VIEWPOINTS

Zhao Mu: The Presence of the Past in the Meaning(s) of Space in Confucius' Graveyard

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ABSTRACT

The idea of heritage in China has been dominated by the Authorised Heritage Discourse, in which the authenticity of material tends to be over-emphasised in the management of heritage sites. This paper seeks to elaborate the intangible 'sense of space' as an alternative form of heritage by blurring the boundaries between intangibility and physicality. We explore the space in the Cemetery of Confucius, a World Heritage Site, to demonstrate how Confucian values are perpetuated in the spatial intersection between past and present, the living and the dead, the tangible and the intangible. Spatial meanings are embedded in the form of mounds, stone tablets, and clusters of tombs (*Zhao Mu*) and are ritually observed to adapt to ongoing changes in kinship relationships and the political context, and to nurture the virtues of filial piety and loyalty. Today, the ways of managing space can still be traced back to the time of Confucius, although material forms have changed with the course of nature and the changing life of the Kong clan. But this heritage practice is now being challenged by modern discourses about heritage. We argue that the ancient meanings that are constantly negotiated within the present context are the core values that need to be interpreted, understood and preserved in the conservation of this heritage site.

Keywords

Spatial heritage, Cemetery of Confucius, Kinship ties, Kong clan, China, Authorised Heritage Discourse (AHD), Qufu, Chi-cha, Virtues of filial piety and loyalty, *Zhao Mu*, Kong Qinghe, Kong Shangren, 'Dukes for Fulfilling the Sage'

Introduction

Smith (2006, p. 8) claims that *there is, really, no such thing as heritage*, and that it is simply a cultural process of meaning-making, involving the construction and regulation of a range of values and understandings. Such a view illustrates the discursive nature of heritage. By introducing a genealogical history of Authorised Heritage Discourse (AHD), Smith (2006) explores the idea of

heritage as a set of discourses indicating national or universal values coined by professional experts and international organisations like UNESCO and ICOMOS. Imagination and the fabrication of heritage meanings could relate to a site that is grand, old, and aesthetically pleasing, mostly in terms of its material authenticity. To a large extent, Chinese heritage since the 1990s has also been undergoing such *discursive formation* (Foucault: 2002, pp. 34-43). In particular, the international idea of material authenticity has permeated China's heritage practices, and for years has had a profound impact on the management of Chinese heritage. It should be noted that, in China, present-day heritage practices influenced by this idea are fraught with cultural tensions, so that local Chinese communities have had to sacrifice their traditions and sense of heritage to conform to the framework of AHD (Wu: 2012a /2012b; Wu: 2014; Zhu: 2015). This paper argues that it is essential to realise that the Chinese way of dealing with its past is fundamentally different in terms of epistemology and modes of practice from today's authorised heritage concepts. A rediscovery of the indigenous understanding of the meaning of heritage, and of the boundaries between intangibility and physicality, is urgently needed.

Regarding Chinese attitudes to the past, many western scholars (Elvin: 1973; Lee and Syrokomla: 1993; Cohen: 2003) who have studied Chinese history have been baffled to find that so many Chinese histories and memories are oddly deprived of the existence of historical materials. Pierre Ryckmans, a French sinologist, visited China in the 1970s and concluded that:

> *...in Chinese landscape, there is a material absence of the past that can be most disconcerting for cultivated Western travellers – especially if they approach China with the criteria and standards that are naturally developed in a European environment.* (Ryckmans: 1986, p. 2)

In other words, heritage in the Chinese context cannot be compared to, for example, Rome with its Colosseum, a solid stone building, but could be perceived, practised and even reproduced invisibly in various forms of space, place and landscape. On this point, Ryckmans (1986, p. 5) further argued that the Chinese past was *a past of words not of stones*. This echoes the fact that China has a long tradition of producing texts about specific areas, places or sites, often referred to as local 'gazetteers' (Hargett: 1996; Bol: 2001). They are the texts that guarantee material reality a timeless value and an unbroken lineage, indicating that the intangibility of heritage outweighs its tangible aspects. Such a phenomenon could not be identified as a single category of heritage, or a thing to be handled, but as a heterogeneous space of meanings, values and processes. Correspondingly, humanists also view the past in terms of space, not only as a temporal narrative of historical events or a material legacy handed down from the past, but as a series of contingent histories (Elden: 2001; Ethington: 2007; David: 2013a). Spatial history can be understood as heritage practices *reflected in events, locations, behaviours, and motivations that make the human experience of space into place.* (Bodenhamer: 2013a)

From this perspective, the Confucian Cemetery in Qufu, a component of the World Heritage property Temple and Cemetery of Confucius and the Kong Family Mansion in Qufu, is a good case study for understanding the tensions arising from the intangible aspects of a heritage site. Here, little survives of the authentic original materials, but over 2,500 years the local Kong clan has constantly reflected on what was recorded in ancient books, and kept the traditions alive. Consequently, their practices have allowed the sense of spatial pattern in the graveyard to remain almost intact for thousands of years, in spite of continual appropriations of its material existence. Hence the authenticity of its heritage is revealed in changing physical forms of unchanged significance in a ritual space, interwoven with numerous discourses recorded in Confucian classics, local gazetteers, family genealogy books, personal memoirs, etc.. The Confucian graveyard could also be interpreted as a series of histories in place and space, and its heritage is *embodied within a narrative context that incorporates space alongside of time* (Bodenhamer: 2013b, p. 170). With our interest in Confucian ideas related to intangible heritage, we carried out an historical-ethnographic research survey in the Confucian graveyard to discover its spatial meaning, reaching out to the words of the past that illuminate the present. In this article, we will try to elaborate the 'sense of space' as intangible heritage by crossing the boundaries between the past and the present, the physical and the spiritual, and the living and the dead.

