

INTRODUCTION

Veneration of Confucius and Local Prestige

A curious shrine for the robe and cap of Confucius (Kongzi; 551–479 BCE) once stood on the rural outskirts of the Qingpu 青浦 district of Shanghai, far from the ancient sage’s hometown of Qufu 曲阜, Shandong, and from anywhere he had traveled in north China. The place was called Kongzhai 孔宅 (Kong Residence) because his clothing was said to have been buried there by a sojourning descendant. From its beginnings as a modest family temple, Kongzhai had developed by the early 18th century into a substantial ritual center with numerous buildings. The buried “relics” of Confucius inspired local patrons to add visual representations of him, and scholarly pilgrims came to offer sacrifices and experience his beneficent aura. Ambitious officials and local literati also used their patronage and other involvement with Kongzhai to enhance their own prestige and build up Qingpu’s reputation. After flourishing for centuries, however, Kongzhai was summarily demolished in 1966, and references to its former existence were deleted from public memory. In 2021, the only features surviving on the site are two majestic old ginkgo trees in a field beside an industrial park (Fig. 1).

The history of Kongzhai’s rise and fall offers new material for understanding Confucian religious expression and the veneration of Confucius himself through physical artifacts and visual images, as well as suggesting the limits of their efficacy. In the early 18th century, Kongzhai featured an imposing Tomb of the Robe and Cap; three separate halls for sacrifices to Confucius, his father, and five generations of ancestors; a two-story pavilion housing imperial calligraphy; a library and lecture court; and several studios. In the main sacrificial hall, sculptural icons of Confucius and his Four Correlates (*si pei* 四配: the disciples Yan Hui 顏回, Zengzi 曾子, Zi Si 子思, and Mengzi 孟子) encouraged celebrants to visualize the recipients of their offerings. A building that displayed stone tablets incised with portraits of Confucius and narrative pictures illustrating his life invited visitors to view the ancient sage in action and to imagine themselves among his disciples. Other structures accommodated offerings to the national gods Guandi 關帝, Wenchang 文昌, and Kuixing 奎星, and a merit shrine honored local patrons who had helped to build or restore Kongzhai. Commemorative arches and stele pavilions highlighted significant moments in Kongzhai’s history, none more glorious than 1705, when the Kangxi emperor (r. 1662–1722) bestowed his own calligraphy certifying Kongzhai as the “Surviving Emblem of the Sage’s Traces” (“Shengji yihui” 聖蹟遺徽).

But by 1966, Kongzhai had declined to a shrunken core in a rural hamlet, with just a dilapidated tomb mound, main hall, imperial calligraphy pavilion, and primary school. Despite



1. Two protected old ginkgo trees are all that remain at the former site of Kongzhai in Qingpu district, Shanghai. View from the north, September 2016. Author's photo

the Kangxi emperor's endorsement, the rise of evidential studies (*kaozheng xue* 考證學) in the mid-18th century made influential Qing scholars skeptical of Kongzhai's legends. Although the shrine continued to receive intermittent patronage, it never regained imperial favor, and its facilities often fell into disrepair. During the later years of the Taiping Rebellion (1850–1864), the buildings were severely damaged, and not all of them were rebuilt afterward. By the late Qing, the emerging discourses of modernity had little use for stories about relics associated with Confucius. Instead, local administrative gazetteers emphasized the region's advantageous position for long-distance waterborne trade and the productivity of its residents, promoting commerce rather than Kongzhai as a more promising basis for development. In contrast to Shanghai's Temple of the City God (Chenghuang miao 城隍廟), which evolved into a multifunction public space used by all segments of society, as Vincent Goossaert and Kai-wing Chow have described,¹ Kongzhai became the antithesis of the new urban popular culture that rapidly took shape in Republican-era Shanghai. Attracting only scholars and statesmen who occasionally gathered there to perform rituals and write panegyrics to Confucius, Kongzhai's patrons were limited to the type of literatus that Lin Zhihong and Tze-ki Hon have characterized as highly educated men who believed that Confucian values and texts were

essential to China's survival, not only as a civilization but as a nation.² Under the People's Republic, Kongzhai's questionable legends and anti-revolutionary associations eventually made it a target of Marxist campaigns against feudalism, superstition, and undesirable social elements. Early in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), its remnants were destroyed by local Red Guards responding to Chairman Mao Zedong's call to "Smash the Four Olds" (*po si jiu* 破四舊) – old customs, old culture, old habits, and old ideas.³

