread to the North, *Family Rituals* was an important part of that doctrine. Worth noting is that Prof. Azuma not only showed that *Family Rituals* gained the attention of both the elite and commoners. He also pointed out that since the section on marriage etiquette in the Yuan legal code 元典章, that is, the imperial edict promulgated by the court in 1264, clearly stipulates that marriage etiquette must follow the norms of Zhu Xi’s *Family Rituals* 朱文公家禮, this work must have already entered the national norms of etiquette from the beginning of the Yuan dynasty. This, without doubt, is another important way in which Neo-Confucianism entered the national legal code, second only to the well-known institution of Zhu Xi’s *Collected Commentary on the Four Books* 四書集注 as the standard for selecting candidates through the civil-service examinations early in the reign of Emperor Renzong (r. 1311–1320) of the Yuan dynasty. A related issue is Prof. Azuma’s examination of the Ming work *Great Compendium on Human Nature and Principle* 性理大全. The source of many annotated editions of *Family Rituals* published in Korea and Japan was the version found in the *Great Compendium*. Hence, the *Great Compendium* version can be called the version authorized for popularization, in Prof. Azuma’s view. But the significance of this version does not stop there. Prof. Azuma notes that the inclusion of *Family Rituals* in the *Great Compendium* by the imperially commissioned editors Hu Guang 胡廣 et al. indicates that a version of *Family Rituals* was now officially recognized and formally approved. Moreover, according to the “Norms of Etiquette” 禮制 chapter of the *History of the Ming* 明史, the norms of *Family Rituals* were formally decreed for use by the entire nation during the Yongle period (1403–1424). Prof. Azuma thinks that the version of *Family Rituals* decreed for public use was the rewritten version that appeared in the
Great Compendium. Thus, Family Rituals, a work produced by a private-sector Neo-Confucian school of philosophy, garnered official recognition, and then, conversely, was promoted in the private sector by the government.

IV

From the above, particularly Prof. Azuma’s third contribution in section 3, we can see that his interest in the literature, spurred by his evidentiary methodology, seeks to go beyond the literature. Behind his extensive gathering and minute examination of the literature lies an interest in weighty issues in the history of scholarship and the history of ideas. In other words, while he pursues his evidentiary methodology by first examining the literature, throughout the process he has a clear perception of the issues. This feature of Prof. Azuma’s research also appears in every part of his study of Family Rituals.

Chapter 2, “A Study of Confucian Decorum during the Edo Period” 江戸時代における儒教儀礼研究: 書誌を中心に, is an examination, based on the literature, of the reception of the three ritual classics (the Rites of Zhou 周禮, Etiquette and Rites 儀禮, and the Book of Rites 禮記) and Family Rituals in the Edo period (1603–1867). Previously, Japanese scholars harbored the preconceived notion that the study of ritual exerted only an intellectual influence in early-modern Japan, that as a studied and lectured-on set of ideas, it had no practical influence on people’s actual lives. But as Prof. Azuma points out on the basis of his ordering of Edo-period works on ritual, in the latter half of the seventeenth century there arose an interest in Family Rituals. This interest found expression not only in works on Family Rituals by Zhu Xi and Wang Yangming scholars, but also in the actual funeral and memorial rites of scholars and politicians, such as Hayashi Razan 林羅山, Tokugawa Mitsukuni 徳川光圀, and Ikeda Mitsumasa 池田光政, who carried out these rites in accord with Family Rituals. This revelation of the extensive historical use of Family Rituals in funeral and memorial rites not only corrected previous widespread preconceptions, but also highlighted the unique features of the Japanese reception of Confucian rites in comparison with China and Korea, which also witnessed the widespread adoption of the Confucian capping, marriage, funeral, and memorial rites found in Family Rituals.

Chapters 4 through 7 examine some central elements of the norms of etiquette in Family Rituals. Below I will use the discussion of family temples in chapter 4 as an example to explicate the special features of Prof. Azuma’s research mentioned above.