'Sense of space' as intangible heritage

The Cemetery of Confucius is the graveyard of the Kong clan, the descendants of Confucius, in his hometown of Qufu, in Shandong province, China. Confucius himself and his children and grandchildren are buried there, as well as many thousands of his descendants. Traditionally, each Chinese family owns their own family cemetery. Confucius' cemetery has been a model for all Chinese family burial grounds for over 2,500 years. In the UNESCO dossier, it is claimed that the cemetery *provides integral and most important material evidence for the development of the Kong Clan*, describing it as one of *the group of monumental ensembles* (UNESCO: 1994) by emphasising its artistic and architectural features. However, what motivated us to do this research was not the material aspect of its heritage, but the space where Confucianism (especially reverence for the ancestors and family ties) is inscribed, perceived as landscape, and practised and experienced spatially. This investigation enriches our understanding of 'cultural space', conceptualised as one category of the intangible heritage defined in UNESCO's *International Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*. According to the *Convention*, intangible cultural heritage can be associated with cultural spaces where the *practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, the instruments, objects and artifacts – are recognised by communities, groups and individuals.* Indeed, creating a cultural space inevitably involves a certain degree of material practice, such as making instruments, objects or artefacts. We wondered then, in what way could this 'sense of space' be conceived as intangible heritage?

We approached the Confucian graveyard by seeing it as a space of a value-laden meaning system, constantly being made and re-made to bring the past into the present. Each time a newly-deceased Kong clan member is buried, the meanings of the space are redefined to express Confucian values in a changing world. The materials that configure the spatial arrangements are mostly soil and trees of indeterminate age. The mounds are of various shapes, some small and round, others large and flat, some in groups and others standing alone to constitute this landscape of space. None of them seems to have been placed arbitrarily. A few stone tablets, mostly erected for distinguished ancestors, serve as spatial markers of the past. Heritage practice has created high and low mounds of different sizes, trees of numerous varieties and tablet stones of different shapes. When Kong people walk through the space, they point out the characteristics of the spatial pattern to the younger



Plate 1
The spatial dimension of aura shown in Confucius' graveyard.
Photo: Zongjie Wu. December 2012.

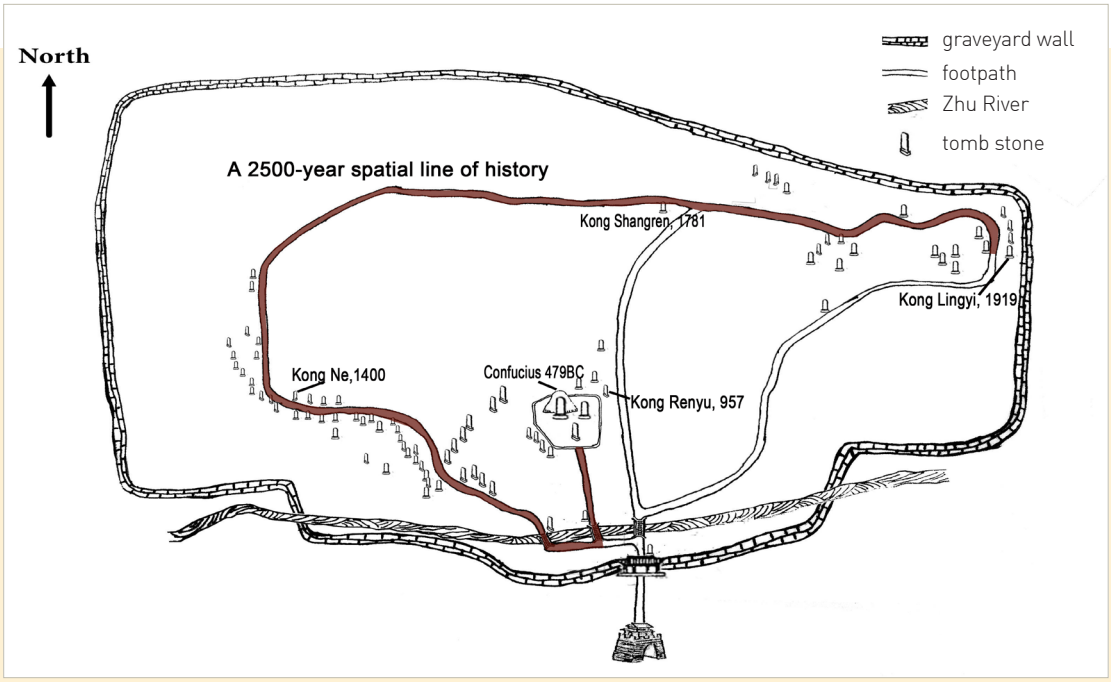


Figure 1
A 2,500-year spatial history map of the grave sites of Confucius' linear descendants.
Source: Zhang Yue. [first drawn by Kong Zhaohong, July, 1987; redrawn by Fang Jiongmin, July 2015].

generation, and tell their stories by relating to their own familiar social life as well as the words recorded in Confucian classics. The Confucian Graveyard illustrates what we refer to as *space of aura* [Plate 1] in its meanings rather than through ancient remains. This concept has been inspired by Benjamin's interpretation of the phenomenon of aura:

> *We define the aura of the latter as the unique phenomenon of a distance, however close it may be. If, while resting on a summer afternoon, you follow with your eyes a mountain range on the horizon or a branch which casts its shadow over you, you experience the aura of those mountains, of that branch. This image makes it easy to comprehend the social bases of the contemporary decay of the aura. It rests on two circumstances, both of which are related to the increasing significance of the masses in contemporary life.* [Benjamin: 1936, p. 418]

As we see in [Plate 1], except for a few tombstones, the harmonious landscape displays heritage meanings embodied in undulating mounds and old trees leaning over the tombs of ordinary Kong people. Since Confucius was buried here, the place and the spirit of the spatial patterns has remained almost unchanged, although the material artefacts have decayed or been updated. This feeling is what we called 'intangible heritage in the form of space' (Qin and Wu: 2013; Qin, Wu and Feng: 2014), which could be defined as the meanings arising from the spatial intersection between past and present, the living and the dead, the tangible and the intangible. It may represent an alternative way of thinking about the value of heritage in the Chinese context, where the presence of the past prevails over the emptiness of its physical form. Hence, there is one important question: how has the Confucian family lineage in Qufu created, maintained and transmitted the cultural patterns of this space, without a break, for over two thousand five hundred years?