Unlike many other sites of traditional culture that were damaged or destroyed during the Cultural Revolution, Kongzhai was not reconstructed by local authorities after Mao's death, despite changes in official policies concerning Confucius. Local descendants also failed to resurrect Kongzhai, unlike communities of Kongs elsewhere who rebuilt their temples after suffering as much or more under Mao's regime, such as the Kongs of Dachuan 大川, Gansu, studied by Jun Jing in the 1990s, or several branches in Zhejiang province, surveyed more recently by Guo Xuehuan.⁴ Many cities and towns restored or rebuilt their former temples of Confucius, initially just for heritage tourism but later expanding into educational or ritual activities. The great primordial temple in Qufu also has been repeatedly repaired and reconceptualized since the early 1980s, as James Flath has shown in a masterly analysis.⁵ Furthermore, many scholars have commented on ways the Chinese party-state has promoted Confucius as an important symbol of Chinese civilization, at home and abroad.⁶ Confucian texts are being studied in schools and in informal settings, and Confucian rituals have been revived or creatively reinvented, as Sébastien Billioud, Joël Thoraval, and Anna Sun have observed.⁷

Despite the post-Mao rehabilitation and upsurge of interest in Confucius and Confucianism,⁸ Kongzhai is not mentioned anywhere in the *Great Dictionary of Confucius* (*Kongzi da cidian* 孔子大辭典), an ostensibly comprehensive encyclopedia edited by the distinguished philosopher Zhang Dainian 張岱年 (1909–2004).⁹ Nor do the 1,331 pages of Qingpu's most recent official gazetteer refer to Kongzhai by name, alluding to it only obliquely within the description of Daying township (Daying zhen 大盈鎮): "Legend has it that descendants of Confucius buried his robe and cap at the former site of a Confucius temple in Tianyi village. The two existing old ginkgo trees belong to the county-level protection unit."¹⁰

Even Kongzhai's own extensive documentary record, the *Gazetteer of Kongzhai* (*Kongzhai zhi* 孔宅志), has been largely ignored. Multiple versions of the compendium appeared in the 17th and early 18th centuries, but few copies have survived. It was not included in the *Four Treasuries Complete Writings* (*Siku quanshu* 四庫全書), which contained books that the Qing court collected, inspected, approved, and copied (sometimes bowdlerized) from 1773 to 1782 for the Qianlong emperor (r. 1735–1796), as R. Kent Guy has described.¹¹ In commenting on why they rejected it, the imperial compilers pointed to problematic details concerning Kongzhai's core legends, openly expressing disbelief that clothing belonging to Confucius could have been buried in this unlikely place so long after his death.¹² Although the *Gazetteer of Kongzhai* has been reproduced in modern reprint series, two of these misidentify it as an account of Confucius's "real" home (*Kongzi guzhai* 孔子故宅, sometimes abbreviated as Kongzhai) in Qufu, which is well north of Shanghai.¹³ Because Confucius never traveled south of the Yangzi River and his temple, residence, and grave have been perpetuated in Qufu for well over two millennia, it has become inconceivable that any other place could have had the kinds of structures and artifacts that the *Gazetteer of Kongzhai* recorded.

Recovering Kongzhai: A Multidisciplinary Project

I initially encountered the 18th-century edition of the *Gazetteer of Kongzhai* because it contained a list of events illustrated in an early pictorial biography of Confucius, the subject of my research at the time. Reading further, I was intrigued to discover that the book actually documented a place purporting to be “Little Queli” (Xiao Queli 小闕里),¹⁴ a veritable microcosm of the temple, cemetery, and Kong descendants’ mansion in Qufu – but it was located in Qingpu, a district of Shanghai! Moreover, this *Gazetteer of Kongzhai* recorded centuries of prior history and indicated that the Kangxi emperor had recently conferred his calligraphy on the shrine in honor of its relic.¹⁵ Yet not only had the once-flourishing complex completely disappeared, it had been so completely forgotten that its gazetteer could be mistaken for an account pertaining to Qufu. What had happened? How had a humble locality used the claim to possess Confucius’s robe and cap to gain renown as a place permeated with the spirit of the sage, and why had it ultimately failed? As an art historian, I could analyze Kongzhai’s architectural layouts and art forms, but its very existence seemed to contradict the standard notion that Confucianism was a humanistic moral philosophy. My search for answers led me to explore a variety of issues concerning perceptions and appropriations of Confucius as I attempted to locate Kongzhai within larger social, cultural, political, and religious contexts.

