

The *junzi* prior to Confucius in the *Shiji**

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One of the major characteristics of the work known as the *Shiji* 史記, “The Scribe’s Record”, is that it contains so many authorial reflections. Certainly the most eye-striking of these reflections are the passages which are introduced by the formula “The Lord The Grand Scribe says” (*taishigong yue* 太史公曰), usually found close to the end of each chapter. Within these passages, the author¹ of the *Shiji* often summarizes and reflects on the contents of the respective chapter and discusses the persons and events the chapter had dealt with. By thus expressing praising or blaming judgments, he acts as an all-encompassing authority, very much comparable to earlier sources in which the words of a master of a philosophical school or of a “gentleman” (*junzi* 君子)² are quoted in which a philosophical term, a person or a historical incident are discussed.

As it has been emphasized already in several studies on the *Shiji*, the *taishigongyue* formula used in the *Shiji* apparently functions very much in the same way as the formula “the gentleman says” (*junzi yue* 君子曰) in earlier sources, such as the *Zuoqibuan* 左傳, and *Guoyu* 國語, and obviously serves to replace the former.³ In these as well as in the *Shiji*, an all-encompassing moral authority expresses praise and blame, and thus the striking parallel between both formulae was certainly intended. To take up a term Gary Arbuckle used with regard to the “Confucius of the *Gongyang* and *Guliang* Traditions”, that of an “ultimate authority”,⁴ one might say that in the *Shiji* the *junzi yue* formula as a kind of marker for the judgment of an ultimate moral authority came to be replaced by a formula representing the judgment of an ultimate scribal authority in the *Shiji*.

Already a superficial look at the *Shiji*, however, suffices to see that the *junzi* as yet did not disappear from the *Shiji*. On the contrary, a total of 160 entries related to a *junzi* already suggests that the word still must be of some importance in this text. At closer scrutiny, it becomes apparent that the *Shiji* does not contain a coherent concept of the *junzi*, but rather displays several different aspects of the *junzi* which should be distinguished from each other. As the meaning of the *junzi* in the *Shiji* seems to have been neglected in Western as well as in Chinese studies on the *Shiji*, I will first try and give a rough survey over different facets of the *junzi* which become apparent in the *Shiji* text. Then I shall turn towards one of those examples in which the authority denoted as *junzi* by the author of the *Shiji* can be identified as a worthy “prior” to Confucius. Finally, a cautious conclusion will be drawn as to how notions of the *junzi* in the *Shiji* may help to gain a more differentiated insight into the ideological commitment of the author and the exegetical method he applied.

As indicated above, the term *junzi* is not used homogeneously in the *Shiji*. Of a total of 160 entries in which the word *junzi* is referred to in the *Shiji* text (cf. the appended table), a major part of these had been transported into the *Shiji* as an integral part of speeches, quotations or allusions, due to the author’s often applied method of excerpting or even rewriting whole passages from earlier sources. The quotations of the

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¹ I’ll avoid to mention Sima Qian 司馬遷 (ca. 145 – ca. 86 B.C.) to whom authorship of the *Shiji* is usually ascribed, by name here, due to the ongoing discussions on the question how much his father, Sima Tan 司馬談 (?–110 B.C.), or even a team of contributors may have shared in the work. My personal conviction is that, apart from some obvious later additions and interpolations, the *Shiji* should be regarded as the work of one main sole author. A valid evidence for the argument that a *magnum opus* such as the *Shiji* could hardly have been brought about by a team will, however, be depending exactly on the degree of inner coherence of the personal reflections expressed in the *Shiji*, which is a task still waiting to be done.

² James Legge in his translation of the *Chunqiu Zuoqibuan* (*Chinese Classics*, vol. V, 1872) rendered the term by “the superior man”, John Knoblock in his translation of the *Xunzi* convolutedly prefers “Gentleman”, Stephen W. Durrant in his *Cloudy Mirror* (1995) lays emphasis on the “True Gentleman”. Eric Henry in his study on “‘Junzi Yue’ Versus ‘Zhongni Yue’ in *Zuoqibuan*”, in: *HJAS* 59.1 (1999), p. 125–161, proposed to render the term by “a superior man” or “man of quality”. Although I tend to prefer the latter term, I will, for the sake of convenience, in translations stick to the term “gentleman”.