A 2,500-year spatial history

Confucius was buried in 479BC, and his cemetery has been used and maintained until today. Confucius' graveyard is surrounded by a thick brick wall over 7 kilometers long, containing over 4,300 surviving memorial stones, 100,000 mounds, the resting places of dead Kongs, high, low or even flat, and 42,000 ancient trees of numerous varieties (Kong and Peng: 2012, p. 102). On close observation, the tombs of deceased Kongs were mostly arranged in clusters, each covering nine generations (九族). At the cemetery, we conducted a historical-ethnographic study of the Kong

lineage. Based on oral histories, and historical maps and texts, we collaborated with local people to draw a spatial-temporal trajectory to reveal over 2,500 years of history in this space. [Figure 1]

The map was a piece of collaborative work by locals at Qufu. Data was collected by Luo Chenlie, and it was originally drawn by Kong Zhaohong in July 1987 and redrawn by Fang Jiongming in July 2015. We were provided with the data by Zhang Yue, one of our informants at Qufu.

This map covered the whole graveyard, mapping the sites of all the tombstones and mounds created since Confucius was buried two and a half millennia ago. The dotted stones arranged on both sides of the footpath are mainly the tombs of Confucius' direct descendants or 'primary lineage-heirs' (大宗). The footpath is thus both temporal and spatial in the sense that it has existed and lengthened over thousands of years. The starting point of this 2,500-year timeline is a three-tomb cluster for Confucius, his son and grandson, located at the centre of the graveyard. The path has been gradually growing longer, spiralling in a clockwise direction, based on funeral rites existing long before Confucius. To understand its historical evolution and significance, we may follow the spatial path through the tombs of Confucius' immediate descendants, which were marked with stone tablets which gave their names, relationship to Confucius, and the year they died. The 2,500-year old spatial-temporal trajectory thus demonstrates historical contingency in a Confucian space, where heritage in the graveyard does not reveals itself as material relics but in the intangible sense of spatial relationships. [Plate 2]

Today most of the tombstones on the map [see Figure 1] still remain in their original places. We saw many stones like the one of Kong Ne (1358-1400) [in the foreground of Plate 2], the 57th linear descendant of Confucius. He was granted the title 'Duke of Fulfilling the Sage' in 1384 by the first emperor of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) (Kong and Peng, pp. 112-113). This duke would always be the first person from whom each new ruling dynasty tried to get support in order to win the hearts of the Chinese people. In the epitaph inscribed on the tablet (衍圣公神道碑铭), Kong Ne is said to have declined the appointment because he was still in the obligatory three-year mourning period for his father (Chen: 1522-1566, chapter 13). The 2,500-year trajectory is represented by the footpath, revealing increasing numbers of tomb sites as vehicles for intangible heritage, from Confucius' time to the present day. It is interesting to find that this temporal-spatial line follows the Confucian tradition that privileges primary male heirs as the legitimate transmitters of the true 'Confucian Way' (Wilson: 1994). In 219BC, it was the first Chinese emperor Qin Shi Huang who started the tradition of calling the ninth direct



Plate 2
Spatial line along the footpath marked by the tombstones of Confucius' direct heirs.
Photo: Feng Yang, 10 March 2011.

descendant of Confucius the 'Master of Classics' (文通君) (Chen: 1522-1566, chapter 8). They were then honoured by each successive imperial government with the rank of duke. The most common title is *Duke Yansheng*, which means an official 'overflowing with sainthood', literally translated as 'Duke of Fulfilling the Sage'. Confucius' direct heirs can be seen as having somehow existed outside the rise and fall of the tide of Chinese history, largely unaffected by changes of regime or government. Even during the reign of the Mongols (1271-1368), who were an ethnic minority group, the family was twice granted noble titles. In 1307, shortly after his enthronement, Külüg Khan granted Confucius the title 'Great Completer, Ultimate Sage and Exalted King of Culture' (大成至圣文宣王) (Kong and Peng: 2012, p. 33), the highest title ever given. This unbroken tradition indicates the genealogical succession of Confucius, which at the same time signifies the ongoing transmission of orthodox Chinese culture to the nation. In some ways, today's spatial-temporal trajectory in the graveyard represents not only a genealogy of descent from antiquity, but also the continuity of Chinese culture for thousands of years.

The use of spatial markers: mounds, stone tablets and clusters

One distinguishing feature of the Confucian graveyard is its longevity. However, this does not mean any material remains survive there, but rather refers to the way of managing the space in terms of its scale, layout, and the height of the mounds. There is very little tangible heritage in this graveyard. The earliest example was an incomplete stone tablet, dating back to 7AD, that has now been relocated to a museum (Kong and Peng: 2012, p. 92). Even the most important stone tablet, the one in front of Confucius' tomb, was actually re-erected by a Confucian duke during the Ming Period (1401-1455) (Kong and Peng: 2012, p. 102). However, using this system of spatial practices, the present local Kongs' burial customs can be traced back to Confucius' time, and this can be verified in historical texts dating back over two thousand years. We will further examine the heritage meanings of the Confucian graveyard through investigating its spatial markers - the mounds, stone tablets and the configuration of tomb clusters. This facilitates our understanding of how the Kong clan in Qufu continuously creates, maintains and transmits the intangible culture of the cemetery.