Religious Elements

In recent years, Confucius has come to be considered a purely secular paragon of learning and morality, obscuring elements of his legacy that are arguably religious. This misleading characterization has been persuasively challenged by a variety of scholars, including Yong Chen, Chin-shing Huang, Lionel Jensen, Anna Sun, Rodney Taylor, Wei-ming Tu, and Thomas Wilson.¹⁶ Confucian practices that could be called religious include certain kinds of moral cultivation for the individual, modes of ancestor veneration for the family, and separate cults for descendants and the governing elite to worship Confucius according to codified ritual procedures. At the end of the 19th century and well into the 20th, Kang Youwei 康有為 (1858–1927) and others even sought to establish Confucianism (Kongjiao 孔教, sometimes called “Confucianity”) as China’s official religion, on the model of Protestant Christianity in Western nations, a movement closely examined by Hsi-yuan Chen.¹⁷

The spectrum of religious or quasi-religious practices associated with Confucius raises a variety of questions that many researchers have addressed.¹⁸ What was the significance of Confucius himself at different periods and among various groups? How did changing conceptions affect his representation in various mediums and contexts, and over time? What impact did reforms in official ritual regulations have on depictions of Confucius and on settings in which people encountered his image? As crucial elements of later imperial governance, how did his inclusion in the official Register of Sacrifices (Sidian 祀典) and his “classics” in the civil-service examination system influence attitudes toward Confucius after the exams were abolished in 1905 and the last dynasty fell in 1911? What were the consequences of an increasingly strong association between his veneration and conservative political movements, such as short-lived attempts to establish a new dynasty (1915–1916) or restore the last Qing emperor (1917), the Guomindang’s New Life Movement to reform social mores (mid-1930s), and the Japanese imperialists’ claims to be the true inheritor and guardian of Confucian values (1920s–1940s)?¹⁹

Reconstructing the history of Kongzhai is important because it shows how Confucian concepts and representations of Confucius himself could be used to create a special place, bringing visual and material forms of religious expression into sharp relief as a means of building symbolic capital. Kongzhai's evolution also reveals connections between Confucian religious expression and modes of veneration inspired by Buddhism, Daoism, and popular cults. Because Kongzhai was said to possess articles of clothing and jade ornaments that Confucius himself had worn, late Ming and Qing apologists declared it a place endowed with the efficacious spirit of the sage. In Buddhism, garments and personal articles were considered "contact relics," as John Strong has observed; while in Daoism, the burial of clothing without a body was associated with someone who had achieved immortality, as Fabrizio Pregadio writes.²⁰ Although Kongzhai's buried relics were never glimpsed, their assumed presence shaped expectations that visitors would have a transformative experience there. The unseen personal articles also justified installing various types of visual representation, which were important for configuring a site to attract pilgrims. At its height in the 17th–18th centuries, Kongzhai displayed sculptural icons, painted or incised portraits, pictorial biographies, and carved texts. Moreover, as at other religious destinations, stories of miraculous or uncanny events became associated with Kongzhai's relics and images of Confucius. These diverse mediums made him visible and thus present in different ways, potentially enriching the experience of visiting Kongzhai.

Unlike the buried clothing, Kongzhai's images of Confucius had counterparts in Confucian temples elsewhere, with which they shared iconography and conventions of display. From the mid-Tang to the mid-Ming period, government temples typically represented Confucius and his closest disciples as seated figures in sculptural icons. Portraits in incised tablets or rubbings also were sometimes displayed in the associated schools and in private academies (*shuyuan* 書院). But as Deborah Sommer has demonstrated, some Confucian ideologues considered images to be a contamination from Buddhism, and in 1530 the Jiajing emperor was persuaded to order figural icons to be removed from official temples.²¹ However, he permitted the Qufu temple and Kong family shrines to keep them because Confucius was worshiped there as an ancestor. Kongzhai had icons after 1530 because the claim to possess his clothing linked the site to the family cult through the Kong descendants who had buried them and dwelled there, however long ago. The mandate to abolish images also did not apply to portraits that were displayed in schools or circulated privately, nor to pictorial biographies in any medium.

