

**The Problem of Philosophy in Classical Chinese Thought:
The Text *Zhuāngzǐ* as Case Study**

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Abstract

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This thesis is an attempt to look at the *Zhuangzi* and whether it can be appropriately understood as a philosophical text. The greater question is what is philosophy proper, and how has it been articulated in comparative approaches, particularly in regards to Classical Chinese texts. The following project will advance accordingly: In the introduction, I will look at the genesis and definition of the term ‘philosophy’ as translated into its Japanese/Chinese counterpart, *tetsugaku/zhexue*, and how the roles of the Meiji and early twentieth century Chinese scholars have shaped and created the meaning of ‘philosophy,’ and how these discourses have helped to form ‘philosophy’ as a discipline. Chapter one will be a brief discussion on the textual history and scholarship on the text of the *Zhuangzi*, focusing mainly on the contributions of the Qing dynasty philologists, and modern scholars Guan Feng and A.C. Graham. Chapter two will be translations of selected passages from the *Zhuangzi*, and will include textual notes on interesting and perplexing lexical, and grammatical features. It will also contain commentary regarding the ‘philosophical’ significance of each selected passage. Finally, this project will conclude with a general observation of how the themes in the *Zhuangzi* may or may not fit in with current conceptions of ‘philosophy,’ and suggest an alternative way in understanding both the *Zhuangzi* and philosophy.

For Mama and Ah-Ba

With Love and Gratitude

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Philosophy, n. /fə'lasəfi/

The love, study, or pursuit of wisdom, truth, or knowledge. **Now rare.** In later use usually only in etymologizing contexts.

Etymology: Classical Latin *philosophia* study or pursuit of wisdom, philosophical thought, particular philosophical system or school of philosophy, view of life, attitude < ancient Greek φιλοσοφία love of knowledge, pursuit of knowledge, systematic treatment of a subject, the study of morality, existence, and the universe < φιλόσοφος philosophe n. + -ία -y suffix³.¹

*Nec quicquam aliud est philosophia, si interpretari velis, praeter studium sapientiae; sapientia autem est rerum divinarum et humanarum causarumque quibus eae res continentur scientia.*²

¹ *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, September 2015. Web. 9 November 2015.

² Cicero, *De Officiis* 2.5. “Nor is philosophy anything, if you wish to interpret it, other than the pursuit of wisdom; wisdom, however, is the knowledge of things of the divine and human, and of their causes.”

INTRODUCTION³

One of the greatest challenges confronting a scholar moving between two distinct cultures with distinct languages is that of translation. A good translation does not simply give linguistic equivalents, but must also take into account a vast network of connotations embedded within a unique set of historical, socio-political, and cultural factors. It is a task that requires painstaking philological methods, as well as a particular sensitivity to problems of what may be lost or hidden between the margins and beneath the surface of a deceptively uniform text. If the text in question spans hundreds of centuries, the task proves even more daunting. To say that the duty and responsibility of the scholar is of utmost importance is an understatement.

No one describes the situation with the text of the *Zhuāngzǐ* better than A. C. Graham, saying that it “illustrates to perfection the kind of battering which a text may suffer between being written in one language and being transferred to another at the other end of the world some two thousand years later.”⁴ For the scholar as a translator is attempting to bridge gaps of spatio-temporal, cultural, social, linguistic... *ad infinitum*. The final translated copy can never fully represent the original in all its complexity. As Graham would have it, “the translator of a

³ For Chinese Romanization, I have used the standard pinyin system throughout, with the exception of names of modern Taiwanese scholars, of which I have kept in the Wade-Giles system. I have also left the word for 道 “tao” untranslated in its Wade-Giles format, unitalicized, simply for the reason that this word has infiltrated the English-speaking community in this particular form, making its presence known in various aspects of our literary culture.

⁴ A. C. Graham, *Chuang-tzu: the Seven Inner Chapters and other writings from the book Chuang-tzu* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1981), 27. The text of the *Zhuāngzǐ* will henceforth be represented as Zz (except at first mention in the beginning of a new chapter), a clever notational device devised by David McCraw in his *Stratifying Zhuangzi: Rhyme and Other Quantitative Evidence* (Taipei: Academia Sinica, Institute of Linguistics, 2010).

complex text is a juggler with a dozen balls to keep in simultaneous flight, and some of them are always bouncing on the floor.”⁵

The primary concern that grounds this thesis is “what is ‘Chinese philosophy?’” which in and of itself demands an explanation of “what is ‘philosophy?’” Sometimes, ‘philosophy’ is used in a very loose and abstract sense as in a particular outlook or a systematic way of thought. For example, the late President Ronald Reagan’s well-known statement, “My *philosophy* of life is that if we make up our mind what we are going to make of our lives, then work hard toward that goal, we never lose - somehow we win out.” Or Isaac Asimov’s dictum, “It has been my *philosophy* of life that difficulties vanish when faced boldly.” One only has to visit the philosophy shelf at the local bookstore to find titles such as *Philosophy for Dummies*, or *Philosophy of Winnie the Pooh*. From the above instances the use of ‘philosophy’ is so truistic that it strikes one as mundane, almost pointless, and even banal.

Modern studies of Classical Chinese thought have generally presumed the fact that the intellectual corpus throughout Chinese history has consisted of ‘philosophy.’⁶ Current

⁵ *Ibid.*, 33.

⁶ A recent study by Wiebke Denecke has proposed to view the works of the pre-Qin “masters” (諸子 *zhūzǐ*) as ‘literature.’ She rightly notes that ‘Chinese philosophy’ was first and foremost a Jesuit invention stemming from their pioneering efforts to translate the Chinese Classics. Denecke then takes pains to illustrate the problematics of translating the *zhūzǐ* as ‘philosophy’ (mostly by a somewhat superficial and at times misleading understanding of the history of philosophy as well as a rather outdated knowledge of the field of philosophy today) advocating instead for viewing “Masters literature” as a “discursive space.” In explaining why “literature” is a more fitting designation than “philosophy,” she gives two reasons: “because it [i.e. *zǐ shū* 子書 ‘masters literature’] was coined relatively soon after the pre-Qin period in the Han and because it was an indigenous label rather than one developed in comparison to and competition with the vastly different Greco-Roman heritage...” (32) While her desire to break free of labels is commendable, and while it is perfectly acceptable to want to open up new ways of looking at the *zhūzǐ*, it is never entirely clear how Denecke wishes to define the genre of “literature,” nor does she give convincing arguments as to why “Masters literature” is more suitable than “Masters philosophy.” But then she will conclude as if indecisively, “I believe claiming the label of ‘Chinese philosophy’ can do terrific work for us.” (338) The most curious of all is that while she criticizes the use of “loaded philosophical vocabulary such as ‘anti-rationalism’ and ‘skepticism,’” she herself uses equally loaded and flowery terms, such as “Catholicity in *Zhuangzi*’s ‘All Under Heaven’” (233), and “cosmopolitan future of philosophy” (31)—the meaning of these descriptions needs to be explained fully.. It is perfectly fine to want to reconceptualize the works of the *zhūzǐ* as literature, but she has yet to give a more complete and informed account of the less favorable label of ‘philosophy.’ Wiebke Denecke, *The Dynamics of Masters*

scholarship from Hu Shih and Fung Yu-lan, to the anthologies of Wing-Tsit Chan and others, and investigations of Roger Ames, Chad Hansen, and even A.C. Graham have all proceeded by assuming that the label ‘philosophy’ can be appropriated to Classical Chinese thought. Consider the following quotes from relevant scholars (*italics mine for emphasis*):

“This book consists chiefly of extracts from Chuang Tzu, Mencius, and Han Fei Tzu. These are books by philosophers, and many people assume that to read a book about *philosophy*, unless one has studied the subject specially, is about as much good for a layman to pore over a treatise on parasitology.”⁷

“Thus we see that the theories of all the schools of *philosophy* drew upon earlier origins and were not altogether new inventions of the minds of the times...”⁸

“It [i.e. the bridge of understanding between East and West] can be achieved only through a searching and serious study of the dominant ideas, the motivating beliefs that have, down through the ages, shaped the ‘mind,’ or over-all *philosophy*, of a race or nation.”⁹

The problem with these usages is twofold. First, the etymological origin of the term ‘philosophy’ itself is Greek, *philosophia*, meaning ‘love of wisdom.’ There is immediately a translative complication in finding a Chinese equivalent. Second, this first meaning is distinct from the discipline of Western philosophy which has included divisions of metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, et cetera, and if not properly distinguished, can be misleading to the uninformed reader. Before we attempt to apply these terms to Classical Chinese thought or to

Literature: Early Chinese Thought from Confucius to Han Feizi (Cambridge, London: Harvard University Press, 2010).

⁷ Arthur Waley, *Three Ways of Thought in Ancient China* (New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1956), ix.

⁸ F.W. Mote’s translation of Kung-chuan Hsiao’s overview of Chinese thought. See Kung-chuan Hsiao, *A History of Chinese Political Thought, Vol. 1: From the Beginnings to the 6th Century AD*, translated by F. W. Mote (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 10.

⁹ Wing-tsit Chan, *A Sourcebook in Chinese Philosophy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), vii.

designate such thought as ‘Chinese philosophy,’ we must first investigate critically whether these divisions are fitting, then determine whether they can be transferred to a different intellectual context while making meaningful comparisons. Thus, instead of beginning with a comparative approach, I wish to start this examination by briefly looking at the genesis of ‘philosophy’ beginning with its Greek roots, and its subsequent transformation into an academic discipline in the West and the East. Then I will look at the Japanese/Chinese translation of ‘philosophy’ as *tetsugaku/zhéxué* and discuss ways in which this may or may not be meaningful in studies of Classical Chinese thought.

I have selected the text of *Zhuāngzǐ* for its complexity in terms of intellectual content and textual history, as well as interesting lexical and grammatical features. Although not classified as a *jīng* 經 ‘classic’ in any known traditional catalogue, nor a part of the Ruǎn Yuán’s 阮元 (1764-1849) “Thirteen Classics,” it is one that is often quoted and studied by prestigious scholars throughout the history of China, as well as in contemporary discussions of ‘Chinese philosophy.’ It also appears in Lù Déming’s 陸德明 *Jīngdiǎn shìwén* 經典釋文, despite its title which literally means “glossing and explaining the *jīngdiǎn* [classics].” In addition, the text is also known for its distinct originality and creative treatment of one alternative in response to the “breakdown of world order” in Warring States China.¹⁰

I would like to look briefly at what Lydia Liu writes about the problem of translation. In her study of what she calls “translingual practice” Liu questions the “hypothetical equivalences between words and their meanings,” a difficulty any conscientious translator would come across in his/her work. Particularly during times when there are no direct corresponding words with the same meaning between two different languages the translator is faced with a dilemma. One

¹⁰ A.C. Graham, *Disputers of the Tao: Philosophical Argument in Ancient China* (La Salle: Open Court, 1989), 9.

solution is to give the closest translation there is in the “host” language, and to offer an extensive footnote. Another possibility is to create a neologism. Here is what Liu says about the latter possibility: “Neologism or neologistic construction is an excellent trope for change, because it has been invented simultaneously to represent and to replace foreign words, and in doing so, it identifies itself as Chinese and foreign locked in linguistic tension. *One does not translate between equivalents; rather, one creates tropes of equivalence in the middle zone of interlinear translation between the host and the guest languages.* This middle zone of hypothetical equivalence, which is occupied by neologistic imagination, becomes the very ground for change, a change that cannot be reduced to an essentialist understanding of modernity, for that which is untraditional is not necessarily Western and that which is called modern is not necessarily un-Chinese.”¹¹

Meanings then are not really transformed; rather they are invented within the spaces of translation processes. If this is so, then each act of translation is a unique and dynamic event, which unfolds according to the unique circumstances and historical factors of each translation. This is also true for the transmission of ideas and concepts in the formation of neologisms. When it comes to a cross-lingual creation of a neologism, the question of fidelity of meaning becomes more complicated. The Japanese and Chinese word for ‘philosophy,’ written with the graphs 哲學 *tetsugaku/zhéxué* is such a case in point, and will be explored in greater depth below.

The second issue is that of a profound misunderstanding between philosophy as an academic discipline, and philosophy as a particular way of life, one that remains truthful to its etymology. The failure to comprehend this distinction is the root cause – if I may be so

¹¹ Lydia Liu, *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity—China, 1900-1937* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), 40. Italics, original.

audacious to suggest – for continued disagreement between the proponents and opponents for a “Chinese philosophy.” Without further ado, let us then venture forward on the etymological origins of ‘philosophy.’

0.1 On the Greek Origin of ‘Philosophy’

The word ‘philosophy’ is etymologically Greek in origin, φιλοσοφία. It is a compound word consisting of two elements, the masculine adjective *philos* (φίλος), meaning ‘love of, dear’, and the substantive feminine noun *sophiā* (σοφία) meaning ‘wisdom.’ Taken together as a single unit, it means ‘love of wisdom.’ The word has long been associated with Ancient Greek thinkers, most notably Socrates, Socrates’ disciple Plato, and Plato’s disciple Aristotle. The history of Western philosophy has a lineage beginning with the Ancient Greeks, to the medieval thinkers (e.g. Thomas Aquinas, William of Ockham), to the moderns (e.g. Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Kant), and finally to the so-called “post-modern” thinkers (e.g. Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Gilles Deleuze, Theodor Adorno).¹² Such is the lineage of Western philosophy taught in academia today.