Mounds

The vast majority of graves in the cemetery are mounds of varying heights without stones. It was recorded that, before Confucius, the ancients buried their dead without marking the graves. The *Book of Rites* (礼记), the Confucian classic dating from around 475BC to 20 AD, stated that it was Confucius who raised a mound to mark the site of his parents' grave. Confucius marked the space, saying *I have heard that the ancients made graves* (only), *and raised no mound over them. But I am a man who will be travelling east, west, south, and north. I cannot do without something by which I can remember* (my parents' tombs) (Zheng: 1999, p. 173). The *Book of Rites* also noted that the mound Confucius raised over the grave of his parents was four feet high. Many other historical texts also indicated that Confucius was very concerned about the scale of the mound and how to maintain it. For example, he once observed a funeral conducted by the successor of the King of Wu, and praised its propriety. On the site, Confucius saw that: *he raised a mound over the grave of dimensions sufficient to cover it, and high enough for the hand to be easily placed on it* (Yang: 2004, p. 131). The historical records also describe how Confucius buried his parents and strictly followed an ancient rite that said a tomb was not to be repaired after it was completed. Confucius even cried when his disciples added soil to repair his parents' tomb when it was washed away by heavy rain. The ancient commentary by Zheng (1999, p. 174) interpreted this to mean he saw it as a violation of the ancient rules of propriety. This shows that Confucius in fact wanted to let the mound disappear gradually in the course of nature. In an ancient Chinese dictionary, the Chinese character 葬 (*zang*, literarily translated as 'burying the dead') was defined as 'changes to the Way and hiding the deceased in the natural world' (Xu: 1963, p. 27). According to Confucian tradition, by the time nine generations of the relatives of the deceased had passed away, the tomb of the deceased would have returned to nature. In other words, it is a moral requirement that humans should not interfere with the tomb. That is why in the Confucian graveyard, the mounds would get lower and flatter until they completely disappeared [see Plate 1]. Such a natural transformation expresses how the kinship bond would gradually evaporate. This bond is divided into five parts, manifested in the mourning ceremony as *wufu* (五服) literarily translated as 'five degrees of funeral clothes'. The mound would gradually return to the earth as the five degrees of closeness or intimacy came to an end over nine generations. Compared to the modern criteria



Plate 3
Confucius inscribing words on Chi-cha's stone tablet.
Source: Kong Deping, Zhou Longtao (eds.), *Drawings of the Sage Traces of Confucius* (in the year 1444). p. 119.

for conserving heritage, we see the ancients never tried to preserve material remains. In the Confucian cemetery, letting the mounds gradually recede into nature is an essential element of heritage practice, conveying the ancient spirit of propriety. In other words, the intangible heritage of the cemetery rites is not only more important than the tangible, but there is actually a moral duty in allowing material forms to evolve naturally and spontaneously. The rule about not repairing tombs is still strictly observed after over 2,500 years.

Stone tablets

Walking through the Confucian graveyard, one observes stone tablets and carved animal or human figures of various shapes and styles, standing upright. The *Drawings of the Sage Traces of Confucius* (孔子圣迹图, completed around 1444 by Zhang Kai) recorded that it was Confucius who first set a stone as a spatial marker for a person who knew how to behave according to the rules of propriety for burying the dead:

> *Chi-cha, the younger son of Shou-meng who was the successor of the King of Wu, declined to accept the throne. In the twenty-seventh year of Duke Chao, Wu State sent Chi-cha as an envoy to Chi (Yen-ling). His son died and was buried at Ying Boa according to the rites for burying travellers (those who die away from their native place). Confucius went to look on and was pleased that Chi-cha did all in accordance with the ritual rules for burying travellers and understood the passage of the living and the dead. Confucius said, "Chi-cha of Yen-ling does things according to the rules of propriety." Later Chi-cha died. Confucius, while travelling in Wu, passed by his tomb and erected a stone tablet, writing on it: "The tomb of Chi-tsi of Yen-ling".* [1]

The picture [Plate 3] shows Confucius placing a mark of respect in honour of Chi-cha. Why did Confucius use a stone as a spatial marker and what did it mean? It is recorded in many other historical texts that Chi-cha was a kind-hearted man who well knew the rules of propriety and was highly respected. The stone tablet was to teach others to remember and learn from his example. Because of Confucius' comments on his behaviour at the burial, later Chinese erected a stone tablet at the site where Yen-ling (Chi-cha) buried his son, inscribed with the words *The Site of Confucius Observing the Rule of Propriety* (孔子观礼处) (Zhang: 2008). We also learn from Confucian texts that rules of propriety, and their

practitioner, Chi-cha, made the space special and important in a way that the Chinese needed to remember, and to promote his spirit by marking the place in material form. The stone, which could be seen as tangible heritage, has been destroyed, rebuilt, torn down and restored many times. And there is a story telling how later generations treasured his spirit and constructed a space of reverence by re-erecting the lost stone tablet over and over again. In the Qing period (1368-1644), Chi-cha was referred to as a 'ritual practitioner' by Fu Guobi, who claimed that society under heaven could not function without learning from him (Song: 2006, p. 129). Fu was a newly-appointed official in the county, and was told that the stone had fallen down and was lost in a big flood. When he heard this, Fu immediately ordered the locals to set up a new stone at the original site. Fu placed an inscription on the stone: *this is the site where Confucius observed how people perform according to the rules of propriety.* (Xu: 2006, p. 135) It can be seen that the significance of the place itself-where no authentic material actually existed - was the impetus for Fu to order the re-establishment of the stone.

The erection of gravestones to remember righteous people gradually developed into a heritage practice in the Confucian graveyard where spatial markers came to be used to promote the virtue of loyalty, one of the two fundamental values relating to familial and social relationships. They are filial piety (孝, *xiao*) and loyalty (忠, *zhong*) which are believed to lead to social harmony and a good life. The former, representing the virtue of respect for one's father, elders, and ancestors, is nurtured and taught within the family. *Zhong* (loyalty), means being concerned for others, being dutiful, and moral submission to the nation. When the virtue of filial piety is applied to interpersonal relationships in society, outside the family, it turns into the virtue of loyalty. Thus the *Book of Rites* says: *As the people are taught filial piety and brotherly love at home, with reverence toward the elderly and diligent care for the aged in the community, they constitute the way of a great king; and it is along this line that states as well as families will become peaceful* (Foust: 2012, p. 194). In the graveyard, the clusters of nine generations of tombs, mostly in the form of mounds, provide the opportunity for the observance of filial piety, and the tablets conferred on those persons deserving of respect promote the virtue of loyalty.

