It has now been twelve years since Zhou Yiliang passed away. I still recall how he devoted his entire life working tirelessly to training disciples throughout the land. The written works into which he poured all of his energies still have profound influence, nourishing generations of numerous students. His position and influence in the work of historical scholarship is both assured and enormous. Because he worked from 1973 to 1976 with the “Great Criticism Group of Beijing and Qinghua Universities”—“Liangxiao” for short—there are people in the academic world who have opinions about him. This was a distinctive time in history, with many an extremely complicated situation. As we are soon to face the centenary of Zhou Yiliang’s birth, I have decided to commit to paper a few things of which I have knowledge as a way of offering a reminiscence of Professor Zhou.

One

In October 1976, “Liangxiao” altogether had thirty-nine members (actually, there were thirty-eight, as one professor worked temporarily on the annotations group and was not counted as a member); all according to temporal exigencies having been decided upon by the Party committees of Peking University and Qinghua University, having been transferred to the project by their respective departments. Three members who were personally selected by Chairman Mao were the first members of “Liangxiao”: Feng Youlan, Wei Jiangong, and Zhou Yiliang. The circumstances behind all this run as follows.

After the September 13, 1971 Incident (the Lin Biao Affair), Chairman Mao told Xie Jingyi: “I have heard that there are many Confucian wall scrolls in Lin Biao’s residence. To deepen the criticism of Lin, get Peking and Qinghua [Universities] to send people to search out and copy the materials for me to read.” Although Xie Jingyi at the time already had duties with the Party committees as both schools, his regular daily work was with Qinghua.
He located several Qinghua professors—I remember Qian Weizhang 錢偉長 [1912–2010], Tao Baojie 陶葆楷 [1906–1992], and Shi Guoheng 史國衡 [1912–1995], among others—who went off to Lin Biao's home at Maojiawan to check. They put together some materials and sent them to Chairman Mao. After reading through them, Chairman Mao said: “This won't do. You'll have to find some Peking University professors, such as Feng Youlan, Wei Jiangong, and Zhou Yiliang.” So, Xie Jingyi organized a group of a dozen or professors, including these three men, from these two schools to travel to Maojiawan. These men, though, were rather old and the house in Maojiawan was multiple stories. Carrying long scrolls down stairs or to unfold them from the tubes in which they would have been kept and then roll them back up into the tubes after examining them would have been terribly difficult. Apparently, Feng Youlan walked with a limp, carried himself with considerable inconvenience, and where was he supposed to find the strength for this work? The Peking University Party committee did their study and determined that they would dispatch me to lead a group of people (at the time I was vice-section chief of the propaganda office of the Party committee of Peking University), and in actual fact this involved carrying out several concrete organization tasks. For example, I was to assign to each of the men a younger faculty member to serve as their assistants; to set up arrangements to get them in and out of cars; to establish a time to collect and distribute materials, and the like. After compiling materials, I presented them to Chairman Mao; and after he read them, he was very satisfied and said: “Look here, there are still more things that can be found at Peking University.”

Following Chairman Mao’s instructions, we began to edit the first of the documents for *Lin Biao yu Kong-Meng zhi dao* 林彪與孔孟之道 (Lin Biao and the way of Confucius and Mencius). The topic was determined by Chairman Mao, and the format was determined by Chairman Mao. Chairman Mao took a piece of paper, folded it in half, and handed it over to Xie Jingyi: one side was for Lin Biao, the other side for Confucius and Mencius; add comments and criticisms. And, later we would compile the second of the documents.

The compilation work took place at the Linhuxuan building on the campus of Peking University (just then, Linhuxuan was receiving foreigners, so we moved to the nearby Russian-language building). Responsibility for the actual organizational work was assumed by myself and Professor Wang Shimin 王世敏 [d. 2006] of Qinghua University (Qian Weizhang, Tao Baojie, and other elderly Qinghua professors did not participate further at this