³ See, eg., An Pingqiu 安平秋, Zhang Dake 張大可 and Yu Zhanghua 俞樟華: *Shiji jiaocheng* 史記教程. Beijing: Huawen chubanshe, 2002, p. 120.

⁴ See the electronic text version of Gary Arbuckle: “Ultimate Authority: The ‘Confucius’ of the *Gongyang* and *Guliang* Traditions”, dated 1994, via <http://www.sagesource.com/papers/ultima/ultimate.html>.

words of a *junzi* within these sources mirror the ideological convictions of different philosophical schools as well as of single persons in its own context and might be denoted as “multiple ultimate authorities”, but as long as they show no signs of being somehow ideologically “digested” by the author himself, they will have to be excluded from the present study.

In contrast, a minor part of the *junzi* entries in the *Shiji* can be distinguished from the “ultimate authority” aspect of the *junzi* in as far as these entries denote concrete authorities or even one distinct authority rather than an anonymous all-encompassing authority. Whereas the ultimate authority *junzi* would be rendered in English by a generalizing statement such as “a gentleman will say”, the facets of the *junzi* to be discussed here could be rendered by “a (certain) gentleman said” or even, addressed to as a specific group of scholars, “gentlemen will have a look at this”. This group which also comprises the example on which this paper focuses will be regarded more closely in the following.

Firstly, in half a dozen entries in the *Shiji*, the author addresses his own virtual future readers by denoting them as *junzi*. In each of these cases, the address to these future *junzi* is, by the way, part of the author’s personal reflections introduced by the formula *taishigong yue*.⁵ The remarkable aspect of the *junzi* here is that it seems to denote a group of men with common scholarly and moral standards that are obviously closely linked with the standards represented by the author of the *Shiji* himself. They do not establish one coherent “ultimate authority”, but rather should be regarded as many single authorities who belong to one group which may be proclaimed as a kind of brotherhood.

Secondly, the author of the *Shiji* in numerous instances refers to distinct persons of his own life time as well as to persons as *junzi* who can be identified with worthies of the past. In only a few instances, these persons are explicitly called by him by name, as, for example, a colleague and friend of his, Hu Sui 壺遂,⁶ or – among persons of the past – Zuo Qiuming 左丘明 whom he proclaims the “gentleman of Lu” (Lu *junzi* 魯君子), and Laozi 老子, the philosopher and archivist of Zhou, whom he calls the “concealed gentleman” (*junzi* 隱君子).⁷ In several more instances, *junzi* mentioned in the *Shiji* can indirectly, by comparing the account given there with those in earlier sources, be identified as worthies of the past, in most cases contemporaries of the rulers whose bad moral behaviour they comment on. In some of these examples, the judgment of a *junzi* rendered in the *Shiji* finds its parallel in an earlier source, with the slight difference that instead of the term *junzi* the concrete name or at least the official title of the person from whose mouth the statement quoted in the *Shiji* account originated, is mentioned in the earlier source.⁸ In other instances, not only the historical incident is narrated already in the earlier source, but sometimes it already includes the judgment of an early *junzi*.⁹

⁵ See *Shiji* (Zhonghua shuju) 15/687; 18/878; 28/1404 (ident. 12/486); 130/3320. It should be added here that by addressing future *junzi* the author of the *Shiji* apparently adopts a tradition established already by the *Gongyang zhuan*. Cf. *Gongyang zhuan*, Aigong 14: 制春秋之義 · 以俟後聖 · 以君子之為 · 亦有樂乎此也 · This very last sentence of the *Gongyang zhuan*, by the way, conspicuously resembles the very last sentence of the *Shiji*. Whereas in the *Shiji*, the hope of addressing future *junzi* is expressed, the *Gongyang zhuan* speaks of wise men (*sheng* 聖) in the future whom to write for is the *junzi*’s joy. Cf. the translation of this passage by Joachim Gentz: *Das Gongyang zhuan: Auslegung und Kanonisierung der Frühlings- und Herbstannalen (Chunqiu)*. opera sinologica. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, pp. 89–90.