In the Confucian graveyard, dozens of the stone tablets of famous Kongs shown in [Plate 4] bear similar heritage meanings to the one Confucius set up for Chi-cha. Those who did good deeds for the state were entitled to have stone tablets after death. The entitlement, which determined the size and the decoration of the stone, was not decided by individual family members, but by the Kong clan, and sometimes even by the emperor. But this ritual way of dealing with stone tablets as a part of intangible heritage is today being challenged. In an interview with Kong Deming, Director of the Association of the Kong *Family Genealogy Book*, we were informed that:

Setting up a stone tablet should be done in accordance with the rules of propriety. We often observe this rule by seeing what kind of person the deceased was. At the end of the Qing period (1644-1912) and even in the Republic of China (1912-1949), if, for instance, the dead person had once achieved a high score in the civil examinations and was elected a scholar/official (qu de gong ming, 取得功名), he was eligible to have a stone tablet with a round or a flat head. People would decorate his stone with dragon reliefs. However burial practices nowadays have changed. The stones will not be set up unless a family can afford it. At present the Confucian graveyard is managed by the Bureau of Cultural Heritage. As you already see, the local Kongs would follow the rules of propriety in terms of both memorial and burial practices. We, as managers, have tried to continue these Kong family customs such as worshipping the ancestors. But the practices have changed. Some ancient stones disappear in the long course of time. As you know, today's national heritage law emphasises the authentic material forms of stone tablets. Surviving stones from the Han period (BC202-220) have been moved out of the graveyard and are now preserved in a newly-built tablet gallery. (Interview transcript, 10 December 2012) [see Plate 6]

Mr Kong's comments reveal that the styles, size, forms of decoration, and location of the stones should comply with the traditional rules of propriety. But today many families no longer obey the rules and choose their own tablets. Today, the heritage practice of creating stone tablets is not governed by the degrees of benevolence but by what people can afford. More than that, AHD in the form of heritage laws has had a major impact on the management of stones in the graveyard. They are no longer seen as spatial markers but as

tangible heritage that should be preserved and displayed in the museum. Hence many stones have been moved from their original context, which means the spatial patterns in the cemetery have become somewhat disordered and unintelligible, though the local people still continue the traditional practices.

Clusters

The Confucian graveyard is primarily a learning environment for family members of the Kong clan. An ancient Chinese dictionary defines a 'tomb' (*mu*, 墓) which is pronounced like the word for 'love' (*mu*, 慕), as a place *where children of filial piety, who long for nurturing love, go to pay tribute to deceased family members and ancestors* (Xu: 1963, p. 289). Confucius believed familial virtues were the foundation for how members of a society should live and preserve their culture. He said *filial piety and fraternal submission - are they not the root of all benevolent actions?* (Yang: 1980, p. 2) In the Confucian graveyard, filial piety or more broadly speaking, kinship ties, are the values that have governed a thousand years of tradition. So how is this actually practised? In the centre of the cemetery [see Figure 1], the three tombs of Confucius, his son and grandson formed a typical spatial cluster that could be interpreted explicitly as a space of kinship ties. It symbolised the familial relations of father, son and grandson, and there is a sacred path leading to it. On the east lies the tomb of his son and to the south is the tomb of his grandson. On our first visit to Confucius' tomb, all three tombs had been decorated with flowers by visitors. This spatial cluster of Confucius' immediate family is known to locals as *holding the son and hugging the grandson* (Kong and Peng: 2012, pp. 108-110), and is called the *Zhao Mu* (昭穆) pattern in historical texts. *Zhao Mu* means 'an order of descent from the common ancestor', and the first ancestor was buried in the centre [see mound as indicated in Plate 4]. Tombs on the left are called *Zhao* and those on the right are called *Mu* (Legge: 1885, p. 246).

Two hundred and fifty years ago, as shown in [Plate 4], and recorded in the *Qufu Local Gazetteer* (曲阜县志) (1711-1799), the spatial pattern of *Zhao Mu* clusters was visible, with the central cluster of Confucius and his son and grandson surrounded by clusters of different groups of descendants. Not until the end of the Warring States Period (475BC-221BC) were eight generations buried around Confucius, their tombs positioned in accordance

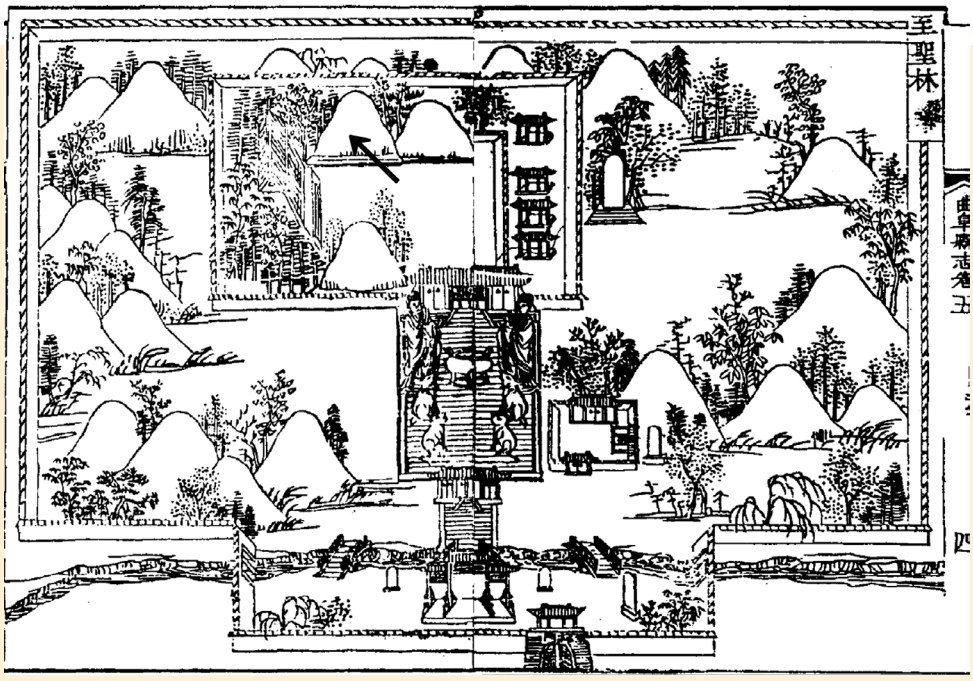


Plate 4
Spatial pattern of *Zhao Mu* clusters in Confucius' graveyard.
Source: Pan Xiang (ed.), *Qufu Local Gazetteer, vol.6* (1711-1799).