¹² The curriculum for the history of Western philosophy differs according to different programs and institutions. What I have just listed beginning with the moderns are figures central to the “continental tradition” of philosophy, and is also the one which I am familiar with. The other, that which has been called the “analytic tradition,” tends to diverge beginning at least with Kant, and does not even worry itself with the “post-moderns.” By “continental philosophy” is referred the intellectuals of the European continent, most notably those from Germany and France. “Analytic philosophy” is loosely associated with Anglo-Saxon thinkers who focus mainly on language and logic problems. The continental/analytic divide is rather thorny, and it is not altogether clear where the precise boundaries lie, though one would insist on distinct methodological approaches through ways of formulating the problem. For a general summary of the differences, see Neil Levy, “Analytic and continental philosophy: explaining the differences,” *Metaphilosophy* 34.3 (April 2003): 284-304. The term “postmodernism” is equally troublesome. It is generally used to refer to a socio-political and intellectual movement beginning sometime in the 1960s in continental Europe, and spans across many disciplines including cultural studies and critical theory, literature, aesthetics, history, etc. It is considered to be an intellectual response to the postwar era, where thinkers and artists alike question radically the meaning and effectiveness of rigid cultural, social, and political systems. In addition, with the advancement of new technologies introducing new ways of interaction and experience, intellectuals attempted to grapple with these historical conditions. For a general historical overview and introduction to postmodernism, see amongst many others, Steven Best and Douglas Kellner, *Postmodern Theory: Critical*

Today, we make a distinction between philosophy and science within academic disciplines. By the ‘discipline of philosophy’ is generally understood a specific world-view that is of a subjective nature belonging to an individual, a group of individuals, or a particular school of thought. By the ‘discipline of science’ is often recognized those categories of objective knowledge verifiable by empirical facts and observations. For the Ancient Greeks, ‘philosophy’ and ‘science’ are the same thing, understood simply as *philosophia*, which encompasses *all* theoretical knowledge. This is the sense of Aristotle’s *prima philosophia*, “first science,” grounded by his rather famous proclamation in the first line of the *Metaphysics*, “all men by nature desire to know.”¹³ The aim of this *prima philosophia* is to be able to give complete accounts of the causes and principles of things, which is framed slightly different from Plato. Prior to Aristotle, we see also that the problem of language may be of concern insofar as the nature through which one understands philosophy is essentially dialectical. This is exemplified in the many dialogues of Plato where the process of philosophy is none other than what unfolds from within the structure of the question and answer. But here for Plato it seems that language more often than not only exposes more *aporias* (Greek for ‘contradiction, paradox’). Itself a journey, philosophy is an end in itself through which one continuously searches for answers about human virtues, only to encounter more questions that do not appear to have any satisfying solution. These frustrating, confusing, and by no means enlightening examinations (Greek *elenchus*, from the verb *elengchein* ‘to examine, refute’) are enacted out in Plato’s so-called Socratic dialogues where the interlocutors perform the very thing in question, usually set forth at

Interrogations (New York: The Gulford Press, 1991). To make a final point, these thinkers identified as “postmoderns” were just as preoccupied with the problem of language the systems of logic as the “analytics” were.

¹³ Aristotle, *Metaphysics* A, 980b22. There are many translations available, but the most commonly used translation for the *Metaphysics* is that of W.D. Ross. It can be found in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, edited by Jonathan Barnes, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984): 2.1552.

the beginning of the dialogue.¹⁴ The general procedure in these dialogues consists of the following: Socrates (usually, but not always) will ask his conversant “what is X?” The conversant will then give an account by saying, “X is A, B, and C.” Then, Socrates will in turn demand the conversant to give subsequent accounts of what is meant by A, B, and C, continuously interrogating the individual about the conventional uses of A, B, and C in comparison or contrast to how the conversant understands these terms. The poor fellow will soon find himself contradicting himself, and worse of all, by the end of the day Socrates will not seemed to have said anything definitive about X. Nor does Socrates ever admit he has anything to teach, or lay any claim to truth. He is always portrayed as a lover of wisdom, chasing after it any lover would in pursuit of the beloved.¹⁵ These dialogues capture the essence of Plato’s notion of philosophy insofar as he remains faithful to the etymology of the word. The full evolution of philosophy from meaning “love of wisdom” changed with the seventeenth century intellectual preoccupation with empirical science. The status of philosophy as a science was thus brought into question.¹⁶

¹⁴ Although it is widely acknowledged that Plato’s dialogues were not real conversations that happened during his times, we can still assume that the Socrates depicted in Plato’s dialogue resembles to a certain extent the historical Socrates (c. 469-399 BCE). Various sources portray Socrates in different lights, and thus it is hard to definitively say which sources contain the “real” Socrates. For an in-depth study on the question of the historical Socrates, see among many others W. K. C. Guthrie, *Socrates*, in *A History of Greek Philosophy* III:2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969); and Donald R. Morrison, *The Cambridge Companion to Socrates* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

¹⁵ For these portraits of Socrates, see Plato’s *Apology*, and *Symposium*.

¹⁶ As the German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer once accounted, now “the sciences were allowed to stand on their own in their compelling correctness and were removed from the foundational claim of philosophy; on the basis of the conditionedness of existence, the latter undertook to read the ciphers of transcendence...and thereby philosophy was pushed into the light of the private sphere.” Hans-Georg Gadamer, “Philosophy, or Theory of Science?” in *Reason in the Age of Science*, translated by Frederick G. Lawrence (Cambridge and London: MIT Press, 2001), 160. By “private sphere” is meant the subjective level of inner sense experience which cannot be verified by external observation. Elsewhere in his own words, “by philosophy one often intends a congeries of such subjective and private matters as the unique world view that fancies itself superior to all claims to scientific status.” See his “On the Philosophic Element in the Sciences and the Scientific Character of Philosophy,” in *Reason in the Age of Science*, 1.

Around the same time, Jesuit missionaries were sent to China in an effort to expand European influence on political and religious levels. Despite the official goal of the missionaries to convert the Chinese to Christianity, the Jesuits seemed more engaged in an intellectual pursuit spurred by a “curiosity” about the Classical texts of China. This is the beginning of the process of what D. E. Mungello has called “proto-sinology.”¹⁷ The efforts to what Mungello has called “accommodate” the Chinese land included Matteo Ricci’s (1552-1610) agenda for a synthesis of Confucianism and Christianity, Athanasius Kircher’s (1602-1680) encyclopedic study of Chinese language and culture, and Andreas Müller (1630-1694) and Christian Mentzel’s (1622-1701) quest for the “Key” of China *Clavis Sinica* (i.e. the Chinese language).¹⁸ Early intellectual interests included the pursuits of Francis Bacon (1561-1626) in the Chinese language, and Joachim Bouvet (1665-1730) and G.W. Leibniz’s (1646-1716) enthusiasm for the *Yì jīng* 易經. In terms of the branding of ‘philosophy,’ Philippe Couplet’s (1623-1694) *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus* was perhaps the first to identify a Chinese thinker as a ‘philosopher.’¹⁹ As for translating ‘philosophy’ into Chinese, the Jesuits used Neo-Confucian terms including *gé wù*

¹⁷ D. E. Mungello, *Curious Land: Jesuit Accommodation and the Origins of Sinology* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989), 13. Mungello dwells on the significance and general misunderstanding of the term ‘curious’ which was not used in the 20th century sense of “merely attention-arousing or prying,” but was instead used in the Latin sense of “*curiosus*, which referred to painstaking accuracy, attention to detail and skillful inquiry.” *Ibid.*, 14. It should not be surprising that we can see elements of this *curiosus* scholarship in the field of sinology today.

¹⁸ In Mungello’s own words: “The term ‘accommodation’ applies to the setting in China where Jesuit missionaries accommodated Western learning to the Chinese cultural scene and attempted to achieve the acceptance of Chinese literati through the Confucian-Christian synthesis. The term ‘proto-sinology’ applies to Europe where the assimilation of knowledge about China took place.” *Ibid.*, 15. Mungello explains that two key differences between “proto-sinology” and later sinology are the former’s orientation toward China insofar as its knowledge was compatible with European culture, and how the inquiry of China was somewhat restricted by such selectivity resulting in a more shallow understanding. Nevertheless, these proto-sinologists had opened the door for an intellectual exchange of ideas, allowing for dialogue between China and Europe.

¹⁹ The full title of this work in its final publication in Paris 1687 is *Confucius Sinarum philosophus sive scientia Sinensis latine exposita*, and includes Latin translations of three of the Four Books of Confucius (or perhaps more accurately, the Ruists), the *Dà xué* 大學, *Lúnyǔ* 論語, and *Zhōng yōng* 中庸, by a group of at least seventeen Jesuit missionaries, and was edited by Philippe Couplet. For a full account of the history of the *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus*, see Mungello, 247-99.

qióng lǐ 格物窮理 “to exhaust principles through the investigation of things,” and *lǐxué* 理學 “principle centered learning.”²⁰ But it was not until the turning of the nineteenth century where we see a full engagement by the Chinese themselves about how to perceive ‘philosophy’ in terms of their own literary thought and history.

0.2 On the Japanese and Chinese Translations of ‘Philosophy’ Into 哲學 *Tetsugaku* and *Zhéxué*

The role of the Meiji intellectuals in shaping the Chinese view of ‘Chinese philosophy’ cannot be underestimated. Yet what was initially a Japanese translation of the Western term ultimately evolved into a larger question of what kinds of thought could be subsumed into a somewhat abstract understanding of ‘philosophy.’ This section will address the Japanese influence as well as the Chinese appropriation to Classical Chinese thought.

Many Meiji scholars had studied abroad in European countries, and were exposed to the philosophy curriculum therefrom. This meant exposure to philosophy as an academic discipline, which included subjects such as logic, epistemology, methodology, et cetera. For many of these scholars, logic constituted an integral part of what philosophy ought to look like—a systematic representation of ideas and their relations.

²⁰ See John Makeham’s introduction to his *Learning to Emulate the Wise: The Genesis of Chinese Philosophy as an Academic Discipline in Twentieth-Century China* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2012), 3. Translations his.

0.2.1 On the Role of the Late Meiji Intellectual Climate and Its Influence on Twentieth Century Chinese Scholars

Let us examine briefly the genesis of the Japanese-Chinese term 哲學 *tetsugaku/zhexue*.²¹ The first person officially known to coin the term using the two Chinese graphs 哲學 was the Japanese scholar Nishi Amane 西周 (1829-1897).²²

Nishi no doubt encountered many difficulties in his translations of Western theoretical works. Finding a suitable translation for ‘philosophy’ proved to be particularly troublesome, and it seems that he was ambivalent about what kinds of thought he believed should belong to ‘philosophy.’ In particular, he seemed ambivalent as to whether what he ultimately called *tetsugaku* should be restricted to the Western discourses, or if it should entail Eastern thought as well. Initially, Nishi had referred to “philosophy” as the Western tradition of “the study of human nature and the principles of things” (*seiri no gaku* 生理之學), the terminology

²¹ Liu places this in the category of “Sino-Japanese-European loanwords in Modern Chinese.” These are Chinese loanwords from the Japanese who had used *kanji* to translate European words. See n. 9 above.

²² Nishi’s father was a samurai physician, and so at an early age Nishi was exposed to and trained in the Confucian classics. He was heavily influenced by his law and philosophy studies abroad at Leiden University, and when he returned back to Japan, he became known for his subsequent translations of Western political and philosophical works, including Simon Vissering’s *Volkenregt*, which was a collection of his lectures on international law, John Haven’s *Mental Philosophy*, John Stuart Mill’s *Utilitarianism*, and Auguste Comte’s *Cours de Philosophie Positive*. He also founded the Meirokusha 明六社 (Meiji Six Society) with other scholars, their journal *Meiroku zasshi* 明六雜誌 (March 1874 – November 1875) contained articles circulating ideas of the Western Enlightenment, and it was here that he published his translations of Western concepts and terminology. The term *tetsugaku* 哲學, shortened for *kitetsugaku* 希哲學, was first used by his friend and colleague, the statesman Tsuda Mamichi 津田真道 (1821-1903) at the Bansho Torishirabe-sho (Center for the Investigation of Western Books), but was not made widely known until Nishi’s publication of the *Hyakuichi Shinron* 百一新論. See Gino K. Piovesana, “The Beginnings of Western Philosophy in Japan: Nishi Amane, 1829-1897,” *International Philosophical Quarterly* (1962) 2:2, 295; and Barry D. Steben, “Nishi Amane and the Birth of ‘Philosophy’ and ‘Chinese Philosophy’ in Early Meiji Japan,” in *Learning to Emulate the Wise* (see note 17), 39-72. But the derivation of 希哲學 is in fact an inspiration from Zhōu Dūnyí’s 周敦頤 (1017-1073) use of 希 *xī* as a verb meaning ‘look up to; to admire; aspire to’ in his *Tōng shū* 通書. This will be further discussed below in §0.3. For a more detailed study of Nishi Amane’s life, see Thomas R. H. Havens, *Nishi Amane and Modern Japanese Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970).

reminiscent of Neo-Ruism.²³ Around the same time, in the *Hyakugaku renkan* 百一連環 he called it *kitetsugaku* きてつがく and *hirososhi* ヒロソヒ variously, in the sense of to love and seek wisdom.²⁴ Elsewhere, he seems to want to equate it with the Western branch of logic.²⁵ By 1874 he refers to ‘philosophy’ consistently as *tetsugaku* throughout his works. His formulation of what is and is not *tetsugaku* is complicated, and revealing of the theoretic tensions involved with a scholar attempting to construct a bridge between East and West. In his *Kaidaimon* 開題門, Nishi writes, “In the Eastern lands it is called *ru* 儒, and in the Western continents it is called philosophy 斐鹵蘇比 [=hirososhi]. Both are concerned with clarifying the way of Heaven and establishing the fundamental norms of human life 人極. In substance they are one. This way is coeval with the human race, and it can never be destroyed until the end of time.”²⁶ There are two interesting points here: First, Nishi identifies philosophy with a specific school of thought in China, Ruism, and this appears to be what he has in mind here when comparing the two traditions. Ostensibly for Nishi, the Japanese version of Ruism would be the Eastern counterpart to Western philosophy. Second, the word that Nishi uses for ‘philosophy’ is a transliteration, which seems to suggest that during this time, he might not have made up his mind on how to translate it, or rather he wanted to simply keep it as a loanword.