Kong Descendants

The importance placed on Kongzhai's connection to the Kongs of Qufu underscores the significance of Confucius's lineal descendants to the history of his official cult, which Chapter 1 describes in more detail. Rulers patronized the cult both to honor Confucius and to ensure the allegiance of educated men who revered his teachings. Thomas Wilson has analyzed the evolving relationship between Kong ancestral worship and state rituals, over many centuries and successive dynasties, while Christopher Agnew and Abigail Lamberton have examined the lineage's social, political, and economic fortunes in the late imperial period.²² Starting with the Han dynasty, emperors occasionally awarded hereditary titles of nobility and various kinds of material support to Kong descendants who conducted sacrifices to Confucius in Qufu. After 1055 the senior male in each generation was titled Duke for Perpetuating the Sage (Yansheng gong 衍聖公) and often enjoyed enormous prestige and power, whose foundations and

fluctuations are scrutinized by Agnew. Late-imperial beneficence to the Kong lineage also included hereditary offices, monetary stipends, tax reductions, and corvée labor exemptions. The Kongs protected these privileges by compiling genealogies to register the male members of each generation. Until the Qing period, the offspring of Kongs who had moved away from Qufu were typically overlooked or even deliberately omitted. However, the southern lineage (*nanzong* 南宗) posed a special genealogical problem that Wilson has closely analyzed.²³ The “Southern Kongs” were descended from senior lineage members, including 48th-generation Duke Kong Duanyou 孔端友 (d. 1132), who had left Qufu during the Jurchen Jin invasion of 1127–1128. The refugees settled in the South, and several generations of dukes maintained sacrifices in Quzhou 衢州, Zhejiang, on behalf of the Southern Song regime, while the Jin recognized dukes from a cadet line in Qufu. After the Yuan reunification in the late 13th century, the Southern duke relinquished the title, but a mid-Ming descendant gained another hereditary title that was only slightly less prestigious.

Kong descendants from Qufu had evidently lived at Kongzhai at various intervals between the late Han and early Tang periods.²⁴ However, none was recorded as a resident for the next millennium, although the 1937 and 2009 genealogies list several Southern Kong descendants as sacrificers (*fengsi* 奉祀) at Kongzhai in the Yuan and Ming periods, while registered elsewhere.²⁵ Moreover, not a single Kong figured among Kongzhai’s late Ming or early Qing patrons, yet the Duke for Perpetuating the Sage acknowledged their “restoration” of a “family” temple. To achieve this hard-won recognition, Kongzhai’s supporters established a relationship with Qufu in the late 17th century and pursued it with great vigor in the early 18th century. After lengthy negotiations involving not only the duke but also assorted government officials, a 67th-generation Southern Kong descendant registered in Taixing 泰興 county, Yangzhou prefecture, moved his residence to Qingpu and became the Sacrificer at the Shrine and Tomb of the Robe and Cap (*Yiguan cimu fengsi sheng* 衣冠祠墓奉祀生) at Kongzhai. This hereditary position passed down the senior line of his descendants from the mid-18th to the mid-20th century.²⁶

The Kongs’ repopulation of Kongzhai had both positive and negative consequences for the site’s physical condition and conceptual status in later times. On one hand, it gained a clearer identity as a branch temple in the Kong family network. On the other, the expanding population of Kongs may have reduced its appeal for the scholar elite. Many of these local Kongs were peasants, and some took over the lesser buildings to use as dwellings.²⁷ When the cult of Confucius was upgraded to a great rite (*da si* 大祀) in 1906, no one took charge of making imperially mandated additions to the Main Hall.²⁸ Most importantly, the Kongs of Kongzhai failed to rebuild the temple after the Cultural Revolution, in contrast to other enclaves of Kongs around China who had also suffered persecution and destruction. For example, a determined community of Kongs in Dachuan, Gansu, successfully pursued monetary compensation for their property losses and built a new temple in the 1980s. In Jun Jing’s analysis, they made adroit use of history and social memory to create modified rituals that drew from broader Chinese cultural traditions, thereby expanding their base of support.²⁹ Guo Xuehuan has documented several villages in Zhejiang where Kongs have reclaimed their identity and reconstructed shrines for rituals exclusively for lineage members, made possible by increased prosperity and more relaxed ideological control in the early 2000s.³⁰