Plate 5
Kong Qinghe walking among the five tombstones of his immediate ancestors, ranked in *Zhao Mu* order along the 400-year old spatial-temporal footpath.
Photo: Song Haitao. 26 March 2016.

with the spatial order of *Zhao Mu* (Kong and Peng: 2012, p. 99). Liang Xianzu, the scholar of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1921), explained: *Bo Yu, Confucius' son and Zi Si, his grandson were buried beside the tomb of Confucius in accordance with the rules of Zhao Mu, and his offspring were all buried by his side in this manner, too*. About 900 years after Confucius, the *Waterways Classics* (水经注) also recorded that in the period of Northern Wei (386-557), *each of the tombs was located in the order of Zhao Mu, which after hundreds of years could hardly be recognised from their spatial patterns. But three gravestone epitaphs were found standing on the tombs with some sculptures of auspicious animals* (Li and Chen: 2006, p. 592). Somehow, the continuing genealogy of 2,500 years of spatial history [see Figure 1] is still being regulated by the rule of *Zhao Mu*. In the present-day Confucian graveyard there are numerous similar examples of *Zhao Mu* tomb clusters. These clusters helped strengthen kinship ties over the nine generations of one family. From this perspective, the cluster as intangible heritage resides not merely in the graveyard, but in the living fabric of social relations in the present Kong community. We will turn next to the case of Kong Qinghe, our fieldwork informant, and how his family dates back to a common ancestor 400 years ago and maintains a *Zhao Mu* spatial pattern in the graveyard.

Life in the 'space of veneration'

In the minds of Kong families today, the Confucian graveyard is of particular importance both for memories of common ancestors and for present-day communal bonding. Whether on Tomb Sweeping Day or at the Festival of the Dead, and even at weddings, local Kongs will always take fruit and wine to the tombs of their close relatives, paying tribute by offering food, and cleaning the ancestral tombs after burning prayer papers. On the second day of a wedding ceremony, a new wife must visit the tomb of the husband's immediate ancestors to show she has been accepted by his family and the ancestors. This custom embeds the cultural fabric of their lives into the heritage site. One such lifestyle is followed by our informant, Kong Qinghe (孔庆鹤), a seventy-sixth generation descendant of Confucius. Our several visits with him provided us with insights into this living heritage, as he frequented the graveyard as part of his daily life. The Confucian graveyard is thus a source of spiritual meaning for him. We have witnessed his efforts to record his personal and family memories on the site. All his literary writings, including the eulogy he wrote for his most respected ancestor, Kong Shangren, were interwoven with texts he had found and collected in the Confucian graveyard. Kong Shangren (孔尚任), a 64th-generation descendant of Confucius, was

a Confucian scholar known nation-wide. His masterpiece, the *Peach Blossom Fan* (桃花扇), is a Kun opera favourite, inscribed on UNESCO's *Representative List of Intangible Heritage*. He also made a great contribution to the expansion of the Confucian graveyard (Kong and Peng: 2012, p. 118).

While on the way to the tomb of Kong Shangren, Kong Qinghe told us that he had kept the manuscripts and furniture of Kong Shangren until the Cultural Revolution. But unfortunately, all his material legacies were burned then. With a broad smile, however, he proudly told us that: *I have a good memory of his legacy and love to frequently visit his tomb. I could recite and write down all his writings. I also read the stone tablets (of virtuous and talented ancestors) and record and study their stories*. At that moment, we became aware of the value of the heritage space, where Kong Qinghe is searching for meanings from the past and making his life meaningful. We were also impressed by Kong Qinghe's conduct of memorial rituals, seeing that he set food on the ancestral altars and knelt down and kowtowed to his ancestors on tomb-sweeping days. On 22 October 2013, the day of Kong Shangren's 356th birthday, he again guided us on another trip to the Confucian graveyard to offer sacrifices to his immediate family members and ancestors. Kong Qinghe drew our attention to the way his family tombs were arranged in *Zhao Mu* order. [see Plate 5]

On site, we were told these tombstones are of his ancestors who died 700 years ago. As we were approaching the stones, he read aloud the inscriptions *Zhi Sheng's 56th Dai Sun Kong Gong Mu*, literarily meaning 'Tomb of the most Honourable Ancestor Confucius' 56th generation descendant, Mr. Kong'. As Kong Qinghe took out an old pen and a wrinkled notepad, on which he wrote something for several minutes in silence, we too, felt in awe. He then proudly informed us that his ancestors were once outstanding officials during the Ming and Qing Dynasties. Kong Qinghe pointed to the tablet of Kong Xusheng, and said that the calligraphy of the inscription was written by Kong Shangren. He added, *Kong Xusheng died in the year of 1703 and his stone was inscribed with the word Juren* (举人). *It indicates he once achieved an honourable title in the Chinese Civil Examinations. I indeed feel honoured to be his descendant, and my remote grandfather, Kong Shangren, did the beautiful calligraphy*.

When he moved to a point near Kong Shangren's tomb, Kong Qinghe shared with us a poem that he wrote for Kong Decheng's (孔德成) death. He was the last Confucian 'Duke of Fulfilling the Sage' who lived in Qufu. He left mainland China during the civil war and died in Taiwan. As a eulogy dedicated to him, Kong Qinghe was not allowed to publish his poem at that time:

To Pay Tribute to Mr. Da Sheng[2]

(A sudden and sorrowful news of Kong Decheng's death on 1st October, 2008 of the lunar calendar)
For 60 years you are away from Qufu but for always your heart is at home,
Boat floating on the Sea and a bright moon will light your way,
I regret you could not return home when alive,
I am wondering what happened and how your life was in Taiwan all this time,
May you rest in peace and I write a poem in remembrance of your place here.