²³ Steben, “Nishi Amane” in *Learning to Emulate* (see n. 17), 41; for original text, see “Letter to Matsuoka Rinjirō” 松岡鑄次郎 (1862), in *Nishi Amane zenshū* (Tokyo: Munetaka shobō, 1960-1981): 1.8.

²⁴ Piovesana, 302.

²⁵ Piovesana, 302.

²⁶ Steben, “Nishi Amane” in *Learning to Emulate* (see n. 17), 48, his translation. The original passage reads: 東土謂之儒，西洲謂之斐鹵蘇比，皆明天道而立人極，其實一也，斯道也與生民並立，窮天不墜，所謂不可須臾離。 See Nishi Amane, *Kaidaimon* 開題門 in *Nishi Amane Zenshū* 西周全集 (Tokyo: Muketaka shobō, 1960): 1.19.

Barry thinks that in these distinctions and comparisons “what Nishi ultimately wanted was not to place any superior value over or to sever the relation between Eastern and Western thought, but rather to build a universal foundation drawn both from Western and Chinese philosophy for the continuing pursuit of truth that could incorporate, develop, and synthesize what is of value in both traditions.”²⁷ These tensions are the workings of Nishi as a philosopher as he attempts to synthesize his learnings from abroad with his childhood education back home. It is not merely a passive acceptance of foreign terms; it is creative act in and of itself.

As part of the academic curriculum, we see that by the late nineteenth century the prestigious Tokyo Imperial University 東京帝國大學 had included *Shina tetsugaku* 支那哲學 (Chinese philosophy) as a distinct discipline, belonging to the department of Japanese and Chinese Literature and Philosophy. A number of scholarly journals were founded, each bearing witness to the growing field, e.g. the *Tōyō tetsugaku* 東洋哲學 in 1894, *Tetsugaku zasshi* 哲學雜誌 in 1897, as well as a number of volumes of histories on *Shina tetsugaku*. Yet at the same time, there were also arguments against considering Classical Chinese Thought as philosophy, with claims that it was simplistic and naïve,²⁸ and “lacked a definite organizational system” 組織體系.²⁹ As Shinsai Gakujin 心齋學人 had written, “Although most of the masters and the one hundred schools have writings, they can be described merely as casual jottings. They do not venture beyond matter-of-factly shedding some light on a topic... [and] because they do not constitute works in which the guiding principles and detailed contents are clearly ordered, they

²⁷ Steben, “Nishi Amane” in *Learning to Emulate* (see n. 17), 49.

²⁸ Oyanagi Shigeta 小柳司氣太 (1870-1940), “Shina no tetsugaku to wa ikaga naru mono naru ka” 支那の哲学とは如何なる者なるか, *Rikugō zasshi* 六合雜誌 175 (1894): 34.

²⁹ Matsumoto Bunzaburō 松本文三郎, “Shina no tetsugaku ni tsuite (tsuzuku)” 支那哲学について(續), *Tōyō tetsugaku* 東洋哲學 5.4 (1898): 228.

cannot be called systematic and ordered. And even though Chinese Studies have systematic works such as the *Commentaries to the Book of Change*, they certainly cannot be compared to the writings of Western philosophy.”³⁰ Whatever the motivation behind such a claim, there seems to have been an undeniable tendency to equate philosophy with reason, logic, and systems.

The first Chinese scholar to bring back the concept of *tetsugaku*, now uttered as *zhéxué* in Chinese, was Huáng Zūnxiàn 黃遵憲 (1848-1905), a diplomat sent to Japan where he had observed the academic divisions of Tokyo Imperial University. One such division of relevance was the Faculty of Letters 文學部, which was further divided into three sections 科, *tetsugaku* being one section. Huáng explained *zhéxué* as that which explicated the “norms of the way” 道義.³¹ China soon followed suit, with Peking University being the first to establish a *zhéxué xì* 哲學系 in 1918.³² The introduction of the Dewey Decimal Classification into China in 1909 had also served as factor for the Chinese in rearticulating their literary tradition within the Western bibliographic framework. Of the *sì bù* 四部 schema, the *zǐ bù* 子部 was the most difficult to place. Ultimately, it was a question of how the Chinese viewed the various titles as what kinds of knowledge.³³

Thus, although the origins of *zhéxué* may have been Japanese, the Chinese had their fair share of shaping, and rearticulating what the term meant for them in their own context in regards

³⁰ As quoted and translated in Makeham, “The Role of Masters Studies in the Early Formation of Chinese Philosophy,” in *Learning to Emulate* (see note 17), 81. See also Shinsai Gakujin 心齋學人, “Shina *tetsugaku* no kenkyū” 階哲學の研究, *Tōyō *tetsugaku** 東洋哲學 6.7 (1899), 327.

³¹ Huáng Zūnxiàn 黃遵憲, *Riběn guó zhì* 日本國志 (Tianjin: Tianjin renmin chubanshe, 2005), 1:798.

³² For a list of the subjects that were offered between the years of 1914 to 1923 at Peking University, see Makeham, 22-25.

³³ By 1911, the Chinese libraries had a *zhéxué* category, though there was no “Chinese *zhéxué*” subcategory until 1929.

to their own heritage. The Meiji scholars had jumpstarted the thinking process, and it was then up to the Chinese scholars to make their own deliberations. Compilations of the history of a Chinese philosophy began in Japan at the end of the nineteenth century, and were picked up and modeled after by the Chinese.³⁴

We see this convention of designating the Masters as ‘philosophers’ beginning with at least Hu Shih, Fung Yu-lan, and others from the early twentieth century. It is interesting to note that the *zhūzǐ* seem to more often be considered as philosophical whereas the *jīngdiǎn* less so, with the exception of the *Lúnyǔ* 論語 and the *Mēngzǐ* 孟子, the latter of which can be considered to belong to the Masters. Moreover, there seems to be a general consensus about the value of the Warring States period as the breakthrough period for fresh and creative intellectual thought. Fung Yu-lan, K. C. Hsiao, A. C. Graham, and others all mark the beginning of the golden age of thought with Confucius (551-479 BCE). Thus it seems appropriate that if we are to designate the origin of Chinese ‘philosophical’ thought, what Hsiao has called “the period of creativity,”³⁵ we should begin historically with the period of the Spring and Autumn (the time of the historical Confucius, and the disintegration of the Zhou royal house), and intellectually with the text of the *Lúnyǔ*.³⁶ This burst of creativity coincides with Karl Jaspers famous phrase “Axial

³⁴ Meiji sinologists and Matsumoto Bunzaburō 松本文三郎 (1869-1944), Endō Ryūkichi 遠藤隆吉 (1874-1946), and Nakauchi Gi’ichi 中内義一 (1875-1937) all wrote their own versions of *Shina tetsugakushi* 支那哲學史 published between the years of 1890 to 1903. In China, we see Xiè Wúliàng’s 謝無量 (1884-1964) *Zhōngguó zhéxué shǐ* 中國哲學史, Chén Fúchén’s 陳黻宸 (1859-1917) *Zhūzǐ zhéxué* 諸子哲學 and *Zhōngguó zhéxué shǐ* 中國哲學史.

³⁵ Hsiao (see n. 7), 9. He further comments, “That the pre-Ch’in age was a period of creativity is so obvious that it scarcely seem necessary to discuss the point further. Yet Confucius said of himself that he was ‘a transmitter and not a maker’... Mo Tzu ‘applied the government of Hsia’... The Taoist and Legalist schools held the Yellow Emperor of antiquity in great reverence... Thus we see that the theories of all the schools of philosophy drew upon earlier origins and were not altogether new inventions of the minds of the times, theories simply spun out of the air.”

³⁶ As is the case with most if not all Warring States texts, the matter of authorship and date can only be approximated, the whole of any one text cannot be considered to represent a homogenous entity. This is why I say “intellectually with the text of the *Lúnyǔ*” since it is difficult to say the exact dates of its compilation.

Period” (from 800 to 200 BCE), and was a part of his larger project to claim a universal origin and trajectory of historical consciousness.³⁷

0.2.2 On the Problem of Whether or Not Zhūzǐ Xué 諸子學, or Masters Studies, Can Be Considered As ‘Philosophy’

In the previous section we briefly discussed the historical context of the Meiji scholars and how the socio-political changes of the Meiji restoration had altered their own views on the value of Chinese history and thought. Just as the Japanese no longer uncritically accepted their own tradition, which had contained many Chinese elements, the Chinese similarly did not passively swallow the claims of the Meiji scholars on their own tradition. We must look at how the Chinese scholars reacted to these claims on the Chinese literary tradition made by the Japanese, and to see how *zhūzǐ xué* 諸子學, or “Masters Studies,” was revived.

Generally speaking, ever since the Han dynasty the scholarly tradition has placed the texts of the Masters as subordinate to those of the *jīngdiǎn* 經典, or “Classics.”³⁸ But by the end

³⁷ Karl Jaspers, *The Origin and Goal of History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953). His argument for a universal history is based on an “article of faith that mankind has one single origin and one goal. Origin and goal are unknown to us, utterly unknown by any kind of knowledge. They can only be felt in the glimmer of ambiguous symbols. Our actual existence moves between these two poles; in philosophical reflection we may endeavor to draw closer to both origin and goal.” *Ibid.*, xv. By “Axial Period” is the “axis of history” around which the human being has acquired a distinctive self-consciousness in which he/she is essentially a thinking being capable of self-reflection. Taiwanese scholar Yu Ying-shih 余英時 has also incorporated Jasper’s terminology in his study on pre-Qin thought. He argues that we can consider this era as a “breakthrough” (突破 *tú pò*) originating in the split between Heaven and humans (not unlike Graham) in tracing the continuity and breaks from Shang to Zhou times. See Yu Ying-shih 余英時, *Lùn tiān rén zhī jì: Zhōngguó gǔ dài sī xiǎng qǐ yuán shì tàn* 論天人之際，中國古代思想起源試探 [Discussing the boundaries of Heaven and man: an investigation into the origins of Ancient Chinese thought] (Taipei: Guojia tushuguan chubanshe, 2015), 14-5.

³⁸ The notion of the *jīngdiǎn* as far as what it essentially means and what titles are counted as one is a rather complex issue. The defining principle of a *jīngdiǎn* is hard to pinpoint, the titles considered as a *jīngdiǎn* have varied and fluctuated over the entire literary history of China, beginning with the *Suí shū* 隋書 “*Jīng jì zhì*” 經籍志 (presented to the throne in 656) all the way up to Qing dynasty scholar Ruǎn Yuán’s authoritative *The Thirteen Classics* 十三經. As a bibliographical category, the earliest record of a *jīng* category is the schema of Wáng Jián’s 王儉 (452-489), but is no longer extant. We know that his system was to change Liú Xiù’s *liù yì* 六藝 schema to *jīngdiǎn* 經典. Amongst others, see Yáo Míngdá 姚名達, *Zhōngguó mùlù shǐ xué* 中國目錄史學, 78-83; and Tsien

of the nineteenth century, several thinkers began to find practical value in the Masters for relating to the influx of new ideas from the Western world. These thinkers included Tán Sītóng 譚嗣同 (1865-1898), Huáng Zūnxiàn, Sūn Yìràng 孫詒讓 (1848–1908), Zhāng Bǐnglín 章炳麟 (1848-1908), and others.³⁹ After the humiliating defeats in the second Opium War (1856-1860) and the first Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895), there was a serious grappling with the “backwardness” of China, coupled with the question of how she needed to progress in order to catch up with European civilization. Part of the solution involved a critical reassessment of the Ruist system of education.

The West had philosophy, which the Chinese believed was the *clavis* to their success and sophistication. ‘Philosophy’ is here equated mostly with logic, and an epistemology that was “orderly, systematic, and structured.” As Wáng Guówéi 王國維 (1877-1927) had written following Bunzaburō et al: “Philosophy is a type of learning that has always existed in China... Our ancient books, however, are loosely organized and lacking in structure, are damaged and incomplete. Although they contain truth, it is not easy to find. When compared to the splendid systematization and orderly formation of Western philosophy, there is no hiding which tradition of philosophy is formally superior.”⁴⁰ Those who found such a resemblance in Chinese texts

Tsuen-Hsien, “A History of Bibliographical Classification in China” in *The Library Quarterly* 22.4 (1952): 307-24. Etymologically, the word *jīng* 經 means the vertical warp threads of a loom that remain stationary, through which the horizontal weft, *wéi* 緯, threads are woven. The word *diǎn* 典 can be translated as ‘authoritative text, canon; testament’ with an extended and related meaning of ‘standard, norm.’ If we wish to keep with the weaving analogy, we could say that the *jīngdiǎn* are the authoritative texts that serve as the basic foundation through which other texts are fabricated in producing a complete system of knowledge.

³⁹ Tán, Huáng, and Sūn all had varying degrees of belief in the “Chinese origins of Western thinking” contention. In particular, Huáng and Sūn placed high values on the text of the *Mòzǐ*, arguing that here was the beginning of logic the West had so esteemed. Zhāng looks to the *Xúnzǐ* as encompassing a well-developed system of logic. For a more extensive summary, see Makeham, “The Role of Masters Studies,” in *Learning to Emulate* (see n. 17), 86-90.

would argue that there is such a thing as Chinese philosophy, and those who did not would argue the alternative, that there is no Chinese ‘philosophy.’ Of course, other factors play into this identification or otherwise. If we ignore the socio-political factors, the central hypothesis appeared to be: “if there is logic, then there is philosophy,” and *mutandis mutatis*. In addressing Classical Chinese texts, the answers had ranged from “none,” to “there once was, but became lost, underdeveloped, or neglected,” to “surely yes.”⁴¹ Each thinker embodied a set of factors that give different conclusions based on each individual’s beliefs, values, and understanding of the Masters, and how it compares to the European discourse.