Institutional Models

The evolution of Kongzhai's physical site invites close analysis of its visual and material elements, considered both as Confucian religious art and in relation to other kinds of artistic expression. Besides its relics and representations, Kongzhai's layout and architectural structures shared features with counterparts in Buddhist, Daoist, and popular cults. Kongzhai bore evident similarity to other temples of Confucius, including both the primordial temple in Qufu and the shrines attached to government schools. As part of the state cult, officials conducted semiannual sacrifices at the imperial university in the capital, as well as at provincial, prefectural, and county schools. But Kongzhai differed from generic Confucian temples because it claimed links to Kong descendants. In addition, its Tomb of the Robe and Cap inspired allusions to the Kong cemetery (Konglin 孔林) in Qufu, where not only Confucius but also many generations of descendants were buried. Some patrons even called Kongzhai "Little Queli," envisioning it as a microcosm of Qufu's sacred sites.

Certain features of Kongzhai's development and some of the practices that the literate elite carried out there point to similarities with the government schools themselves, as well as with the private academies that proliferated in the Song period and flourished intermittently thereafter, particularly in the late Ming.³¹ In their quest to gain official recognition and financial support for Kongzhai, its patrons sometimes invoked specific institutions as models or precedents to buttress their case. Prefectural, subprefectural, and county schools generally followed a common model of organization and function, as well as funding, which Thomas H. C. Lee has described in detail.³² In addition to a temple, school precincts typically included lecture and study halls, a library for the *Classics* and other texts, offices for the director and instructors, shrines to meritorious former officials and local worthies, and lands to provide revenue. Besides performing an elaborate sacrifice of wine and meat (*shidian* 釋奠) to Confucius's spirit twice a year, on the first *ding* 丁 day of the second month of spring and autumn, schools were also supposed to make a lesser offering of vegetables (*shicai* 釋菜) twice a month.³³ Although government schools delivered little actual instruction from the Ming period onward, they importantly provided stipends to affiliated local scholars who were qualified to take provincial-level civil-service examinations.

Privately founded academies encompassed greater variety in their configurations and practices. As Linda Walton has shown, many began as shrines to famous men who had lived or served in a particular area, and some were built on the ruins of former Buddhist or Daoist temples.³⁴ Some academies accommodated scholars who were preparing to take examinations, while others attracted local literati and officials who professed an interest in learning for purposes other than career advancement. These institutions performed sacrifices to Confucius and other worthies, and provided sites and occasions for the literati elite to gather. In the late imperial period, many academies aspired to emulate the White Deer Grotto Academy (Bailudong shuyuan 白鹿洞書院) in Jiangxi, which Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200) had revived and for which he had composed regulations for students that were widely adopted, as John Chaffee has described.³⁵ An academy's association with eminent figures created a legacy that helped it gain renown, particularly when celebrated in writing, because texts written for a specific place were published and read elsewhere. Successful academies received state-funded stipendiary positions and tax exemptions, like government schools, so they could offer material support as well as status to affiliated scholars.

Five academies in or near Qufu were controlled by the senior Kong lineage as satellites of the main temple, distinguishing them from academies dominated by the literati. Some occupied sites associated with significant events in the life of Confucius, such as the Mount Ni Academy (Nishan shuyuan 尼山書院), on the mountain where his mother was said to have prayed for a son.³⁶ Developed in the mid-14th century, Kong-dominated academies around Qufu functioned primarily as venues for sacrifice, not study, and provided remunerative sinecures for Kong lineage members. Kongs also were involved with academies elsewhere, such as Kong Forest Academy (Konglin shuyuan 孔林書院) in Guangdong and Myriad Pines Academy (Wansong shuyuan 萬松書院) in Hangzhou.³⁷ All of these institutions offered models for developing Kongzhai into a more prominent and profitable resource, but they differed in the effects that their institutional arrangements would have on its long-term vitality.

Regional Development and Administrative Gazetteers

The history of Kongzhai and its process of placemaking must also be considered in the context of the surrounding geographical region, as defined by administrative jurisdictions of various levels and sizes. Located south of the Yangzi River, Kongzhai belonged to the area traditionally known as Wu 吳, after the ancient state centered on Suzhou during the Spring and Autumn period (722–481 BCE). Far from the centers of power and culture in north China, the lower Yangzi delta was considered exotic and not fully civilized until after the Han period, a gradual development analyzed by Hugh Clark.³⁸ The collapse of the Han empire and northern invasions brought an influx of refugee settlers to the South, stimulating population growth and development. Although the Sui–Tang reunification reestablished traditional centers of power in the North, the economic importance of the lower Yangzi delta steadily increased, and the construction of the Grand Canal facilitated regional integration. The Tang–Song transition brought further demographic, economic, and cultural developments to the region. After invasions forced the Song dynasty to abandon the North in 1127 and rule from a new capital at Hangzhou, the South also gained the center of political power.