Kong Qinghe described the context in which he wrote this poem: *One day in 2008, it is here that I happened to hear the news that my remote family member, Kong Decheng, passed away in Taiwan*. He continued sadly in a low voice:

On the Festival of the Dead, I came here to sweep Shangren's tomb, paying homage to my ancestors. When I got nearer to his grave, I heard people nearby talking about the news that Kong Decheng had passed away. So I couldn't help writing three poems as eulogies to remember his death. In fact, if he had been buried in his hometown, Kong Decheng was supposed to have a grave site just east of Kong Shangren's tomb.

The cemetery area to the south of Kong Shangren's tomb is tacitly reserved for the seventieth to seventy-ninth generations of 'Dukes for Fulfilling the Sage'. *He should have been buried here according to the ritual rules*, Kong Qinghe said to us, pointing to a clearing along the spatial-temporal footpath. As a contemporary, Kong Qinghe never met Kong Decheng in life, but he showed deep grief for his death and cared very much about the displacement of the Confucian Duke. According to Confucian tradition, the direct descendant plays both a spiritual as well as a social role in uniting the members of the whole Kong clan (收族, *shouzu*). So, as a most

respectful member of the Kong people, Kong Qinghe was deeply touched by his death. The area reserved for his grave has become a space he can use for spiritual dialogue. When leaving the Confucian graveyard, he collected the bananas and eggs he had used as sacrificial offerings. Kong Qinghe stored them in his shabby shoulder bag with his writing papers. Upon arriving back home, Kong Xiangling, his grandchild, was already home after school and waiting for his dinner. To our surprise, Kong Qinghe took out the banana and eggs and passed them gently to his grandson. Sitting around a simple dinner table, Kong Qinghe taught his grandson how to behave ritually and politely with guests at the table. Handing over the bananas and eggs to the next generation, was to us, the intergenerational transmission of the element of intangible heritage we call 'kinship ties'. This was not simply food he brought to his grandson but the love and veneration he learnt in their ancestors' graveyard.

Spatial transformation since the 1950s

Since the 1950s, the meanings of heritage in the Confucian graveyard have gradually been transformed by the influence of AHD, which is mostly limited to issues of material authenticity. As a consequence, concepts of the movable and immovable heritage have been established in accordance with the nature of materiality, and used by the Chinese government to categorise and classify heritage (Guo: 2013). Historical information, ideas of Confucianism, and funeral rites are seen as non-material (intangible), only a background to tangible, material artefacts. Such a discourse is represented in the UNESCO inscription citation for the site:

> *Confucianism has exerted a profound influence not only in China but also on the feudal societies of Korea, Japan and Vietnam and had a positive influence on the Enlightenment of 18th century Europe. The Temple of Confucius, the Cemetery of Confucius, and the Kong Family Mansion are not only outstanding representatives of oriental architectural skills, but they also have a deep historical content and are an important part of the cultural heritage of mankind* (UNESCO :1994).

Some traditional aspects of heritage practice, for instance, the ritual way of maintaining the graveyard, were identified as part of intangible heritage, but only in terms of 'traditional Chinese conservation intervention methods' and the skill of maintaining the property. The value-laden meanings revealed in the ineffable sense of space, in the form of mounds, trees, layout and practice of using spatial markers, are not recognised as aspects of heritage.



Plate 6
Stone tablets moved from the Confucian graveyard and exhibited in the museum.
Photo: Bailan Qin. 18 December 2013.

Chinese professionals, among whom many are western-educated, have assimilated the western discourse of heritage-materiality, authenticity, objectivity, etc. (Wu: 2012a, Zhu: 2015) and assiduously applied them to the protection of material remains in China. Faced with relics destroyed by war, the new Chinese government engineered a shift in heritage practice from perceiving heritage as site and space to seeing it as material items (Li: 2005; Peng: 2008; Li and Peng: 2008). In recent years, the Central Bureau of Cultural Heritage has officially accepted an international idea called 'tangible heritage' and has adopted a corresponding idea 'Movable Cultural Heritage' (可移动文物, hereafter MCH)[3]. MCH refers to ancient valuable artefacts, literature (ancient books and manuscripts) and stone tablets which could and should be moved to museums, galleries or libraries for repair and better preservation.

Returning to the case of the Confucian graveyard, tombstones that had survived from the Han Period (25 -220AD) are now categorised as MCH items and were unearthed and moved to a newly-built tablet gallery in 1998 [see Plate 6]. The space and sites these stones originally marked were thus disrupted and forgotten. From October 2012 to December 2016, in response to a directive from the Central Bureau of Cultural Heritage, the Qufu municipal government launched a three-month investigation and released a statistical chart[4] of MCH items in the Confucian graveyard, showing there are altogether 5,572 memorial stones (grave stones with inscriptions) together with a great many animal or human-shaped stone sculptures. This emphasis on the material legacy of the graveyard has inevitably led to the spatial transformation of the cemetery landscape.



Plate 7
Red Guards smashing the stone tablet in front of Confucius' tomb.
Source: Kong Xiangming. 29 December 1966.