In chapter 4, “Song Family Temples and Ancestor Worship” 宋代の家廟と祖先祭祀, “family temple” 家廟, an installation for venerating the souls of a clan’s ancestors, is a general term encompassing ancestral-portrait halls 影堂,
memorial-service halls 和 ancestral halls 祠堂. In other words, family
temples (or ancestral halls) are places for carrying out memorial rites. Book 1
of Family Rituals, “Common Etiquette,” begins with a discussion of ancestral
halls, beneath which, in small print, is a note by Zhu Xi that says, “This
chapter was originally in the part titled ‘Memorial Rites.’ Now to return to
beginnings, respect the ancestors, and truly have a clear division of roles in
the family, I begin this project by informing readers of the original intention.
Hence, I rewrote this chapter specifically to begin this part.” From this quote,
one can see that Zhu Xi, in his vision for Family Rituals, gave ancestral halls
pride of place. Obviously, in this study Prof. Azuma also takes family
temples (or ancestral halls) as primal. By the research of this chapter, Prof.
Azuma seeks to show the historical evolution of the Song system of family
temples. By examining the system of family temples before and after Zhu Xi,
one can see the gains and losses attributable to his proposals for family
temples, and their historical significance. Prof. Azuma notes that a feature of
the system of family temples in the ancient ritual literature, such as the Book
of Rites, was that only those of a certain status and rank could build family
temples, the right to build a family temple being a prerogative of high offi-
cials. In this system, if the descendents lost an ancestor’s official rank, they
might also lose the right to build a family temple. Up to the Tang dynasty, a
powerful aristocracy could carry out a system of family temples, but in the
Song dynasty, which limited official ranks to one generation, the system of
family temples became an empty form unsuited to the times. This caused the
national norms of etiquette surrounding the family-temple system to atrophy
during the Song period. In response, Neo-Confucian scholars such as Han Qi 韓琦, Sima Guang 司馬光, Zhang Zai 張載, Cheng Yi 程頤, and Lü Dafang 呂
大防 began exploring new norms. Especially worthy of our attention are
Cheng Yi’s views, which can be summarized as follows: First, all scholar-
gentlemen ought to have family temples. Second, one may make use of gods
that formerly only high officials could use. Third, as stipulated in the norms
for morning apparel in Etiquette and Rites, those perpetually memorialized in
the family temple cannot be further back than the great-great-grandfather,
four generations back. Zhu Xi’s Family Rituals took over Cheng Yi’s proposal
and institutionalized it. Thus, the efforts of Cheng Yi and Zhu Xi resulted in
a reform of ritual in a certain sense, and through this reform, family temples
were transformed from the exclusive province of the aristocracy to a common
institution of the scholar-gentleman. From this discussion we can see that
Prof. Azuma has not only discovered a previously unnoticed connection
between the thought of Cheng Yi and that of Zhu Xi, namely, Zhu Xi’s use of
Cheng Yi’s ideas in his proposed system of family temples. He has also
pointed out the political and social changes driving the historical reform of the
family-temple system. Even if we regard the demand that the scholar-gentleman have a family temple, an idea that *Family Rituals* takes over from Cheng Yi, as an equalizing trend in the thought of Cheng Yi and Zhu Xi, we must also not overlook the objective political and social changes occurring in the historical background that produced *Family Rituals*. At this point we can ask, Since political and social changes had already made it difficult to promote a system of family temples, why were the Neo-Confucians so anxious to reform the system of family temples? In addition to the reason given by Zhu Xi in the note quoted above, Prof. Azuma notes that the establishment of family temples caused the site for venerating ancestors to move from the memorial temple to the family temple. A memorial temple 墓祠, common in the Song period, was an ancestral temple placed at the side of a grave. In those days, such graves, called grave temples 坟寺 or grave cells 坟庵, were usually taken care of by Buddhist temples. All such installations can be considered memorial temples. There were also cases of Daoist temples looking after graves and of ancestral halls built within the confines of Daoist temples. Thus, in terms of both the care of installations and the performance of rituals, Buddhism and Daoism bore a considerable responsibility for private-sector veneration of the dead. Hence, transferring the veneration of ancestors from memorial temples to family temples in fact meant transferring this important social rite from Buddhist or Daoist forms to Confucian forms.

Prof. Azuma also discusses, in chapters 5 and 6, the issue of memorial tablets 木主, the most important ritual implement in the family temple. And in chapter 7 he discusses formal *shenyi* robes 深衣, the Confucian vestments discussed in *Family Rituals*. As before, Prof. Azuma pursues these two research topics by ordering the literature in detail, and on this basis produces seminal views overturning the theses of previous researchers. Owing to limitations of space, I cannot go into detail. Suffice it to say that in his treatment of memorial tablets and *shenyi* robes, two key topics of *Family Rituals*, we can see even more clearly how he pursues his research with an unwavering focus on cultural interaction in East Asia. For example, in his study of memorial tablets, Prof. Azuma examines their influence on not only China but also Japan, Okinawa, and Korea. And in his study of *shenyi* robes, he discusses practices in Chosŏn Korea and Tokugawa Japan. One can thus say that the author, as his basic slant for this work, consistently approaches Neo-Confucianism from the perspective of cultural interaction in East Asia.

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