As the Yangzi delta grew increasingly populous and prosperous during the Song, lower-level administrative units were established, creating smaller localities that developed their own identities. Elite families increasingly focused attention on local projects and alliances in addition to national concerns centered around the court, a “localist turn” whose various forms have been described by Robert Hymes and Peter Bol.³⁹ At the same time, as James Hargett has shown, administrative gazetteers evolved from primarily functional compilations into more literary works that helped create and give expression to local history, social customs, and cultural identity.⁴⁰ It is under these circumstances that Kongzhai first appeared in the historical record. As Part II will discuss in detail, Kongzhai merited a single entry in the 1193 official gazetteer of Huating 華亭 prefecture, whose seat of government was 75 *li* 里 (about 25 miles/40 km) away in Songjiang 松江.⁴¹ By the late 19th century, Kongzhai occupied a full chapter in the gazetteer of a much smaller unit, Qingpu county, which was based just 9 *li* (about 3 miles/5 km) away.⁴² Kongzhai’s distance from the center of local government clearly affected the dynamics of its development. In an intriguing variation on the localist turn, Qingpu patrons made Kongzhai the focus of efforts to gain a national reputation as a place that had “famous sites” (*mingji* 名蹟), and some supporters clearly hoped that their association with Kongzhai would also bring prestige for themselves and their families. At various times, resident scholars

and sojourning officials used fund-drives, donations, and gatherings at Kongzhai to strengthen the sense of local identity. Different kinds of literary production – private and public histories, petitions, official memorials and edicts, liturgies and prayer texts, regulations, poetry, even the names given to structures – all played a role in efforts to make Kongzhai a significant place in the local and national landscape, generate social capital for its patrons, and promote the locality's reputation.

Symbolic Capital and Intertextuality

Until the early 17th century, documentation on Kongzhai existed within larger texts, the regional administrative gazetteers that surveyed the surrounding county or prefecture.⁴³ These treated Kongzhai under categories that reveal changing views of its significance, as well as documenting its physical configuration. Song and Yuan gazetteers discussed Kongzhai in a single entry under “traces of the past” (*guji* 古蹟), implying that the site was defunct. Ming accounts subdivided the discussion. Under “schools” (*xuexiao* 學校), an entry for the Kongzhai Academy (Kongzhai shuyuan 孔宅書院) described a modest institution, active during the late Yuan period, whose local patrons had tried unsuccessfully to gain official certification and funding.⁴⁴ Other information about Kongzhai in Ming gazetteers appears under the headings “traces of the past,” “residences” (*dizhai* 第宅), or, combining the two, “traces of the past, residences” (*guji dizhai* 古蹟第宅).⁴⁵ Late Ming and Qing gazetteers not only offered new information but also further disaggregated Kongzhai's history by adding an entry under “graves” (*mu* 墓 or *zhongmu* 冢墓).⁴⁶ Some of these variations simply responded to the central government's changing guidelines for preparing gazetteers, which Joseph Dennis has brought to wider attention in an enlightening study of extant compilations.⁴⁷ Nonetheless, the increase in categories applicable to Kongzhai also reflects different ways of exploiting its symbolic capital. Moreover, later compilers sometimes presented more information than the earlier writers who had lived closer to the period of described events. Whether or not the new details are credible, the expansions and embellishments of the historical record suggest changing concerns and beliefs.