⁶ See the authorial judgment at the end of the biography of Han Anguo, *Shiji* 108/28655.

⁷ See *Shiji* 14/509–10 and 63/2142.

⁸ See, for example, the laconic entry in the table of chapter 14 of the *Shiji* which states: “When the duke (Yin of Lu) went to see the fishing, a gentleman criticized him.” See *Shiji* 14/551: 公觀魚于棠 · 君子譏之 · Turning to the *Chunqiu*, one finds under the 5th year of duke Yin of Lu the entry: “In spring, the duke went to see the fishing in Tang” 五年 · 春 · 公觀魚于棠 · The corresponding *Zuo* comment (Yin 5.1) adds a whole narrative, explaining the background of this record, saying that when the duke wanted to go and see the fishing, Zang Xibo 臧僖伯 criticized him, explaining to him in a long speech why it was undecorous for the duke to follow such an unimportant event. As the duke did not obey but went to see the fishing, Zang Xibo did not follow him. Instead, a document (probably one by a scribe authorized by Zang Xibo) said (*shu yue* 書曰): “The duke went to see the fishing – (an action) which was an offence against the rites.” The *Gongyang zhuan* and the *Guliang zhuan* also interpret the record as a criticism directed against the duke, but only *Zuo zhuan* contains a story which may illuminate the original background of the record. See *Chunqiu jingzhuan yinde*, p. 11–12. Grant Hardy, p. 23, already pointed towards this example by adding the remark that “for the text of the criticism and some sense of why this action was inappropriate, we must go to the *Tso chuan*.”

⁹ An example is the case in which the author of the *Shiji* refers to an incident dated to the ninth year of duke Mu of Song (720 B.C.) in which the dying monarch decided to yield his throne not to his own son but to his brother, thus following in the footsteps of his deceased predecessor, duke Xuan of Song (r.: 747–729). He then quotes the words of a *junzi* who praised duke Xuan for his at-

The judgments given by these *junzi* of the past are mostly of a critical nature, and thus almost exclusively appear in the formula “a gentleman criticized (this)” (*junzi ji* [zhi] 君子譏 [之]). A closer analysis of the entries belonging to this type reveals that they are not evenly distributed over the whole *Shiji* text, but rather concentrate on very few places: seven on chapter 14, the “Table by Years of the Twelve Feudal Lords” (*Shi'er zhubou nianbiao* 十二諸侯年表),¹⁰ three entries fall to chapters within the category of the “Hereditary Houses (*Shijia* 世家),¹¹ and the remaining two to chapters 103 and 130.¹² Certainly of special interest are the *junzi* judgments in chapter 14. Grant Hardy who in an article treated with the interpretive function of the table of this chapter came to the result that it “is very closely related to the Tso chuan; in most instances, a brief entry in the table will reflect the Tso chuan’s explication of a notice in the Annals or it will reflect an independent Tso chuan narrative, often employing similar or even identical words.”¹³ In fact, these “independent Tso chuan narratives” towards which Hardy points here should be regarded as being of eminent importance for the understanding of the intent of this table, and in this respect he is certainly also right by emphasizing the pre-eminent role of the *Zuo zhuan* for the author of the *Shiji*.¹⁴