We will now look at two case studies, Hu Shih and Fu Ssu-nien, the former as an example of an advocate, the latter as critic. While studying abroad in New York, Hu Shih had written his doctoral dissertation for the philosophy department at Columbia University on what he saw as the logical method inherent in Classical Chinese thought.⁴² During his later years at the Academia Sinica in Taipei, he published an expanded and polished version of his dissertation in Chinese, titled *Zhōngguó gǔdài zhéxué shǐ* 中國古代哲學史. In the introduction to *The Development of Logical Method of Ancient China* he stressed the importance of reviving the

⁴⁰ As quoted and translated in Makeham, *ibid.*, 83. See also Wáng Guówéi, “Zhéxué biànhuò” 哲學辨惑 (1903) in *Wáng Guówéi zhéxué měixué lùnwén jíyì* 王國維哲學美學論文輯軼, compiled by Fó Chū 佛籙 (Shanghai: Huadong Shifandaxue chubanshe, 1993), 5-6.

⁴¹ Those who refused to identify the label ‘philosophy’ with Chinese thought included Liáng Qǐchāo (1873-1929), Liú Shīpéi 劉師培 (1884-1919), and Fu Ssu-nien (1896-1950). Hu Shih (1891-1962), and Yán Fù 嚴復 (1853-1921) were more careful in saying “maybe,” and folks such as Zhāng Bóyén, Fung Yu-lan were quite enthusiastic in confirming the label ‘philosophy.’

⁴² His dissertation was submitted and accepted by Columbia University in 1917, and later published in 1928 by the Oriental Book Company in Shanghai as *The Development of the Logical Method in Ancient China*. Within the lapse of eleven years, Hu Shih tells us in “A Note” dated January 1922 at the National University of Peking that he had wished to make revisions after having “continued research and maturer judgment as well as better facilities”. But his “English and American friends in China who have read this volume in the manuscript form, have repeatedly persuaded me to publish it as it was written four years ago. I have now decided to do so with much reluctance, but not without the consolation that the main position taken in this dissertation and the critical methods in the treatment of its source-materials have receive the warm approval of Chinese scholars...” See his *Development of Logical Method*. The “Note” is not paginated, but can be found at the beginning of the book after the table of contents.

“great philosophical schools” of the Warring States that were not part of the orthodox Confucian tradition. He writes that this “revival... is absolutely necessary because it is in these schools that we may hope to find the congenial soil in which to transplant the best products of occidental philosophy and science.”⁴³ For Hu, “Chinese philosophy,” i.e. works of the various masters, was key to developing a logical system of thought, which in turn would help China rise to the top alongside the West. To illustrate his point, he then attempts to systematize the intellectual thread of the Warring States period, drawing out an inner logic he believed was inherent.⁴⁴ Moreover, he believed that Chinese philosophy should be established as an academic discipline. He also believed that it is only by means of a comparative approach that the “Chinese philosopher and students of philosophy [can] truly feel at ease with the new methods and instrumentalities of speculation and research.”⁴⁵ While Hu Shih’s agenda has been viewed as a political one, such a standpoint only simplifies his motive without doing justice to Hu as a thinker, one who was truly attempting to grapple with the intellectual tradition of his country on the one hand, and on the other trying to make sense of the international status of China during modernization.

On the opposite end of the spectrum was a younger Fu Ssu-nien, who at first was an enthusiastic student of Hu Shih at Peking University, but in his later years would dismiss the idea of identifying the Masters as ‘Chinese philosophy.’ Generally speaking, he was quite resistant against the trend of equating Chinese thought with that of the West, and strongly opposed the establishment of Chinese philosophy as a distinct department at the Academia Sinica in Taipei.

⁴³ Hu (see n. 42), 8.

⁴⁴ Makeham traces the development of Hu Shih’s thinking as influenced by his studies from abroad, and his own subsequent rearticulation of what a history of philosophy ought to look like, reapplying these ideas to his own country. See Makeham, “Hu Shih and the Search for System” in *Learning to Emulate* (see n. 17), 163-186.

⁴⁵ Hu (see n. 42): 9.

Fu's stance was of the minority during those times, but one that was so extreme that we must take a closer look at his argument.

When Fu was a student at the Preparatory School of the Imperial University (later, Peking University) in the Department of Chinese Literature 國文門, he was a roommate of Gù Jiégāng 顧頡剛 (1893-1980) who at the time was in the Department of Philosophy 哲學門. Together, they attended Hu Shih's lectures on the history of philosophy. Fu became an eager follower and defender of the young professor who had just returned from abroad. Yet it seems that within the years that Fu himself would study abroad in Europe, Fu had developed a strong resistance to the value of Western philosophy, becoming rather critical of Hu's attempts to rearticulate the discourse of the various masters as a history of philosophy. As far as Fu was concerned, philosophy was merely a "by-product of language" 語言之副產品 that was caught up in unnecessarily complex and vague grammatical expressions. For him, the Chinese language was in no way 'philosophical,' the masters definitely not 'philosophers.'⁴⁶

This did not mean that he did not value the study of the masters; rather, he simply believed that Chinese thought ought to be investigated in its own terms without having to be compared to other civilizations, devoid of foreign neologisms. In a letter to Gù Jiégāng, after expressing his disagreement with Hu Shih, he declared, "China did not originally have a so-called philosophy. Thank god our people had such healthy habits."⁴⁷ Over the years of

⁴⁶ See Fu Ssu-nien's "Lùn zhéxué nǎi yǔyán zhī fùchǎnpǐn; Xīyáng zhéxué jǐ Yìndù Rì'ěrmàn yǔyán zhī fùchǎnpǐn; Hànyǔ shì fēi zhéxué dé yǔyán; Zhàn guó zhūzǐ yì fēi zhéxué jiā" 論哲學乃語言之副產品，西洋哲學既印度日耳曼語之副產品，漢語實非哲學的語言，戰國諸子亦非哲學家, in *Fù Sīnián quánjí* 傅斯年全集, edited by Ōuyáng Zhé-shēng 歐陽哲生 (Changsha: Hunan jiaoyu chubanshe, 2003), 2:252.

⁴⁷ Fu Ssu-nien, "Yu Gu Jiegang lun gu shi shu" 與顧頡剛論古史書, in *Fù Sīnián quánjí* (see n. 42), 1:459.

correspondence with Hu, he seems to have made a marked influence and significant impression, for in Hu's later years, his stance toward Western philosophy made a sharp turn.⁴⁸

Yet as Carine Defoort notices, Fu Ssu-nien's view on 'philosophy' was much more ambivalent, his distaste for the labeling of 'Chinese philosophy' not entirely straightforward. For Fu, there seem to have been two kinds of 'philosophy.' The first is the institutional embodiment of philosophy as an academic discipline. The second is what 'philosophy' should be ideally. The latter was the one viewed more positively. It is not quite clear just what this 'ideal philosophy' should look like, for he never gave a full-fledged definition of 'philosophy.' He did write the following: "If we try to compare all the questions contained in what the West calls learning of the love-of-wisdom with the masters of the Warring States, Qin, and Han, down to the *míng jiā* 名家 of the Wèi and Jìn, and the *lǐ xué* 理學 of the Song and Míng, [we have to conclude that] a love-of-wisdom theory, such as that of Socrates, existed for the masters until the *lǐ xué* of the Song and Míng."⁴⁹ Consider this in relation to Hu Shih's definition of philosophy as a search for the tao "which simply means a way or method; a way of individual life, of social contact, of public activity and government, etc."⁵⁰ It is this insight that I wish to take away from Fu Ssu-nien.

⁴⁸ As Hu Shih had responded to Fu Ssu-nien in a letter, "What entangles people most of all is this web that spiders spit out of their belly and in which they entangle themselves. Over the last few years I have done my best to learn to become good at forgetting--for six to seven years I have not read Western philosophy books. I have removed quite a lot of the Western spider web, which makes me really happy." Carine Defoort's translation. See her "Fu Sinian's Views on Philosophy, Ancient Chinese Masters, and Chinese Philosophy" in *Learning to Emulate the Wise*, 291. See also Hu Shih, "Zhi Fù Sinián" 致傅斯年 in *Hú Shì quán jí* 胡適全集, 44 vols., edited by Ji Xiànlín 季羨林 (Hebei: Anhui jiaoyu chubanshe, 2003), 23:499.

⁴⁹ I use Defoort's translation in her "Fu Sinian's Views on Philosophy," in *Learning to Emulate* (see n. 44), 298. The brackets are hers, the italics mine. The original quote can be found in Fu Ssu-nien's "Lùn zhéxué nǎi yǔyán zhī fùchǎnpǐn; Xīyáng zhéxué jǐ Yīndù Rì'ěrmàn yǔyán zhī fùchǎnpǐn; Hànyǔ shì fēi zhéxué dé yǔyán; Zhàn guó zhūzǐ yì fēi zhéxué jiā" 論哲學乃語言之副產品，西洋哲學既印度日耳曼語之副產品，漢語實非哲學的語言，戰國諸子亦非哲學家, in *Fù Sīnián quánjí* (see n. 42), 2:253.

⁵⁰ Hu (see n.42), 9.

We can see the tensions and ambivalence within Fu as telling of the question of Chinese philosophy beginning with China's exposure to the West, and even up to present times.

On the one hand it is understandable and commendable that folks following the attitude of Fu Ssu-nien would deny applying Western labels to Classical Chinese thought, advocating instead to use indigenous methodology and terminology. On the other hand, it would be unfair to simply dismiss the phenomenon of the birth and shaping of Chinese philosophy for it has taken substantial presence and made undeniable influences on academia today. Defoort has illustrated in another article the sensitivities surrounding all sides of the argument, each proving to be laden with multiple complex factors that involve historical, social, political, as well as cultural issues.⁵¹ Is there a common ground upon which disagreeing proponents can engage in a meaningful discussion?

0.3 On the Lack of Attention to the Etymology of *Zhéxué*, and How a Deeper Analysis May Help to Foster an Alternative Understanding of Classical Chinese Thought.

Scholars who have addressed the question of whether we can rightfully understand Classical Chinese thought as a kind of 'philosophy' have focused primarily on the meaning of it as a Western concept with Western origins. Not many have looked at the Japanese-Chinese translation *tetsugaku/zhéxué* 哲學 and its etymology. If we are to determine the appropriateness of classifying Classical Chinese thought as 'philosophy,' we must also look at the meaning of the translated term within the lexical and semantic context of the Chinese language.

⁵¹ Carine Defoort, "Is there such a thing as Chinese philosophy? Arguments of an implicit debate." *Philosophy East and West* 51.3 (July 2001): 393-413.

In section 0.2.1 we saw the different arguments of the Meiji intellectual discourse about the role of the Chinese thought as it may or may not be the counterpart to Western philosophy. We also saw how the Chinese scholars themselves confronted these same questions, conclusions of which differed from individual to individual. Although Nishi Amane is the one who officially propagated the use of *tetsugaku* as ‘philosophy’ as early as 1862 in his lecture notes, his friend and colleague Tsuda Mamichi 津田真道 (1829-1903) might have been the first to suggest this term around 1861.⁵² *Tetsugaku* is a contracted form of *kitetsugaku* 希哲學, which was in turn inspired by the Northern Song dynasty scholar Zhōu Dūnyí 周敦頤. In a footnote, Makeham gives a reference to Saito Tsuyoshi’s study on Nishi Amane noting that in Nishi’s “1873 manuscript *Seisei hatsu’un* 生性發蘊 [On the relation of the physical and the spiritual] Nishi explained that the term ‘philosophy’ derives from the Greek *philos* ‘to love’ and *Sophos* ‘wise’ and concluded that the learning or science of philosophy means to love the wise. Nishi further related that the meaning is compatible with Zhou Dunyi’s notion of 希賢 ‘to emulate the worthies.’”⁵³ In the “*Zhì xué*” 志學 section of his *Tōng shū* 通書, he gives an introductory summary saying “the following will talk about the correctness of what one learns, and thereupon will make visible the heart of the sages and the worthies” 此言所學之正而見聖賢之心也. The word 希 *xī* appears in the following line as a verb meaning ‘to emulate’: “The sages emulate the Heavens, the worthies emulate the sages, and the scholar-officials emulate the worthies” 聖希天，賢希聖，士希賢.⁵⁴ Here, *xī* has the primary meaning of ‘to watch, speculate.’ It also has a

⁵² See Makeham’s introduction in his *Learning to Emulate* (see n. 17), 4, 27 n12.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 27 n12. Translation in the brackets are Makeham’s.

⁵⁴ Zhōu Dūnyí, *Tōngshū shùjiě*, in *SKQS* 697:34a-35b. The primary definition for 希 *xī* is ‘few; scarce.’ Here, it is sandwiched three times between two other items, both of which are nouns, and thus in this location

secondary but related meaning of ‘to admire, emulate.’ In the context of the *Tōngshū* it can be understood as a guideline for scholarly conduct. The correct behavior ought to be modeled after the worthies, who in turn are modeled after the sages, and who finally look up to the Heavens and follow its patterns. It is a concern with proper action and how one should live one’s life. Taken together as a verb-object combination, 希哲 *xī zhé* would mean ‘to admire the wise.’⁵⁵ Taking Zhōu’s passage into consideration, the role of the scholar is to follow after the footsteps of the sages and the worthies. At the bottom of the tricolon, and already twice removed from Heaven, the *shì* cannot completely know the secret ways of Heaven; he can only stand from below as a spectator and observe in awe and admiration. This is not far from the Socratic “love of wisdom” and may have been what Nishi originally had in mind when he was trying to translate ‘philosophy.’