During the Cultural Revolution (1967-1977), a campaign of 'Smash the Four Olds' (破四旧, meaning old customs, old culture, old habits and old ideas) was launched against Confucius in Qufu (Jin: 1997). As in Europe's Age of Enlightenment (Delanty: 2007), China's modernity was then depicted as history's renunciation of the past. During this period, China condemned its past by the violent means of subverting traditional spatiality (Yang: 2004). This mentality caused the radical destruction of spatial arrangements in the Confucian graveyard, and of many other ancient sites in the city. In February 1967, six very important tomb mounds, including that of Confucius, were levelled and dug up. Ancient trees around the site were uprooted and stone tablets were knocked down [see Plate 7] (Liu and Wang: 1992). The tombs of Kong Lingyi, the last 'Duke of Fulfilling the Sage', and his wife, were dug up, and their attendant treasures were removed. Their corpses were pulled from their coffins and hung on an old tree. The revolution was a catastrophe for the spatial integrity of the graveyard. In the early 1970s, an ambitious policy of 'flattening tombs for farming' (平坟造田) did further damage to the Confucian space. More grave mounds were flattened and tombstones were designated 'feudal remnants' (封建残余) and forcibly removed. Some old stone and wood from the Confucian family cemetery was used to build public wells and bridges[5] . However, some of the artefacts from the remote past were protected because they were designated by experts as national 'cultural heritage materials' (文物) (Liu and Wang: 1992, pp. 231-244). This time, the idea of cultural heritage, with its emphasis on material authenticity and the ancient, was borrowed to rescue heritage objects from destruction.

During the 1980s, Qufu regained its cultural significance as an important historical city, and it is now a world-renowned tourist destination (Kong and Peng: 2012). Ever since the 1990s, the preservation and management of Qufu's cultural heritage has attracted attention from international institutions (e.g. the UNESCO

World Heritage Centre and the World Bank). Modern methods of conservation and intervention are now used to maintain the space. The Confucian graveyard is hence managed as a property/asset, where the ownership and maintenance of the property and its use for tourism are assigned to different divisions of stakeholders, *in light of the principle of separating institutions from enterprises and ownership from operation* (UNESCO: 2003, p. 42). The Kong clan, whose members had in the past been the owners, managers and users of the graveyard, was completely sidelined. Under this management structure, the Confucian graveyard was turned into an object of scientific and commercial operation, for example for *pest and disease prevention work for old trees* or for *the opening of scenic spots and admission affairs* (UNESCO: 2003, p. 64). The ritual way of managing the space is still practised by the Kong clan, especially when a recently-deceased descendant is buried there. Nonetheless, this is not recognised as an objective of heritage management. For instance, the living *Zhao Mu* spatial pattern as described above is not recognised as heritage in need of protection and restoration. This risks a complete forgetting of spatial practice as a form of intangible heritage. In recent years, Qufu has also attracted a US $50 million loan from the World Bank and 540 million RMB of funding from the central government of China for its preservation and management[6]. In this project, rehabilitation, modern spatial designs such as aesthetic landscapes, viewing routes, public washrooms, etc. were implemented in the Confucian graveyard. As a consequence, the graveyard is gradually being transformed into a museum instead of a space where the Confucian intangible heritage of space is practised as a living tradition of local life.

Conclusion

In today's China, heritage ideas are articulated and framed to a large extent within AHD, which over-emphasises the materiality of heritage and has inevitably created cultural tensions. This paper revisits the notion of heritage, where the value lies not only in its physical presence, but essentially in the ancient meanings of spatial practice. This case study shows that for thousands of years, the cemetery as a heritage site has been actively used in the intersection between the physicality of space and the spirituality of ritual life, the living present and the past, and its perpetuation and adaptation. The authentic spatial meanings of the Confucian graveyard were thus preserved in spite of its ongoing transformation in a material sense. As shown in [Plate 1], intangible heritage can be perceived in the peaceful spatial landscape surrounding the tombs of the ordinary people descended from Confucius. Since the 1950s, with the influence of the modern discourse on heritage, the spatial meanings embedded in the graveyard have been sidelined, and its material entities have been transformed into movable and immovable heritage, or into a property to be managed through technology and exhibitions. Conservation work has to conform to the criteria of professional management of the graveyard as a World Heritage property and a tourist destination. Nonetheless, the Confucian graveyard still remains a vital place for strengthening kinship ties and for intergenerational bonding among members of the Kong clan, a legacy laid down by Confucius himself. For the local Kong community, We are almost inadvertently reminded of the value of kinship ties for the local Kong community as shown in their bodily movements, gestures and the details of their lives that become apparent in this aura of space. The spatial meanings of the Confucian graveyard are thus not fixed or imparted from their ancestors' material legacies, but rather were reproduced interactively in response to people's concern for the virtues of filial piety and loyalty. We argue that the ancient meanings, constantly negotiated with the present, are the core values that need to be interpreted, understood and sustained in the conservation of this heritage site. Understanding space in terms of sizes, heights, levels, clusters, landscape and so on enables antiquity to move beyond the boundaries of heritage into everyday life - through which all heritage is created.

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ENDNOTES:

1. In today's Confucian Temple in Qufu there is a Sage's Trace Hall where *Drawings of the Sage Traces of Confucius* were embedded in the walls. The picture can be found in the edited reproduction of the book. See He Xin (ed.), 2012. *Drawings of the Sage Traces of Confucius*. China Bookstore Press: p. 80.
2. Da Sheng is Kong Decheng's literary name chosen by himself (字, *Zi*), and that is the way he is usually addressed informally among literati.
3. See *Regulations for the Repair and Restoration of Movable Cultural Heritage* on the website of the Bureau of Chinese Cultural Heritage (Chinese government policy document), available from: http://www.sach.gov.cn/art/2014/8/6/art_1036_104452.html. Consulted, July 2015.
4. See *Over 5500 relics found: a thorough survey of stone tablets in the Confucian graveyard available* from: http://www.sd.xinhuanet.com/news/2011/07/06/content_23176687.html. (China News Agency, 6 July 2011) Last consulted, July 2015.
5. The second author had an informal interview with Wang Liang, researcher and author of *Disasters in Confucian Places (1967-1977)* (孔府大劫难), and *Cultures of the Confucian Graveyard in Confucius' Home City* (事死如事生：孔子故里墓葬文化与孔林). During the conversation, Wang talked about the Cultural Revolution in Qufu and recounted his experience of interviewing former Red Guards to collect first-hand information about what happened there during the Cultural Revolution.
6. See *World bank supports China to conserve cultural heritage*, available from: http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2011/05/24/world-bank-support-china-to-conserve-cultural-hritage-improve-water-environment-expand-railway-network. (World Bank News Press) Last consulted, July 2015.

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