However, G. Hardy seems not to have taken the *junzi* judgments in this table so seriously, as a closer scrutiny of these entries will reveal some facets of the table in chapter 14 which Hardy did not mention. A comparison of the *junzi* judgments in the *Shiji* table with the comments made by the compiler of the *Zuo zhuan* as well as with those of the *Gongyang zhuan* and *Guliang zhuan* reveals that the author of the *Shiji* often, but not necessarily, adopted the position of the *Zuo zhuan*. Of the ten *junzi* entries in chapter 14, eight record the judgment of a *junzi*. In at least two of these entries the author of the *Shiji* seems to have adopted the position of the compiler of the *Guliang zhuan* rather than that of the compiler of the *Zuo zhuan*.¹⁵ In one entry the compilers of the *Gongyang zhuan* and *Guliang zhuan* explicitly state that the corresponding *Chunqiu* 春秋 entry was meant to criticize the duke, whereas the *Zuo zhuan* merely renders a narrative in which a contemporary worthy criticized the duke.¹⁶ In three entries it is not the *Zuo zhuan* but a narrative contained in the *Zuo zhuan* in which a concrete person is quoted with exactly the criticism which the author of the *Shiji* rendered as the authoritative word of a *junzi*.¹⁷ In one entry the *Zuo zhuan* already contains exactly the same judgment of a *junzi* which is also to be found in the corresponding *Shiji* entry¹⁸, and in one further entry the compiler of the *Zuo zhuan* explicitly states that an action of the ruler would run counter to the principle of *li*.¹⁹

An illuminating study in which the question of the identity of the *junzi* in the *Zuo zhuan* is treated in comparison with parallel accounts in texts such as the *Guoyu*, as well as with the *Xunzi* 荀子, *Han Feizi* 韓非子, *Lzhi chunqiu* 呂氏春秋, *Hanshi waizhuan* 韓詩外傳 and other sources including the *Shiji*, has been undertaken by Pu Weizhong.²⁰ From these corresponding accounts he drew the conclusion that the *Zuo zhuan* not

titude. See *Shiji* 38/1623: (...) 君子聞之，曰：「宋宣公可謂知人矣，立其弟以成義，然卒其子復享之。 In the *Zuo zhuan*, under the entry for the eighth month of the third year of duke Yin of Lu (719B.C), we find the same incident, closing with the same positive judgment for the duke. See *Zuo zhuan*, Yin 3.5: (...) 君子曰· 宋宣公可謂知人矣· 立穆公· 其子饗之· 命以義夫· 商頌曰· 殷受命咸宜· 百祿是荷· 其是之謂乎· This example is of special interest, as the author/ compiler of the *Gongyang zhuan* gives a wholly different judgment of duke Xuan, by maintaining that the calamity of Song would have been caused by duke Xuan. See *Gongyang zhuan*, Yin 3.7: 宋之禍· 宣公為之也·

¹⁰ Entries of the formula “A *junzi* criticized this” in chapter 14 are on pp. 525, 540, 551, 552, 555–6, 557, 603. One similar entry is of the form “a *junzi* knew (in advance) its decline” (*junzi zhi qi fei* 君子知其廢), cf. p.581.

¹¹ *Shiji* 33/1529, 1530 (two entries); *Shiji* 43/1782.

¹² *Shiji* 103/2774; 130/3309.

¹³ Grant Hardy: “The Interpretive Function of *Shih chi* 14, “The Table by Years of the Twelve Feudal Lords”, in: *JAOS* 113 (1993), p. 22.

¹⁴ On p. 23, Grant Hardy, *ibid.*, states that “In some cases, then, the table functions more as a synopsis of the *Zuo zhuan* than of the *Shiji*.” Later on the same page he writes: “Ssu-ma Ch’ien drew upon the interpretative principles of the Tso chuan to construct an interpretive synthesis of his own.”

¹⁵ *Shiji* 14/552 (Lu/ 715 B.C.); *Shiji* 14/555–6 (Lu/ 710 B.C.).

¹⁶ *Shiji* 14/551 (Lu/718 B.C.).

¹⁷ *Shiji* 14/525 (Jin/ 802 B.C.); *Shiji* 14/540 (Jin/ 745 B.C.); *Shiji* 14/581 (Jin/ 660 B.C.).