Now let us look at the word 哲學 *zhéxué* insofar as it consists of Chinese words whose meanings can be analyzed.

Shuō wén jiě zì 說文解字 entry for 哲⁵⁶:

哲，知也。从口折聲。

(following a subject and preceding an object) it must be functioning as a transitive verb meaning ‘to look up to; admire; aspire.’ Another possibility is to take the formula “X *xī* Y” where X is still the subject, but with *xī* functioning as a modifier to Y, ‘the scarceness/rarity of Y.’ With two nouns side-by-side, we could then understand it appositionally, X is *xī*-Y (with an implied 也). The translation would be something like “the sages are the scarcity of Heaven,” and *mutandis mutatis*. The third possibility is “to take X as *xī*-Y.” We would then have something like “to take the sage as the scarcity of Heaven” etc. Here, the former construction of subject-verb-direct object seems more likely and more sensible given the context.

⁵⁵ As we have already established the fact that *xī* must be functioning as a transitive verb after a subject noun, if what follows is also a noun this noun must be functioning as a direct object. Here it is *zhé*, meaning ‘wise, possessing discernment of what is true and proper; insightful.’ Thus, we can understand the phrase 希哲 as ‘to admire the wise.’

⁵⁶ Dùan Yùcái 段玉裁, *Shuō wén jiě zì zhù* 說文解字注, edited by Yuen Kuo-hua 袁國華 (Taipei: Yiwen yinshuhang, 2001), 57.

The graph 哲 *zhé* < **trat* means ‘to know.’ It is derived from 口, 折 < **tet* is phonophoric.

The following is Duàn Yùcái’s (1735-1815) commentary:

哲，知也。釋言曰。哲，智也。方言曰。哲，知也。古智知通用。从口。斲聲。
按凡从折之字皆當作斤斲艸。各本篆文皆作手旁。用斲改篆也。今悉正之。陟列切。
十五部。⁵⁷

[In the SWJZ] “哲 means to know 知.” The *Shì yán* [of the *Éryǎ* 爾雅] says that “哲 means to know 智.” [Yáng Xióng’s] *Fāng yán* says that “哲 means to know 知.”⁵⁸ The ancient [graph] 智 is interchangeable with [the graph] 知. [In the SWJZ] “从口，斲聲.” In general, characters that come from [the phonetic element] 折 ought to be written in seal script 斲. In all editions the seal script form is written with a 手 ‘radical.’ This is the case of using the *lì* form (clerical script) to write the seal script. Now, I have completed and corrected it. The

⁵⁷ There are two subsequent entries in the *Shuō wén* with seemingly related words: The first is for 慙 *zhé*: “慙，哲 sometimes comes from 心” 哲或从心. Duàn’s commentary says, “the *Yùnhuì* cites *SWJZ* and defines it according to the 心 *xīn* component. 慙 *zhé* means ‘respect.’ I suspect that this is an error, and that 哲 *zhé* is a loan and borrowed graph (*jiǎ jiè*).” 韻會引說文古以此為哲字，按心部云慙敬也，疑敬是本義，以為哲是假借. The second is for 囿: “囿 is the ancient form for 哲, and it comes from three 吉” 古文哲从三吉. Duàn’s commentary says, “sometimes you can reduce it by writing 喆” 或省之作喆. It seems that there is some semantic relation between these three characters, and would be interesting and worthwhile to delve into a further investigation on Warring States usages.

⁵⁸ Yáng Xióng records that *zhé* < **tet* is a Song and Qi dialect word for 知 *zhī* < **tre*. “*Dóng*, *xiào*, and *zhé* mean ‘to know.’ In the state of Chu, they say *dóng*, or *xiào*. Among the states of Qi and Song, they say *zhé*” 黨，曉，哲：知也。楚謂之黨，或曰曉，齊宋之間謂之哲. For the word 黨 *dǎng*, Qing scholar Hú Wényīng’s 胡文英 *Wú xià fāng yán kǎo* 吳下方言考 [A study of the dialects south of Wu] gives a sound gloss for 黨 as 董 *dǒng*, with a comment “to ‘not know’ is construed as *bù dǒng*” 不曉為不黨. See *Yáng Xióng fāng yán kǎo* 揚雄方言考, edited by Huá Xuéchéng 華學誠 et al. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2005), 2:9-10. 黨 pronounced as *dóng* and glossed as ‘to know’ is phonophoric and means the same thing as modern Chinese 懂 *dǒng* ‘to know.’ For reasons of time and scope, the linguistic relation between these two words must be saved for another study.

pronunciation is the initial of 陟 with the final of 列. It is in the *Shī jīng* rime group number 15.

The *Hànyǔ dàcídiǎn* 漢語大辭典 entry gives us the following for the graph 哲⁵⁹:

1. 明智，有智慧。Illuminated wisdom; to have wisdom.
2. 賢明的人，有智慧的人。A person who is worthy and clear-sighted; a person who has wisdom.
3. 知道，瞭解。To know, to understand.

There is nothing about systems, logic, epistemology, or anything else associated with the modern divisions of philosophy. As a noun, the word *zhé* means “illuminated wisdom; the possession of wisdom,” and in definition (2) meaning “one who is worthy and perceptive/clear-sighted.” Taken together with 學 *xué* “learning, study,” we can understand it as “the study of illuminated wisdom,” or “the study of the worthy/wise person”—study here meaning to learn by observing and imitating.

* * *

My hope is to propose to rearticulate ‘philosophy’ in a way that will open up a possibility for a common understanding, and a chance for proponents in each field to come into dialogue, and listen to what others may have to say about this issue. For perhaps we have been wrong all this time. Perhaps we have been focusing too much on ‘philosophy’ as determined by academic institutions as a body of knowledge divided branches such as epistemology, metaphysics, logic, etc. Institutionalized ‘philosophy’ has become the culprit in restricting the possibility of a more

⁵⁹ I have only included relevant portions of the entry. For the full entry, please see s.v. the *Hànyǔ dàcídiǎn* 漢語大辭典, edited by Luó Zhúfēng 羅竹風 (Shanghai: Cishu chubanshe, 1986-1993), 3:350-3.

open-minded understanding. Rarely have we looked at philosophy in the most ordinary sense of a way of life that is tied to a life of the heart/mind. It is a disposition of the mind that in its contemplation of its relation to the world – to heaven, to earth, to other human beings – reflects at its very core a love for wisdom.

There is nothing more to philosophy than exposing the limits of what we conceive of as knowledge, and to live in this manner is to continuously strive to learn and chase after the infinitude of inconceivable “truths,” while knowing that the end to this chase is unreachable, and accepting it as such, accepting the ignorance of the mind as an irreparable condition.

THE TEXT

1.1 On the Question of the Man Zhuāng Zhōu, and the Text *Zhuāngzǐ*: Historical Records, and Textual Transmission.

The earliest biography of Zhuāng Zhōu is found in the *Shǐjì*, and the record of the text *Zhuāngzǐ* (hereafter, Zz) is found in Bān Gù's 班固 (32-92 CE) abridgment of Liú Xīn's 劉歆 (ca. 50 BCE - 23 CE) *Qī lüè* 七略 the *Hànshū* "Yìwénzhì."⁶⁰ Based on traditional sources, here is what we can piece together about Zhuāng Zhōu. His courtesy name (*zì* 字) was Zǐxiū 子休, and he lived around the times of King Huì of Liáng 梁惠王 (370-319 BCE), and King Xuān of Qí 齊宣王 (r. 319-301).⁶¹ He had temporarily served as an attendant of the Lacquer Gardens, and as a minister of King Wēi of Chǔ 楚威王 (r. 339-329). He also seems to have been well acquainted with Huì Shī 惠施. We find the first classification of the text Zz as belonging to the *daò jiā* 道家 "daò specialists" in the "Yìwénzhì."⁶² The "Yìwénzhì" lists the corpus of Zz as consisting of a total of

⁶⁰ Unfortunately, the *Qī lüè* 七略 is no longer extant. The *Qī lüè* was also based on Liú Xīn's father, Liú Xiàng 劉向 (ca. 79-8 BCE) who was commissioned by Han Emperor Chéng 漢成帝 (r. 33-7 BCE) to compile a list of all the books in the Han imperial archive. We now only have Bān Gù's edited version.

⁶¹ In Lù Déming's biography of Zhuāngzǐ in his "Preface" to the *Jīngdiǎn shì wén* 經典釋文, we find a commentary by Wú Chéngshì 吳承仕 (1884-1939) that says 太史公云 字子休, but this line is no longer present in the *Shǐjì*. See Lù Déming 陸德明, *Jīngdiǎn shì wén xù lù shù zhèng* 經典釋文序錄疏證, comm. Wú Chéngshì 吳承仕 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2008), 141. Also, in Chéng Xuányīng's 成玄英 *Zhuāngzǐ shù xù* 莊子疏序, in the "Yuè shì jiā" of the *Shǐjì* 史記越世家, as well as Sīmǎ Zhēn's 司馬貞 "Suó yǐn" 索隱 are references to Zhuāng Zhōu as Zǐxiū. On his dating, Wang Shu-min 王叔岷 speculates that Zhuāng Zhōu was probably born a few years after Mencius (372-289), but died before him. Wang gives an estimation of c. 368-288. He was a native of Mèng district in the Sòng 宋 state of the Warring States period, which became state of Liáng in the Hàn dynasty. This is present day Shāndōng, north of the Hézé district 荷澤縣. Wang Shu-min 王叔岷, *Xiān Qín dào fǎ sī xiàng jiàng gǎo* 先秦道家思想講稿 (Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiu yuan Zhongguo wen zhe suo, 1992).

⁶² *Hanshu* 30:1730.

52 *piān*.⁶³ This version was probably then edited and revised by Guō Xiàng 郭象 (d. 312 CE), Cūi Zhuàn 崔譔 (3rd to 4th century CE), and Xiàng Xiù 向秀 (ca. 221- ca.300). Our earliest extant edition is Guō’s version containing only 33 *piān*.

Built on these textual evidences alone, it is difficult to say whether there really was a man named Zhuāng Zhōu, and even if such a person existed, whether or not he was the sole author of the text of Zz. Because the earliest official record of such a text was written some four hundred years after the purported compilation of the Zz, it is thus difficult to say anything about the degree of accuracy, or reliability of the traditional records. The homogeneity of the text was already questioned beginning in the Northern Song with Sū Shì 蘇軾 (1037-1101), who in his “Zhuāngzǐ sī tang jì” 莊子祠堂記 had suggested that the sections “Ràng wáng” 讓王, “Dào Zhǐ” 盜跖, “Shuō jiàn” 說劍, and “Yúfū” 漁夫 seemed out of place with the other parts.⁶⁴ The Ming dynasty scholar Lǐ Zhuōwú 李卓吾 (1527-1602) pointed out that the diction of the outer and mixed sections were closer to the “Daoists” of Qin and Han than to the writings of the pre-Qin period.⁶⁵ By the time we get to the Qing dynasty, scholars including Wáng Fūzhī 王夫之 (1619-1692), Yáo Nài 姚鼐 (1731-1819), and others continued critical investigations into the problems of textual authenticity.

The earliest extant edition was compiled by Guō Xiàng 郭象 (d. 312 CE), with seven “Inner”, fifteen “Outer”, and eleven “Mixed” chapters. Guō’s rendition is the earliest and fullest

⁶³ This was probably the version that Liú Ān 劉安 (179-122 BCE) had at his court, and the one that Sīmǎ Biāo 司馬彪, and Mr. Mèng 孟氏 had used.

⁶⁴ *Dōngpō qī jī* 東坡七集 in *SBBY* 372:7. See also Gang Seong-jo 姜聲調, *Sū Shì dé Zhuāngzǐ* 蘇軾的莊子 (Taipei: Wenjin chubanshe, 1999).

⁶⁵ Guān Fēng 關鋒, “Zhuāngzǐ wài zá piān chū tàn” 莊子外雜篇初探 in *Zhuāngzǐ zhéxué tāolùn jí* 莊子哲學討論集 (Hong Kong: Wenchang shuju, 1961), 65.

commentary extant, with annotations explaining puzzling items. All other editions are derived from Guō's, and it is evident that he did some major revisions to the sources he had on hand. According to Graham, the text of *Zhuāngzǐ* that we have today is probably as it was in c. 300 CE.⁶⁶ It appears that by Guō's times, the text was already confusing and difficult to understand. In its early form the text probably existed as fragmented writings, later collected in the early Han by what H. D. Roth calls the "eclectic Daoists" along with some of their own writings. Roth suggests that the "eclectic Daoists" were in fact not the compilers. Rather, the text in its current entirety was compiled at the court of Liú Ān in c. 130 BC. Roth further argues that the Syncretist *Zhuāngzǐ* (nos. 12-16, 33) and the *Huáinánzǐ* were part of Huáng-Lǎo lineage of Daoism during early Han.⁶⁷ This would suggest that the ideas in the text represent different strata in the development of early Daoist thought.⁶⁸ The *Huáinánzǐ* seems to include material adapted from *Zhuāngzǐ*, so the court of Liú Ān probably had an earlier version. Lǐ Shàn's 李善 (d. 689) commentary to the *Wénxuǎn* 文選 includes two fragmented essays on the *Zhuāngzǐ*, and is

⁶⁶ A. C. Graham, *Chuang-tzu: The Seven Inner Chapters and other writings from the book Chuang-tzu* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1981), 29.