Even the longest entry in an official regional gazetteer is terse by comparison with works entirely devoted to Kongzhai, namely the various versions of the specialized *Gazetteer of Kongzhai*. Beginning with Lu Yingyang's 陸應陽 (ca. 1542–ca. 1627) *Annals of the Confucius Temple* (*Kongmiao ji* 孔廟紀) of 1609, which does not survive as an independent text, successive compilations articulated Kongzhai's history and described its structures, artifacts, lands, rituals, patrons, and related literature in ever-increasing detail, and eventually with illustrations. The most comprehensive version is an 18th-century edition that highlighted the Kangxi emperor's beneficence to the site. Its nominal editor-in-chief was none other than the august Kong Yuqi 孔毓圻 (1656–1723), Qufu's 67th-generation Duke for Perpetuating the Sage. While Lu Yingyang's *Annals of the Confucius Temple* probably resembled other commemorative inscriptions for temples of all types, subsequent versions of the *Gazetteer of Kongzhai* took their format from more complex compilations. One obvious model that Kongzhai's supporters occasionally mentioned by name is the *Gazetteer of Queli* (*Queli zhi* 闕里誌). This liberally illustrated work presented a history and inventory of the Qufu temple, cemetery, and mansion; a chronological outline of the life of Confucius and successive generations of descendants, along with honors bestowed on them; details on procedures, liturgies, and paraphernalia for sacrificial rituals; and

transcriptions of stele inscriptions and other important records.⁴⁸ Unillustrated gazetteers of famous academies, such as White Deer Grotto, provided Kongzhai's patrons with a somewhat different model that more consistently reflected the concerns of scholars, the intellectual heirs of Confucius, rather than the preoccupations of his blood descendants.

Analysis of the various iterations of the *Gazetteer of Kongzhai* reveals that this more detailed and celebratory compilation frequently reframed and sometimes distorted the information that it quoted from earlier regional administrative gazetteers. Moreover, these reformulations influenced subsequent representations of Kongzhai in later official gazetteers, particularly after the mid-18th century. In addition to such intertextuality, two major 18th-century trends had an impact on the reception of the *Gazetteer of Kongzhai* and ultimately on attitudes toward Kongzhai itself. One is the assertion of stricter imperial control over local histories and gazetteers, which Seunghyun Han sees as beginning under the Yongzheng emperor and intensifying under the Qianlong emperor.⁴⁹ The other is the entrenchment of the evidential research movement, whose proponents reevaluated traditional lore with critical skepticism and subjected it to more rigorous standards of proof, as Benjamin Elman has described.⁵⁰ The high court officials who selected books for the *Four Treasuries Complete Writings* scathingly dismissed the late 17th-century edition of the *Gazetteer of Kongzhai* and did not mention the far grander 18th-century version, as Qiao Zhizhong has pointed out.⁵¹ These actions had far-reaching effects on the transmission of Kongzhai's history and even ramifications for the physical site. Despite the 19th-century resurgence of Jiangnan local activism in shrine construction and historiography, which Han has explored,⁵² attempts to recover what had been lost at Kongzhai were only partially successful.

Finally, all of these gazetteers display seemingly irreconcilable differences with the 1937 and 2009 editions of the *Register of Confucius's Hereditary House* (*Kongzi shijia pu* 孔子世家譜), the official genealogy of the Kong lineage. Specifically, they conflict with each other concerning the Kongs' involvement with Kongzhai. Neither the regional administrative gazetteers nor the *Gazetteer of Kongzhai* records people surnamed Kong as active at Kongzhai between the early Tang and mid-Qing periods. Moreover, official gazetteers mention only two 18th-century Kongs who served as Sacrificer at the Shrine and Tomb of the Robe and Cap after the Ministry of Rites authorized the position in 1746.⁵³ However, both the 1937 and 2009 editions of the official Kong genealogy identify a series of descendants as sacrificers in successive generations, starting in the mid-14th century.⁵⁴ These records claim that Kongs living in the region maintained observances at Kongzhai during the Yuan and Ming periods, and that one line moved its residence to Kongzhai itself in the mid-Qing, gaining a hereditary appointment there in 1738.

The 1937 genealogy was compiled in Qufu under the auspices of Kong Decheng 孔德成 (1920–2008), the 77th-generation Duke for Perpetuating the Sage, whose aristocratic title had just been abolished by the Nationalist government in 1935, making him a bureaucrat called the Sacrificing Official for the Ultimate Sage of Great Completion and Former Teacher (Dacheng zhisheng xianshi fengsi guan 大成至聖先師奉祀官).⁵⁵ One reason for compiling the genealogy was to enhance Kong solidarity nationwide at a time when the senior patriline's financial resources and prestige had seriously declined. Descent lines based elsewhere in China were invited to submit their records (and payment) for inclusion, making this edition far more comprehensive than previous ones. Superseding it, the massive 2009 edition incorporated and