¹⁸ *Shiji* 14/603 (Qin/621 B.C.).

¹⁹ *Shiji* 14/557 (Lu/709 B.C.).

²⁰ See Pu Weizhong 浦衛忠: “*Zuo zhuan junzi yue de sixiang*“ 《左傳》「君子曰」的思想, in: *Chunqiu Sanshuan zhonghe yanjiu* 春秋三傳綜合研究. Dalu diqu boshi lunwen congkan 大陸地區博士論文叢刊. Taipei: Wenjin, 1995, p. 70–97. Eric Henry excluded this important category of *junzi* notions in the *Zuo zhuan* from his study, classifying them as the “third” category on the first page

only recorded concrete historical persons in places where in other sources this name is replaced by the term *junzi*,²¹ but also that in some instances in which the *Zuo* referred to the statement of a *junzi*, the parallel account in a different source renders the same statement from the mouth of a concrete historical person, mostly a contemporary and thus an eyewitness of the person criticized.²² From this phenomenon – the replacement of concrete names by the anonymous term *junzi* and *vice versa* in certain sources – Pu Weizhong drew the conclusion that not only there must have existed different strands of tradition, but also that the method applied here seems to be common to texts of a certain historiographical tradition. It would thus be no wonder, he writes, that the author of the *Shiji*, too, inherited this method.²³

But what about a case in which the author of the *Shiji* demonstrates that he knew the name of a worthy of the past and still decided to replace the name in one instance by the term *junzi*? For the better understanding of the following example on which this paper will be focused, a closer look will be taken at the background of the story and the earlier sources on which the author of the *Shiji* here possibly drew upon.

According to a record in the *Chunqiu*, Zhao Dun 趙盾, the most high-ranking minister of duke Ling of Jin 晉靈公, in the 14th year of his reign (607 B.C.) had murdered his duke. The incident is recorded twice in the *Shiji*, in the chapter of the Hereditary House of Jin and in the chapter of the Hereditary House of Zhao.²⁴ From the longer account – the one in the chapter on Jin – we learn that duke Ling of Jin was a bad ruler who grew more and more prone to luxury. Zhao Dun remonstrated with him, but did do so in vain, and after the duke even tried to get rid of Zhao Dun by the help of a killer, Zhao Dun decided to take his leave and flee from Jin. But before he had crossed the borders of the state, he heard that the ruler of Jin had been killed by his cousin, Zhao Chuan 趙穿. He returned and was reinstated as the minister of state. But due to his action – or rather due to his lack of support for the duke – he didn't evade a critical record in the annals for which the scribe of Jin signed responsible. The account in the chapter on Jin runs:

Dong Hu, the Grand Scribe of Jin, wrote down: “Zhao Dun murdered his ruler”, and showed it in the court. Dun said: “It was Zhao Chuan who was the murderer – I am without guilt!” The Grand Scribe said: “You were the highest minister. Flying from the state, you did not cross its borders; since you returned, you have not punished the (ones who put the state into) disorder. If it was not you (who murdered the duke), who was it?” Xuan said: “Alas!” [The “Odes”] say: “The object of my anxiety has brought on me this sorrow!” – is it me who is addressed by this? When Master Kong heard of this, he said: “Dong Hu was an excellent scribe of olden times – in his writing he obeyed the rules and did not conceal (anything). (Zhao) Xuanzi was an excellent officer of olden times – to uphold the law he accepted a bad name. That was a pity – if he had crossed the border he would have escaped that fate.”²⁵ 晉太史董狐書曰「趙盾弑其君」，以視於朝。盾曰：「弑者趙穿，我無罪。」太史曰：「子為正卿，而亡不出境，反不誅國亂，非子而誰？」孔子聞之，曰：「董狐，古之良史也，書法不隱。宣子，良大夫也，為法受惡。惜也，出疆乃免。」

Especially notable in the above passage are the different attitudes towards Zhao Dun which are revealed by Dong Hu 董狐, scribe of the state of Jin 晉, on the one hand and Confucius on the other who lived at a later time and knew of the incident only by hearsay. Whereas the scribe clearly blames the minister Zhao Dun for his behaviour, Confucius seems to praise both the scribe and the minister who had been blamed by the scribe.²⁶ The second passage in the chapter on the Zhao state is shorter than the first and ends as follows:

of his article and adding the remark: “In these often deeply analytical passages, the narrator borrows the voices of his personages to give conceptual shape to the complex web of events that makes up his account of the *Chunqiu* era (p. 125).