⁶⁷ The term "Huáng-Lǎo" has been used beginning with the discovery of the Mǎwángduī silk manuscripts (henceforth, MWD) in the summer of 1972. There in tomb 3, four texts were bound to a copy of the *Lǎozǐ*, and some scholars believe them to be the four lost texts of Huángdì, recorded in the *Yiwénzhì* as the *Huángdì sì jīng* 黃帝四經. The catch-all term seems to be a mixture of the *Lǎozǐ* and the texts of Huángdì. But as Tu Wei-ming 杜維明 has noted, the four attached texts found in MWD include much more complex and sophisticated ideas than propounded in the *Lǎozǐ*, though it is evident that these manuscripts contain some kind of fusion between the *Lǎozǐ* and the *Hánfēizǐ*. Thus one should be meticulous in assigning the term "Huáng-Lǎo," and be clear with what one means by "lineage." The earliest appearance of "Huáng-Lǎo" together was in Han dynasty scholar Wáng Chōng's 王充 (27-100 CE) *Lùn Héng*, 論衡 "Qiǎn gào" 讖告: 夫天道、自然也，無為。如讖告人，是有為，非自然也。黃、老之家，論說天道，得其實矣。 Moreover, what is referred to as the "Huáng-Lǎo" thought or lineage may or may not be what was current during the Warring States to Western Han. More scholarship simply still needs to be done before we can make a definitive claim. For more discussion, see Tu Wei-ming, "The 'Thought of Huang-Lao': A Reflection on the Lao Tzu and Huang Ti Texts in the Silk Manuscripts of Ma-wang-tui," *JAS* 39.1 (1979): 95-110. Kidder Smith also notes that the term "Huáng-Lǎo" only occurs in the *Shiji* and with a different meaning. See his article "Sima Tan and the Invention of Daoism, 'Legalism,' et cetera," *JAS* 92.1 (2003): 129-56.

⁶⁸ See Harold Roth, "Who Compiled the Chuang tzu", in *Chinese Texts and Philosophical Contexts*, ed. Henry Rosemont, Jr. (La Salle, Illinois: Open Court Press, 1992), 79-128.

attributed to Liú Ān.⁶⁹ The alternative honorific title of *Nánhuá zhēn jīng* 南華真經 followed the imperial edict of Emperor Xuánzōng 玄宗 (r. 712-756) in 742.⁷⁰

As reference, I have included a translation of the biographical entry from the *Shǐjì*:

莊子者，蒙人也，名周。周嘗為蒙漆園吏，與梁惠王、齊宣王同時。其學無所不闕，然其要本歸於老子之言。故其著書十餘萬言，大抵率寓言也。作漁父、盜跖、胠篋，以詆訛孔子之徒，以明老子之術。畏累虛、亢桑子之屬，皆空語無事實。然善屬書離辭，指事類情，用剝剝儒、墨，雖當世宿學不能自解免也。其言洸洋自恣以適己，故自王公大人不能器之。⁷¹

Zhuāngzǐ was a native of Méng, and his name was Zhōu. Zhōu was once an attendant of the Lacquer Gardens,⁷² and lived during the times of King Huì of Liáng, and King Xuān of Qí. There was nothing that his learning did not encompass, and his key compositions belonged to the sayings of Lǎozǐ. Thus, his writings of some tens of thousands of words are mostly allegories. His writings, "Yúfū," "Dào zhì," and "Qū qié" slander and defame the

⁶⁹ This is according to Roth's bibliographic entry to the *Zhuāngzǐ* in *Early Chinese Texts: A bibliographic guide*, edited by Michael Loewe (Berkeley: Society for the Study of Early China, 1993), 58. I have yet to find the exact fragments in the *Wénxuǎn*. Wang Shu-min has also collected all the variant readings and fragments from other texts in his appendix to his *Zhuāngzǐ jiāo quán* (Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan, 1988), 3:1383-1414.

⁷⁰ The imperial edict was issued by the Tang Emperor Xuánzōng 唐玄宗 (r. 712-756) in an effort to elevate various Daoist masters and their works into canons (*jīng*).

⁷¹ *Shǐjì* 63.2143.

⁷² According to the *Shǐjì* commentary following the *Dì lǐ zhì* 地理志, Méng belonged to the state of Liáng. In Simā Zhēn's *Suóyǐn* 索引 according to Liú Xiàng's *Bié lù* 別錄, Zhuāng Zhōu was from the Méng district of the state of Sòng. The discrepancy between location of Méng can be accounted by the fact that Sòng was conquered by the state of Liáng. Zhāng Shǒujié 張守節 gives a note in his *Shǐjì zhèngyì* 史記正義 saying that the Lacquer Gardens was located in the Méng district.

disciples of Confucius in order to elucidate the art of Lǎozǐ. The compositions of “Wèi lèi xū” and “Gēng sāng zǐ” are all but empty words lacking reality.⁷³ Nevertheless, he was skilled at composing writings and arranging words, and in indicating affairs and categorizing situations, used these means to peel and strip off [the teachings of] the Ruists and Mohists, although the current state of the world’s teachings cannot untie themselves from this. His sayings are free and unrestrained, self-indulgent in order to accommodate himself. Thus, from kings to dukes, to great men, none are able to use him [as an advisor].

1.2 On The Textual Scholarship and Traditional Interpretation of the Text of *Zhuāngzǐ*

The traditional understanding of the *Zhuāngzǐ* beginning with Sīmǎ Qiān is that it is a single text, compiled by a single person by the name of Zhuāng Zhōu. This suggests that the entire corpus represents a homogeneous system, or continuity of thought by one person. Yet as we have seen above, since as early as the Tang dynasty there were already suspicions about the fragmented nature of the text, although the critique does not fully mature until the Qing dynasty.

The textual scholarship behind the question of authorship and compilation is complicated, and has already been explored in depth by many scholars. Because this thesis is not a textual analysis, I will not spend extended time illustrating the difficulties surrounding claims of whether there was or was not a man named Zhuāng Zhōu who wrote the *Zz*. Instead, I will proceed by

⁷³ The commentary tells us that “Wèi lèi xū” 畏累虛 is the name of a chapter in the *Zz*, and also refers to Lǎozǐ’s (Lǎo Dān) disciple by the name of Wèi lèi 畏累. This chapter is no longer extant in our received version. The chapter recorded here as 亢桑子 is also not in the received text, but the commentary tells us that this *pian* is construed as 庚桑 in Wáng Shào’s 王劭 version. The *Zhèngyì* says that a certain man by the name of Gēng Sāng belonging to the state of Chǔ 庚桑楚 was also one of Lǎozǐ’s disciple who lived in the northern mountain of Wèi lèi. The actual location of this mountain is unclear. The received *Zz* does indeed have a section titled “Gēng sāng chǔ.” Moreover, we are given a sound gloss for 亢 as phonophoric with 庚 gēng < kaeng < *kʰraŋ, and thus should be pronounced in Modern Mandarin as *gēng* instead of *kàng*.

assuming that there is such a text given the title *Zhuāngzǐ*, that it is a heterogenous collection of writings bundled together by later editors, and that these writings date from the Warring States to early Han.

1.2.1 Qing Dynasty And Modern Scholarship

In Benjamin Elman's investigation in the transition from what he calls "philosophy to philology" he argued that what the *kǎozhèng* 考證 movement (or "evidential scholarship") of the Qing dynasty had introduced was new critical methods for the study of the classics, with a strong emphasis on evidence and verification.⁷⁴ Using phonology, etymology, and paleography as tools to study textual sources mostly from the Former Han, they believed that it was possible to recover the "authentic" text, allowing the teachings of the classics untainted by later Daoist and Buddhist influences beginning in the later Han to surface. The *kǎozhèng* movement was part of an attempt to return to antiquity (*fù gǔ* 復古). In determining the authenticity of a text, Duàn Yùcái explained, "By basic text we mean the original version drafted by the author himself; by the meaning of the text we refer to the meanings and principles that the author expounds... Once we reconstruct each basic text, we can decide on the validity of their respective meanings and principles. Then we can proceed to reconstruct a basic text [on which they were commenting] and gradually verify its meanings and principles."⁷⁵ Prior to any attempt to interpret the meaning of the ideas of a text, it is necessary to reconstruct the text into its original entirety (at least, as much as possible). We can further see the "tacit standards" in the compilation of the monumental *Sìkù quánshū* 四庫全書 (compiled in 1782) as reflective of the "linguistic self-consciousness of

⁷⁴ Benjamin A. Elman, *From Philosophy to Philology: Intellectual and Social Aspects of Change in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1984), 68.

⁷⁵ As translated by Elman in his *From Philosophy to Philology* (see n. 74), 68. Bracketed additions are Elman's.

k'ao-cheng evaluation.”⁷⁶ For example, the criterion “proper use of sources and verification or not,” “critical of arbitrary judgment,” and “worthy of consideration as *k'ao-cheng* or not” displays a serious commitment for evidence and verification over groundless interpretation.⁷⁷

The methodology employed by the *kǎozhèng* scholars allow us to identify multiple layers of the text as well as expose the heterogeneity of textual compilation. What at face value appears to be one homogenous entity is in fact multiple entities that have been meshed together throughout the history of the text, including various commentaries from different eras, and sections (or strips of bamboo once bound together before the disintegration of the threads) that were thought to have been misplaced, and then tacked on by later editors. Theoretically, scholars would be able to peel away these commentative and interpretive layers, and through textual analysis determine which passages belong together, and then ultimately revealing the “original,” or “authentic,” entity.

Moreover, as William G. Boltz has shown, pre-Han texts cannot be understood, whether in material form or compositional content, from the vantage point of modern texts bounded into a single entity, written by one author, with a beginning, middle, and end. Early Chinese texts are essentially composite in nature, meaning that received version of a particular text actually consists of “units” (what we would understand as “paragraphs” in English) that have been fitted together like Lego building blocks in an editorial procedure to produce what we see today as a uniform whole.⁷⁸ The *Zz* is certainly no exception.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 65.

⁷⁷ For a full list of the criterion, see *ibid.*, 65.

⁷⁸ For his full argument, see William G. Boltz, “The Composite Nature of Early Chinese Texts,” in *Text and Ritual in Early China*, edited by Martin Kern (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005), 50-78.

Taking into all these points into consideration (that is, the methodology and goals of Qing *kǎozhèng* scholarship), along with the composite nature of early Chinese texts, it is not inconceivable that each received version of a particular text, say the *Zz*, consists of multiple editorial layers. Each layer then includes its own unique set of meanings from a particular time or individual that has been tacked onto the previous set. We can then say, for example, that the Guō Qìngfān (GQF) version of the *Zz*, the *Zhuāngzǐ jí shì* 莊子集釋 consists of his own layer mixed with elements from Lù Démíng (LDM), as well as those from the subcommentary of Chéng Xuányīng (CXY) and commentary from Guō Xiàng (GX). If all elements in a set are represented, then we may call it a “layer.” If only selected elements of a set are represented, then these themselves do not constitute one layer, but rather belong to the one layer into which they have been included. The GQF “layer” consists of “elements” from LDM, CXY, and GX, and is limited within the bounds of the *Gǔ yì cóngshū* 古逸叢書 edition upon which the GQF version is based. The *Zz* is a stratified fabric of multiple layers, embedded with singular points (GX, CXY, LDM, ...) from which we may extract various interpretations. This is a rather simplistic account of a very complex phenomenon, but will hopefully suffice for our purposes.

1.2.2 Contributions From Guān Fēng 關鋒 And A.C. Graham

We saw earlier that already in the Tang there were suspicions of the completeness and homogeneity of the text of the *Zhuāngzǐ*. But it was not until the mid-twentieth century that we find a more methodologically sophisticated textual analysis, finally culminating into the modern field of Chinese philology, perhaps most notably in the various studies of A.C. Graham.

Graham's divisions of the *Zhuāngzǐ* was influenced by a lesser known scholar Guān Fēng 關鋒 (1919-2005), which is where we shall begin our discussion for this section.⁷⁹

In Guān's article "*Zhuāngzǐ wài zá piān chū tàn*" 莊子外雜篇初探 he first argues that the outer and mixed sections were not by same individual who composed the inner sections by the name of *Zhuāngzǐ* during the middle of the 4th century BCE, but were rather compiled some time between the end of the Warring States to the beginning of the Western Zhou.⁸⁰ Moreover, what the Han scholars had referred to as the *dào jiā* 道家 was in fact a collection of various jottings from the schools of Lǎozǐ, Sòng Qīng 宋卿, Yīnwén 尹文, disciples of *Zhuāngzǐ*, disciples of Yáng Zhū 楊朱, and other random writings having nothing to do with Daoism. For Guān, we cannot make any definitive claims on the authorship of the outer and mixed chapters, other than pose the possibility that these sections seem to have been written by various individuals who may or may not have been followers of the *dào jiā*.

In completion of his argument, Guān then gives a list of reasons as to why the inner sections must have been written by *Zhuāngzǐ* and not his followers. First, thematically speaking, he believes that the ideas expressed in the inner sections are of a "degenerative, pessimistic, and hopeless" nature 沒落悲觀絕望的, and claims that beginning from the Qin and Han times, there

⁷⁹ Guān Fēng is apparently a pen name for Zhōu Yùfēng 周玉峰 as listed in the *Harvard Yenching Library Bibliographical Index: 20th Century Chinese Authors and their Pen Names*, ed. Zhū Bǎoliáng 朱寶樑 (Guangxi Shifan daxue chubanshe, 2002), 348. Other than this and his published articles, there seem to be no reliable sources on his life. He seems to have been familiar with 20th century German philosophy, particularly that of Hegel and Marx's, his views on "Chinese philosophy" probably similar to Hu Shih et al. See Guān Fēng and Lín Yùshí 林聿時, *Chunqiu zhéxué shǐ lùn jí* 春秋哲學史論集 (Beijing, Renmin chubanshe, 1963).

