FOREWORD TO THE TRANSLATION

My translation of the *Gomō jigi* is meant primarily for scholars and advanced students of Japanese intellectual history, as well as general readers interested in East Asian philosophy. In order to maximize its accessibility, I have steered away from the awkward literalist approach, towards one which both translates and interprets the work, making it as transparent as possible. At the same time, many if not most interested readers will have, or will be developing, the language skills necessary to read the original text in Japanese. In order to facilitate an informed and even critical appreciation of the translation, I offer romanized versions of key terms, phrases, and passages from the *Gomō jigi*. The romanization is based on the *bungo* 文語, or classical Japanese, readings given in the Nihon shisō taikei 日本思想大系 (NST) edition of the *Gomō jigi*. The accompanying *kanji* 漢字, or Chinese characters, give the same text as it would appear in *kanbun* 漢文, or Sino-Japanese. Due to the limitations of my Japanese software, I have not been able to supply the *kanbun* punctuation as found in the NST edition. Nevertheless, with the romanized *bungo* and the *kanbun* arrangement of the *kanji*, the reading order of the text should be clear enough for those who understand the mechanics of *kanbun*. Even when citing only a phrase from a sentence, I give the readings as found in the NST *bungo* text. Thus, in some cases, especially with verbs and adjectives, the endings reflect the fact that the phrase has been lifted from the grammar of its text.

In addition to romanizing the various literary names, or *gō* 號, by which Jinsai refers to Zhu Xi 朱熹, I render them more consistently as “Zhu Xi” or “Master Zhu.” Typically I give the latter first, and then the literary name in parentheses along with the Chinese characters. This order facilitates understanding of the text, even while sacrificing simple fidelity to the original. Also, I use the terms “Confucianism” and “Neo-Confucianism,” rather than “sagely learning” (*seigaku* 聖學), “Song learning” (*Sōgaku* 宋學), and “Later Confucianism” (*Kōju* 後儒), in order to better convey, in admittedly anachronistic academic terminology, the ostensibly sectarian quality of the work.

Jinsai assumed that his students and contemporary readers were familiar with certain texts, passages and interpretations, and so did not specifically identify them. Today, similar familiarity with Chinese philosophy cannot be taken for granted, especially not among those accessing the *Gomō jigi* via translation. Therefore, when Jinsai alludes
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to passages from the *Analects* without identifying their source, my translation often supplies that information immediately rather than consign it to a footnote. In the footnotes, I offer additional data about where the passage can be found, and textual details about the *Gomō jigi*, e.g., whether or not certain sections of the “definitive” Hayashi 林 edition of 1705 appeared in the pirated Edo 江戸 edition (*Ehon 江本*) of 1695.

I have romanized Chinese names in *pinyin*. Of course, Jinsai referred to Chinese proper nouns via their Japanese readings, calling Zhuzi 朱子, “Shushi,” and Laozi 老子, “Rōshi.” He assumed that his contemporary audience knew that the individuals, imperial dynasties, and philosophical texts to which he referred were Chinese. Similar knowledge cannot be assumed of most Western readers. In order to capture the extent to which Jinsai, a Kyoto philosopher living in seventeenth-century Tokugawa Japan, was a scholar of a foreign philosophical discourse, all Chinese personal names have been romanized as such. Also, while the NST edition of the *Gomō jigi* renders the text, as well as Jinsai’s name, by use of the simplified characters of postwar Japan, I have most typically represented the same by means of the older, more complicated, and historically authentic versions. Rather than *ben* 博, *ki* 氣, *gaku* 学, *rei* 礼, and *sai* 斋, I give such characters as *ben* 辨, *ki* 氣, *gaku* 学, *rei* 礼, and *sai* 斋. However, in the bibliography and notes, I present the characters as they appear in the titles to the primary and secondary works quoted.

Those who might have wondered about the nature of a Tokugawa philosophical text—too few have been translated—will perhaps find this rendition of Jinsai’s philosophical masterpiece helpful. After all, it is not only the first translation of the *Gomō jigi*, but the first full translation of any major work by Jinsai. Hopefully, others will be facilitated by it. As the preparer of the camera-ready manuscript for this volume, I take full responsibility for errors in it.