²¹ As an example he raises an account in *Zuo*, under *Chunqiu*, Zhuang 11, in which a man whose name was Zang Wenzhong 臧文仲 is quoted to have presaged the rise of the state of Song. The utterance is quoted from the mouth of Confucius in the *Hanshi waizhuan* and referred to as the prophecy of a *junzi* in the *Shiji* and in the *Shuoyuan* 說苑. See Pu Weizhong, p. 76.

²² The example Pu Weizhong alludes to here is a parallel account in *Zuo*, Wen 2, and an utterance quoted in the *Liyu* section of the *Guoyu* which is quoted in the latter source from the mouth of the “Official responsible for the temple service directed to the ancestors” (宗有司). Cf. Pu Weizhong, p. 75.

²³ Cf. Pu Weizhong, p. 77.

²⁴ Cf. *Shiji* 39/1673–1675 (*Jin shijia* 晉世家); 43/1782 (*Zhao shijia* 趙世家).

²⁵ *Shiji* 39/1675; cf. 井ouard Chavannes: *Les Mémoires Historiques de Se-ma Ts'ien*. Paris: Angers, 1895–1905, vol. IV, p. 316.

²⁶ Having compared the attitudes of the *junzi* on the one hand and of Confucius (the difference in the formulae *Kongzi yue* and *Zhongni yue* have unfortunately not been further differentiated by him) on the other, Eric Henry (p. 144–145) from the evidence given in the *Zuo* already concluded that a certain “ambiguity” or “equivocality” seems to be frequent in judgments given by Confucius, whereas strict blaming would be more much more often in statements uttered by the (or a) *junzi*.

A *junzi* blamed Dun (saying) that he who were the highest minister of the state, when fleeing did not cross the borders; since (he) returned, (he) had not punished the (ones who put the state into) disorder. For this reason, the Grand Scribe recorded “Zhao Dun murdered his ruler.”²⁷

君子譏盾「為正卿，亡不出境，反不討賊」，故太史書曰「趙盾弑其君」

The most conspicuous differences between both accounts consist in the following two aspects: For one, the contents of the words which were, according to the first account, quoted from the mouth of the scribe are here said to have originated from the mouth of a *junzi* who – or whose authoritative statement – caused the scribe of Jin to record in the annals that Zhao Dun had murdered his ruler. Moreover, the modifying or at least equivocal and thus differing judgment of Confucius which had been added in the first example is lacking in the second.

Thus the question arises how the discrepancy between the two Zhao Dun versions in the *Shiji* might be explained. Did the author of the *Shiji* rely here on different strands of traditions, and: What may have caused him to render two different accounts in two chapters of his work?

Turning to the *Chunqiu*, under the year 607 B.C. it is recorded that Zhao Dun assassinated his ruler (here rendered by his personal name Yi Hao 夷皋).²⁸ Referring to this *Chunqiu* entry, we find a comment of the *Guliang zhu* as well as of the *Zuo*zhu, treating with the Zhao Dun episode, and somewhat later, referring to the *Chunqiu* record for the year 603 B.C., where Zhao Dun is for the first time again mentioned in an official activity, the *Gongyang zhu* as well reflects on the incident.²⁹ Whereas the accounts given in the *Gongyang zhu* and *Guliang zhu* end with the scribe’s words, explaining to the angry Zhao Dun why the scribe decided to record him as the duke’s murderer in the annals, the *Zuo*zhu account ends with the modifying judgment of Confucius (here: Master Kong) in which Zhao Dun as well as the scribe are equally praised.