⁸⁰ Guān Fēng, "*Zhuāngzǐ wài zá piān chū tàn*" 莊子外雜篇初探 [An initial investigation into the outer and mixed sections of the *Zhuāngzǐ*], in *Zhuāngzǐ zhéxué tāolùn jí* 莊子哲學討論集 (Hong Kong: Wenchang shuju, 1961), 61-98.

were no longer disputations, and thus this kind of writing can only be from the Warring States.⁸¹ This reasoning is rather abstract, for he does not give any concrete examples, nor does he elaborate on what he means by “degenerative, pessimistic, and hopeless.”

Second, the “ways of expression” appear to be from the same period, and is not an instance of historical writing 同時代人的口氣而不是講歷史. For example, there is nothing about the death of Zhuāngzǐ as there are in the outer and mixed sections.

Third, there is a complete philosophical system within the inner sections, while others do not seem to consist of a distinct trajectory of thought. This thesis is expanded in a separate article, “Zhuāngzǐ zhéxué pī pàn” 莊子哲學批判.⁸² Here he uses a comparative method, evoking Western intellectual figures such as Hegel and Marx, and using Chinese translations of Western terminology including 客觀 “objectivism,” 主觀 “subjectivism,” 唯心主義 “[German] idealism,” 絕對精神 “absolutism,” and a curious 阿 Q 式 probably alluding to the novelist Lǚ Xùn’s 魯迅 *A True Story of Ah-Q* (阿 Q 正傳).⁸³ There are a couple of problems inherent in this approach. One may ask: why must we suppose that any one text ought to represent a distinct system of thought? This would be to assume that Classical Chinese texts were compiled like the modern book, one that consists of a beginning, middle, and end, with a clearly preconceived idea of some main hypothesis with some kind of supporting explanations, leafs of paper then gathered together and bounded into a single entity for a particular audience. There is an even more pressing complication involving Western originated terminology. Words such as “objectivism,” “subjectivism,” and “idealism” are loaded terms that cannot simply be extracted from their

⁸¹ 就是說，如果依據這種歷史分期意見來分析，《內篇》表述的哲學體系則只能是沒落領主的意識形態，它只能發生在戰國。See *ibid.*, 62.

⁸² Guān Fēng, “Zhuāngzǐ zhéxué pī pàn,” in *Zhuāngzǐ zhéxué* (see n. 74), 1-60.

⁸³ See especially *ibid.*, 2-6.

historical context and inserted into another without a full explanation of the many social, political, and intellectual connotations hidden behind these words. To note but one terminology problem, *wéi xīn zhǔ yì* 唯心主義 is a translation of “idealism.”⁸⁴ It is clear that by these terms are meant the combined thoughts of Hegel and Marx. But this in itself is problematic. Although it is generally well known that Hegel heavily influenced Marx’s writings, each thinker has his own distinct system. To collapse the two into one phrase “idealism” is not only to miss crucial differences between two separate individuals, but also to slump together very different meanings and usages of the term into one abstract word.

Fourth, the Han practice of dividing a text into inner and outer sections is a way of grouping writings of the master into the inner, and those of the disciples into the outer. We see this in texts such as the *Mencius*, the *Yànzǐ chūnqū*, and the *Huáinánzǐ*. Because the book of *Zhuāngzǐ* was edited in the Han dynasty, it should thus follow accordingly with the examples above.⁸⁵ Yet by the editing of the text in the Han dynasty, some hundreds of years have already passed since the composition of the text. It is difficult to say whether the division of the outer and inner sections by the Han editors preserved the original integrity of authorship.

Fifth, looking at the tabulations of sections from various Jin commentators, we see the following numbers of “chapters” for the inner, outer, and mixed *piān*:

Sīmǎ Biāo

7:28:14

⁸⁴ Contemporary philosopher Tom Rockmore has given a lucid explanation of the confusion within the discipline of philosophy about the term “idealism” and its modified categories including “British idealism,” “German idealism,” etc. He writes, “None of the early analytic thinkers had more than a very general, imprecise conception of British idealism, German idealism, or idealism in general. There is no idealism in general any more than there is a general triangle and there is no single doctrinal commitment shared by all thinkers in the idealist camp.” A couple of pages later, he asserts once again that “not only is there no idealism in general, but it is not even clear that there is a family resemblance among the many different idealist views.” See Tom Rockmore, *Hegel, Idealism, and Analytic Philosophy* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2005), 11-13.

⁸⁵ In Guān’s own words: 就是從常識來看，也沒有將老師的作品列為外雜篇，將學生的又是同時代的作品列為內篇那種道理。Guān, “*Zhuāngzǐ wài zá piān chū tǎn*,” in *Zhuāngzǐ zhéxué* (see n. 74), 63.

Cuī Zhuàn, Xiàng Xiù 7:20:0

Guō Xiàng 7:15:11

Guān points out that only the inner sections have remained a consistent total of seven *piān*. But this only supports the claim that the original text contained seven inner sections, and says nothing definitive about authorship.

And finally, according to Lù's preface to the JDSW Guō Xiàng only deleted items from the outer and mixed chapters, and left the inner alone.⁸⁶ Again, like the fifth item above, Guō's statement can only support the seven inner sections, and cannot tell us who the real author is.

Thus, unfortunately, these six pieces of evidences do not say anything definitive about the identity of the inner sections, other than it was probably by the same person. However, some of these points can help support the claim that the inner sections represent a homogenous entity, and that it probably originally contained a total of seven.⁸⁷

In summary, Guān's conclusion can be stated as follows: the outer and mixed sections were not written by the same individual of the inner section, but were later composed and compiled by multiple individuals dating from the late Warring States to early Han. Despite the inauthenticity or time gap between the inner from the outer and mixed, these sections are nonetheless valuable for understanding the intellectual history of early Chinese thought, and

⁸⁶ Guō's postface can only be found in fragments in the *JDSW xù lù*, and a longer version preserved in the Kōzanji manuscript held in Kyoto, and dates from the Muromachi period (1336-1573). The Kōzanji version contains only fragments of the Zz along with Guō postface. It has been collected in *Kyūshō kansuben Sōshi zankan kōkanki* 舊鈔卷子本莊子殘卷校勘記, edited by Kano Naoki 狩野直善 (Tokyo: Dōhō bunka gakuin, 1932), 517-518. A slight problem with Guān's analysis is that he relies heavily on the *JDSW* excerpts, probably because he did not have access to the Kōzanji manuscript. While the statement about Guō deleting parts from the outer and mixed sections is indeed in the JDSW preface, it is not present in the Kōzanji manuscript. This suggests either that it was not Guō but Lù Démíng who said that Guō had deleted those parts, or that Guō had indeed stated so, but it was not copied onto the Kōzanji manuscript. Guān (see n. 74), 64. Cf. Lù Démíng, *Jīngdiǎn shìwén xù lù* (see n. 56), 141. Cf. also *Kyūshō kansuben*, 518.

⁸⁷ Having established the single authorship of the inner section, the final part of Guān's article is his analysis of the authenticity and authorship of the outer and mixed sections. Because this thesis deals primarily with the inner section, I will only give an outline below of how Guān divides the outer and mixed sections in comparison with Graham's. For Guān's full argument, see Guān (see n. 74), 66-98.

cannot simply be dismissed as “inauthentic.” The line between what counts as “authentic” and “inauthentic” is not as well-defined as scholars would like.

Graham’s influential and celebrated study of the *Zz* encompasses a more statistical analysis than Guān, coming to similar conclusions.⁸⁸ His studies on the *Zz* include much more than just translations of the “Inner chapters,” for if we look to his many other works, we find bits and pieces of scattered ideas about the text of *Zz* including textual, grammatical, and ideological problems and features. In his textual investigation, he gives a tabulation of what he calls “positive and negative criteria,” which includes usages characteristic of or missing from the inner sections. He divides the text into three: the inner sections (nos. 1-7); certain mixed sections (nos. 23-27, and 32); and other sections (nos. 8-22, 28-31, and 33). Then, he categorizes the characteristic usages into the following: idiom; grammar; philosophical terms; and persons and themes. By indexing these occurrences in the divided sections, we can see clearly how certain phrases that occur in the inner sections may or may not overlap with those in other sections. Based on the number of occurrences or lack thereof, Graham is able to conjecture which sections are more likely to be written by *Zhuāngzǐ*, or at least by the same author of the inner sections. From those fragments that bear resemblance to the inner sections, Graham is then able to transpose certain lines into passages in the inner that seem to end abruptly, or have missing parts. These are lines which may have originally belonged to the inner sections, but became mixed with the outer and mixed sections through later collating efforts. The problem with this method, as Graham himself acknowledges, is that it remains difficult to say whether these fragments of the outer and mixed sections can indeed safely be said to be of *Zhuāngzǐ*’s hand; they could very well be imitations of followers or admirers of *Zhuāngzǐ*’s writing style. Yet at the very least,

⁸⁸ For a more detailed comparison with areas of divergences between the two scholars, please see Harold Roth’s “Colophon” in *A Companion to Angus C. Graham’s Chuang tzu*, edited and collected by Harold R. Roth (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2003), 181-219.

Graham's charts show distinct differences between the inner and outer chapters, help prove that the notoriously difficult section two "Qí wù lùn" 齊物論 was composed by Zhuāngzǐ, and provide clues to help textual reconstruction. This method is also applied to the remainder of the text, and is part of how Graham groups sections of the text into what he labels as "Primitivist," "Syncretists," and "Yangist miscellany."⁸⁹

The Primitivist group includes sections 8 to 10, and the first half to section 11. The style in these sections is so distinctive and homogenous that Graham goes so far as to suggest that they were in fact written by one individual. The Syncretist group dates from around the second century BCE, and includes the second half of section 11 to 22, and 33. Sections 23 to 27, and 33 consist of highly fragmented "ragbag" chapters, which include pieces that may be fitted together with the inner chapters. Finally, the "Yangist" selection includes sections 28 to 31 that date from 209 to 202 BCE, and have to do with matters of *yǎng shēng* 養生 (nourishing life).

One of the greatest values of Graham's many works on the *Zz* that distinguishes him from other scholars is his insightful contextualizations of pre-Qin texts taken together as a whole. This is most evident in his *Disputers of the Tao* where the *Zz* is not read in isolation, but rather against and within the other currents of thought within the same historical context, particularly the Mohist *Canons*. His aptitude for philosophical ideas and sensitivity to philological issues makes his approach a model for those who wish to tackle both sides of any text. We see this in his *Chuang tzu: the Inner Chapters*, an entire article devoted to the most difficult chapter in the *Zz*, the "Qí wù lùn" with a new translation and comprehensive philosophical notes, and scattered remarks on grammar and word usages in other essays that will be mentioned throughout this

⁸⁹ For his full analysis, see Graham, *Chuang-tzu* (see n. 60), 27-39; and his *Disputers of the Tao: Philosophical Argument in Ancient China* (La Salle: Open Court, 1989), 172-4.

thesis.⁹⁰ To refrain from being too redundant, I will not dwell much on Graham's scholarship, for in section 2 there will be many opportunities to focus on what he has to say about the *Zz*.

⁹⁰ These include three essays, "Chuang tzu's Essay on Seeing Things as Equal," "Two Notes on the Translation of Taoist Classics," and "Taoist Spontaneity and the Dichotomy of 'Is' and 'Ought'" in *A Companion* (see note 82); and two essays "'Being' in Western Philosophy Compared with *Shih/Fei* 是/非 and *Yu/Wu* 有/無 in Chinese Philosophy," and "Relating Categories to Question Forms in Pre-Han Chinese Thought" collected in his *Studies in Chinese Philosophy and Philosophical Literature* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1990).

PASSAGES, NOTES, AND COMMENTARY⁹¹Abbreviations⁹²

HYCT	Harvard-Yenching Concordance 莊子引得
ACG	A. C. Graham's translation, <i>Chuang-tzu, the Inner Chapters</i>
WSM	Wang Shu-min's <i>Zhuāngzǐ jiào quán</i> 莊子校詮
SWJZ	<i>Shuō wén jiě zì</i> 說文解字
JDSW	<i>Jīng diǎn shì wén</i> 經典釋文
HYCD	<i>Hànyǔ dà cídiǎn</i> 漢語大辭典

* * *

It has almost become a cliché to characterize the ‘philosophical’ elements of the *Zhuāngzǐ* using the following labels formulated by A. C. Graham: an anti-rationalistic attitude toward language; spontaneity of the spirit; the dichotomy between Heaven and Man; the seemingly indistinguishable boundary between waking and dreaming, and so on.⁹³ Modern Chinese scholar Fāng Yǒng 方勇 in his extensive study on the history of the reception of Zz has more generally articulated these aspects as different “perspectives” 觀 *guān*: “cosmological perspective” 宇宙觀，

⁹¹ For the main text, I will be using the Harvard-Yenching Concordance 莊子引得, which is based on the *Gǔ yì cóngshū* 古逸叢書 edition. Although it has been criticized as unreliable, I have decided to use it anyway for sake of simplicity, and consistency in that A. C. Graham, whom I have come to consult many times throughout my translation, had used it for his translations. For those who are familiar with his translation, it will become obvious that in some places I have merely adapted his, and I have made note of these instances.

⁹² For full bibliographic information on these materials, please see my “References.”

⁹³ See his *Disputers of the Tao: Philosophical Argument in Ancient China* (Illinois: Open Court, 1989), and also his *Chuang-tzu, the Seven Inner Chapters and other writings from the book Chuang-tzu* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1981).