Comparing the accounts rendered in the *Gongyang zhu*, *Guliang zhu* and *Zuo*zhu with the two different versions contained in the two chapters of the *Shiji*, the one in the chapter on Jin in which the comment of Confucius is added can easily be identified to be close to the *Zuo*zhu version. The second version, however, as it appears in the chapter on Zhao, seems to differ from all the three earlier version, as it quotes a *junzi* where in none of the earlier sources a *junzi* is mentioned, but at the same time seems to have distilled the

²⁷ *Shiji* 43/1782; cf. E. Chavannes, *Les Mémoires Historiques de Se-ma Ts’ien*, V, p. 15.

²⁸ Yi Hao was posthumously given the title “Duke of Ling” (Ling Gong). *Chunqiu*, Xuan 2.4. 秋·九月·乙丑·晉趙盾弑其君夷皋· “In autumn, in the ninth month, on Yichou, Zhao Dun of Jin murdered his ruler, Yi Hao.” Cf. Legge, *Classics*, V, p. 290.

²⁹ Here are the accounts of the three exegetical texts given in full below:

Guliang zhu, Xuan 2.4: 史狐曰·子為正卿·入諫不聽·出亡不遠·君弑·反不討賊·則志同·志同則書重·非子而誰·故書之曰·晉趙盾弑其君夷皋者· “The scribe Hu said: ‘You were the highest minister. Your remonstrances were not heard (by the duke). Fleeing from the state, you did not get far. After the duke has been murdered, you have not punished the villain. Consequently, your intent was the same (as that of the killer). As the intentions were the same, the responsibility (*zhong*) was recorded. Who but you (should have murdered the duke)?’ It was for this reason that I recorded: Zhao Dun of Jin murdered his ruler Yi Hao.” The commentary given in *Chunqiu Guliang zhu* *zhu* (p. 2412 b) runs: “Dun was a minister of state and also a worthy, for this reason one speaks of *zhong* 由孫正卿又賢故言重. The decision to render the difficult word *zhong* 重 here by “responsibility is justified by a parallel in *Zuo*zhu, Zhao 5 (Yang, p. 1268) where we find the expression *shei qi zhong ci* 誰其重此, to which the *Qun-jing pingyi* 群經平議 commentary adds: “*zhong* means: to charge” 重猶任也.

*Zuo*zhu, Xuan 2.4: 乙丑·趙盾攻靈公於桃園·宣子未出山而復·大史書曰·趙盾弑其君·以示於朝·宣子曰·不然·對曰·子為正卿·亡不越境·反不討賊·非子而誰·宣子曰·嗚呼·[詩曰]·我之懷矣·自詒伊戚·其我之謂矣·孔子曰·董狐·古之良史也·書法不隱·趙宣子·古之良大夫也·為法受惡·惜也·越境乃免· “On the *yi-chou* (day), Zhao Chuan attacked (and killed) duke Ling in the peach garden, and Xuanzi who was fleeing from the state, but had not left the hills behind him yet, returned to the capital. The grand scribe wrote down: “Zhao Dun murdered his ruler!”, and showed it in the court. Xuan said to him, “It was not so!” but he replied: “You were the highest minister. Fleeing from the state, you did not cross its borders; since you returned, you have not punished the villain. If it was not you (who murdered the duke), who was it?” Xuan said: “Alas!” [The Odes] say: ‘The man of my heart! – He brought up this separation!’”²⁹ – is it me who is addressed by this? When Master Kong heard of this, he said: “Dong Hu was an excellent scribe of olden times – a rule of his writing was not to conceal. (Zhao) Xuanzi was an excellent officer of olden times – to uphold the law he accepted a bad name. That was a pity – if he had crossed the border, he would have escaped that fate.” Cf. J. Legge, V, pp. 290–291; see also E. Henry, p. 144.

Gongyang zhu, Xuan 6.1: 晉史書賊曰·晉趙盾弑其君夷皋·趙盾曰·天乎·無辜·吾不弑君·誰謂吾弑君者乎·史曰·爾為仁為義人·弑爾君而復國不討賊·此非弑君而何· (...)” The scribe of Jin recorded the assassination and wrote: “Zhao Dun of Jin murdered his ruler Yi Hao.” Zhao Dun said: “Heaven! I have not committed the crime! I have not murdered the ruler! Who says that it was me who murdered the ruler?” The scribe said: You are humane and you are a man of righteousness. After your ruler had been murdered, you returned and did not punish the villain. If it was not you (who murdered the duke), who was it?” See also J. Gentz, p. 101.

statement which all the three exegetical texts quote from the mouth of the scribe by instead putting it into the mouth of a *junzi*. Thus, it was apparently the author of the *Shiji* himself who replaced the name of the scribe by the term *junzi* in the second account.

But what might have caused the author of the *Shiji* to render the Zhao Dun account twice in his work? Any attempt of giving an answer will, of course, be speculative. But it would seem to me plausible if the author of the *Shiji* by replacing the name of the scribe and not Confucius by the term *junzi* wanted to demonstrate that he was not only aware of the different exegetical traditions extant at his own life time, but also that the uncompromising judgment of the scribe seemed to him of higher relevance than the equivocal attitude of Confucius. To put it in other words: by terming the critical judgment of an authority which lived prior to Confucius as the judgment of a *junzi*, the author of the *Shiji* perhaps intended to demonstrate that the scribe of Jin was not only temporally prior to Confucius but also in judgmental respect was given by him priority. This would certainly not be too far-fetched, if one considers that the author of the *Shiji* himself was a scribe and thus may have had a special interest for the rules according to which early scribes recorded history.

A detailed analysis especially of those notions of the *junzi* in the *Shiji* in which judging worthies of the past can be identified, will probably reveal much about the overall ideological frame of this great work and the special exegetical attitude of its author. Especially in those places where the author of the *Shiji* explicitly records that a *junzi* criticized or presaged something, he seems to have set “markers“ which point towards somehow decisive moments in history, especially turning points with regard to the rise or decline of states, and were hoped to be perceived by attentive and worthy readers – future *junzi* – in exactly this way. The above discussed notions of the *junzi* seem to belong to these “markers“ and thus contribute in a way to the complex web of the “lines of causation“ traced in the *Shiji* – a phenomenon which I am presently concerned with in an ongoing research project.

Appendix: Distribution of *junzi* entries in the *Shiji*

chapter	number of entries	chapter	number of entries	chapter	number of entries	chapter	number of entries
1	0	34	0	67	16	100	0
2	0	35	1	68	0	101	0
3	0	36	0	69	0	102	0
4	0	37	4	70	0	103	3
5	3	38	5	71	1	104	0
6	1	39	5	72	0	105	0
7	0	40	1	73	0	106	0
8	0	41	1	74	0	107	0
9	0	42	1	75	0	108	1
10	1	43	1	76	0	109	0
11	0	44	0	77	0	110	0
12	1	45	0	78	2	111	0
13	0	46	1	79	1	112	1
14	10	47	14	80	2	113	0
15	2	48	0	81	0	114	0
16	0	49	1	82	0	115	0
17	0	50	1	83	0	116	0
18	1	51	0	84	2	117	2
19	1	52	1	85	0	118	0
20	1	53	1	86	0	119	2
21	0	54	0	87	0	120	0
22	0	55	0	88	0	121	0
23	5	56	0	89	0	122	1
24	20	57	0	90	0	123	0
25	1	58	1	91	0	124	2
26	0	59	0	92	0	125	0
27	1	60	4	93	0	126	2
28	1	61	1	94	0	127	6
29	0	62	1	95	0	128	1
30	0	63	3	96	0	129	2
31	3	64	0	97	0	130	6
32	1	65	0	98	1		
33	5	66	0	99	0		
						total	160