“theory of knowledge” or “epistemology” 認識論, “life perspective” 人生觀, “political perspective” 政治觀, and finally “aesthetics and literary perspectives” 美學與文藝觀.⁹⁴ Like K. C. Hsiao, he does not include any form of *zhéxué*. Of course, the *Zz* is indeed all of the above, and while it is important to pay heed to why Graham makes the theoretical discussions that he does, what I wish to do in this project is to shed a different interpretive light on how to conceptualize the contents of the *Zz*. This section will be devoted to some of these ‘philosophical’ strains identified by Graham in his *Chuang-tzu, the Inner Chapters*. Section 2.1 will focus on the most challenging but significant issue on the problem of language as explicated in the “Qí wù lùn” 齊物論. As is well known, Graham has given a full treatment including lexical features as well as a new translation in a separate article.⁹⁵ We see in the “Qí wù lùn” a rigorous discussion that at times involves very technical discussions that were probably at the peak of circulation during a time when fresh ideas were exchanged, disputed, and reformulated. The “Qí wù lùn” has also been noted by many scholars to be the “most philosophical” of all and, despite my introductory claim that philosophy is much more than analytic categories of language, cannot be avoided in this thesis.

In section 2.2 I will look closely at passages that show the 真人 *zhēn rén* ‘genuine/true man’ as exemplar of one who lives in accordance to the ways of the world devoid of preferences. It is this particular carefree and spontaneous disposition that sets the *zhēn rén* apart from the common folk, though it remains questionable for now whether the *zhēn rén* is the same as the 聖人 *shèng rén* ‘sage.’ Finally, in section 2.3 I turn to selections that seem to expound a very

⁹⁴ Fāng Yǒng 方勇, *Zhuāngzǐ shǐ lüè* 莊子史略 (Chengdu: Sichuan chuban jituan bashu shu she, 2008), 7-24.

⁹⁵ Graham, “Chuang tzu’s Essay on Seeing Things as Equal,” in *A Companion to Angus C. Graham’s Chuang Tzu*, edited by Harold Roth, 104-29 (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2003).

different kind of 知 zhī ‘knowledge’ distinct from the contrived and learned disputations we see in the “Qí wù lùn.” Genuine knowledge appears to be something unbounded and cannot be captured by fixation of language.

Formatting Notes

For the excerpted passages from the *Zz*, I have used A. C. Graham’s with only minor modifications. In rare instances where I disagree significantly from him, I will mark with footnotes at the bottom of the page, along with explanations in the textual notes at the end of each translation. Unless otherwise indicated, notes from historical commentators are from Wang Shu-min’s *Zhuāngzǐ jiào quán*, with page numbers in the footnotes. This section will consist of the following elements: Selected passages from the *Zz* with Graham’s translations; textual notes consisting of interesting lexical, grammatical, and or interpretive problems indicated by a superscripted alphabetical letter in the translation, and placed at the end of the translated passage; and commentary illustrating various intellectual puzzles that may or may not have to do with ‘philosophy.’ References and further scholarship are placed as footnotes throughout. Philological notes are taken from Wang Shu-min’s *Zhuāngzǐ jiào quán* with page number, unless otherwise explicated in the footnotes. Old Chinese reconstructions are indicated with an asterisk *, and unless otherwise noted are taken from William Baxter and Laurent Sagart’s *Old Chinese: A New Reconstruction*.⁹⁶

⁹⁶ William Baxter and Laurent Sagart, *Old Chinese: A New Reconstruction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

2.1 The Problem of Language: The Arbitrariness of the Demonstratives *Cǐ* 此 ‘This’ And *Bǐ* 彼 ‘That’

In Graham’s “Chuang Tzu’s Essay on Seeing Things As Equal” he asserts firsthand the importance of this section not only for the text of the *Zz* but also as an early textual source for Taoism. In terms of content, the intellectual depth here is at its peak. Yet as Graham has warned, there are certain features of this section that we must not overlook both in translation and interpretation. Namely, that given the seemingly fragmented and at times contradictory nature of the passages, we cannot treat this section – nor any other “chapter” in the *Zz* – as a complete or fully developed system of thought. There are many instances where the author presents a particular idea, either one that is mainstream or of his own. Then, the author discusses the validity and problems associated with this idea, not unlike European thinkers such as St. Thomas Aquinas, Spinoza, Leibniz, and others. Moreover, these ideas cannot be read in isolation, as Graham has not failed to remind us throughout his many studies of pre-Qin thought. This is to say that we must read *Zz* from within the intellectual context of the Chunqiu (“Spring and Autumn”) to Zhanguo (“Warring States”) periods, which in turn include the socio-political context. The reader must pay heed to allusions to other schools of thought, particularly to those of the Mohist school, and ideas which have now been identified as belong to the “sophists” Hui Shī and Gōngsūn Lóng.⁹⁷

⁹⁷ It is quite unfortunate that the writings of Hui Shī are unfortunately no longer extant, with only a few lines summarizing his paradoxes in the “Tiān xià” chapter of the *Zz*, and stories surrounding him and Zhuāngzǐ throughout the *Zz*. The figure and text of Gōngsūn Lóng is slightly less problematic. Like Zhuāngzǐ, we cannot know for sure either the dates of the man Gōngsūn Lóng, nor the dates or reliability of the text *Gōngsūn Lóngzǐ*. The relation between the *Gōngsūn Lóngzǐ* and *Zz* will be explored further below. For textual difficulties on the *Gōngsūn Lóngzǐ*, see Graham’s *Disputers*, 82-95 (see n. 86); his “Three Studies of Kung-sun Lung” in *Studies in Chinese Philosophy and Philosophical Literature*, 125-215 (New York: State University of New York Press, 1990); and his bibliographic entry “Kung-sun Lung tzu” in *Early Chinese Texts: A Bibliographic Guide*, edited by Michael Loewe, 252-7 (Berkeley: Society for the Study of Early China, 1993).

Another thing to note is the possibility of interpolated commentary by later editors of the Zz. In light of our earlier discussion in the “Introduction,” we might keep in mind the following questions: Why should this chapter be considered as the most important? More pertinent to this thesis, why has the “Qí wù lùn” been regarded as the most ‘philosophical,’ and how has this perspective shaped our understanding of the meaning of ‘philosophy,’ and what is the intellectual nature of text the Zz, or any other text belonging to the pre-Qin masters? With this mindfulness, let us then turn to selected passages in the Zz.

夫言非吹也，言者有言，其所言者特未定也，果有言邪，其未嘗有言邪，其以為異於
穀音，亦有辯乎，其無辯乎，道惡乎隱而有真偽，言惡乎隱而有是非，道惡乎往而不
存，言惡乎存而不可，道隱於小成，言隱於榮華。故有儒，墨之是非，以是其所非，
而非其所是。欲是其所非而非其所是，則莫若以明。⁹⁸

Saying is not blowing breath,^a saying says something; the problem is that which is being said is not fixed. Is there indeed something being said? Or perhaps nothing has yet been said? If you think it different from the twitter of fledglings, can you prove a distinction?^b Or perhaps there is no distinction? By what is the Way hidden, that there should be a genuine or a false?^c By what is saying obscured, that there should be a “this” and a “not-this?” How can the Way extend without being present?^d How does saying exist without being permissible? The Way is hidden within minor accomplishments, saying is obscured by foliated flowers.^e This is why we have the “this” and “not-this” of Confucians and Mohists, by making into “this” what is “not-this” for one, and making into “not-this” what is “this” for the other.^f

⁹⁸ HYCT 2:23-27. Excerpted from “Qí wù lùn” 齊物論, the title of which has been translated various by Graham as “seeing things as equal,” “the sorting which evens things out,” and “treating things as equal.”

If you wish to make into “this” what the other takes as “not-this,” or to make into “not-this” what the other takes as “this,” the best way is by that of Illumination.⁹⁹

Textual Notes

- a. In the JDSW, Lù Démíng gives the following note: “Cùi [Zhuàn] says that ‘blowing’ is like [the manner] of the pipes” 吹猶籟也. Ch’ien Mu 錢穆 following Xuān Yǐng 宣穎 explains that “the heavenly pipes are natural, whereas saying is not its equal” 天籟自然，言非其比. Wang understands the subject of 言 *yán* ‘saying’ to be that of a human event. This seems to be a revisiting of an earlier passage in the “The Sorting Which Evens Things Out” where the topic of a conversation between two men, Zǐqí and Zǐyóu, is about the natures of the various pipes of heaven, earth, and human 天籟地籟人籟.¹⁰⁰ Here, Zǐyóu is prompted to inquire about the secret (*fāng* 方) of the three pipes. The pipes of earth are the “hugest clumps of soil [that] blows out breath, by the name ‘wind’” 夫大塊噫氣其名為風; the pipes of human are “rows of tubes” 人籟則比竹是已, and the pipes of heavens are not clearly described, though seem to be of the sort that “sit with nothing to do” other than act as the prime mover.¹⁰¹ Nothing is really elaborated about the human

⁹⁹ His standard translation in *Chuang-tzu, the Inner Chapters* is different from a later revision published as “Chuang Tzu’s Essay on Seeing Things as Equal,” in *A Companion* (see n. 88). For passages from the “Qí wù lùn” I have relied mostly on his later translation, making note of significant differences should there be any. To avoid confusion of these two separate translations, I will keep the shorthand ACG for his main translation in *Chuang-tzu, the Inner Chapters*, and for the revised version, I will use r.ACG. Thus for this passage, for the Graham originals, please see ACG, 52; and r.ACG, 120.

¹⁰⁰ WSM, 1:57, n.5. For the “Qí wù lùn” passage on the various pipes, please see HYCT 2:3-9; r.ACG, 118.

¹⁰¹ The lines about the heavenly pipes are extracted from the “Tiān yùn” 天運 chapter from the outer sections. The lines relevant to my nomination of the heavenly pipes as “prime movers” are: “Who is it sits with nothing to do and gives them the push that sends them?” 孰居無事推而行是; “Who is it sits with nothing to do as

pipes except for the short description “rows of tubes.” Graham suggests that we can understand the “parable of the wind [as comparing] the conflicting utterances of philosophers to the different notes blown by the same breath in the long and short tubes of the pan-pipes, and the noises made by the wind in hollows of different shapes.”¹⁰² The line in our passage “saying is not blowing breath” 夫言非吹也 is an introductory proposition which the author will then assess.

- b. For “fledgling” 鷦 *kòu*, the JDSW gives us a phonetic gloss from Jin dynasty scholar Lǐ Yí 李頤 as 鷦 *gòu*. Sīmǎ Biāo gives a semantic gloss “a bird that is ready to fly away” 鳥子欲出者也. The SWJZ has an entry for 鷦 *kòu* as a newborn chick that still relies on its mother to feed it 鳥子生哺者. Guō Xiàng also has a similar definition “a young bird that needs maternal feeding” 鳥子需母食也. Taken together, 鷦音 *kòu yīn* means the chirp of a baby bird, which Graham has translated here as “fledgling.” This line is an analogy of how the disputations amongst the various masters each have their own kinds of sayings whose meanings fluctuate and are instable, just like the little chirps of fledglings. The *Lǚ shì chūnqiū* 呂氏春秋 “Tīng yán piān” 聽言篇 has a similar line within the context of *biàn*: “as for his *gǔ yán* with others, does he indeed have something to dispute, or does he not have anything to dispute?” 其與人鷦言也，其有辯乎，其無辯乎. In Chén Chāngqí’s 陳昌齊 commentary *Zhèng wù* 正誤 he suggests that 鷦言 *gǔ yán* is in fact a (graphic) mistake for 鷦音 *kòu yīn* “fledgling’s chirp.”¹⁰³ The word Graham has

in ecstasy he urges them?” 孰居無事淫樂而勸是; and “Who is it sits with nothing to do and sweeps between and over them?” 孰居無事而披拂是.

¹⁰² ACG, 49.

¹⁰³ WSM, 1:57, n. 8.

translated as “distinction” is 辯 *biàn*, which he explains to literally mean “‘distinguishing, discriminating’ (between proposed alternatives)” of 是 *shì* ‘this’ and 非 *fēi* ‘not-this.’ *Biàn* later came to refer to “rational discourse” in the debates during the end of the sixth century BCE.¹⁰⁴ This word is placed together in a list with ten other technical terms that appear in the *Gōngsūn lóngzǐ* 公孫龍子, and the *Canons*.

- c. The phrase 惡乎 *wū hū* appears in the *Gōng yáng zhuàn* 公羊傳 in the following line “wherein lies the finesse of the Lord of Lu?” 魯侯之美惡乎至, with an explanation from Hé Xiù 何秀 saying that it means the same thing as the interrogative “wherefrom, wherein” 惡乎至猶何所在. Edwin Pulleyblank has suggested that 惡乎 *wū hū* is probably a derivation from 於何 *yū hé* “in relation to what,” meaning “how” or “why” as an interrogative, noting that there may be difficulties explaining the phonology.¹⁰⁵ Zhāng Tàiyán 章太炎 has a note for 隱 *yǐn* as a loan graph for 𠄎 which according to the SWJZ means “that which is being based upon” 所依據也.¹⁰⁶
- d. Graham takes the subject of the verb 往 *wǎng* as a dropped first person “we,” and translates this line as “wherever we walk how can the Way be absent.”
- e. There seems to be an imperfect parallel between 小成 *xiǎo chéng* and 榮華 *róng huá*, the former with a modified noun, the latter with two nouns side by side so we have for *xiǎo chéng* “X-zhī-Y,” and for *róng huá* “X and Y.” This is how Graham translates these items: “The Way is hidden by **formation of the lesser**, saying is darkened by its **foliage and**

¹⁰⁴ See Graham’s discussion, “Chuang Tzu’s Essay,” in *A Companion* (see n. 88), 105.

¹⁰⁵ Edwin G. Pulleyblank, *Outline of Classical Chinese Grammar* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1995), 96-7.

¹⁰⁶ WSM, 1:57, n. 9.

flowers.” In Sui dynasty scholar Wáng Tōng’s 王通 (586-617) *Wén Zhōngzǐ* 文中子, the *Zhōng shuō* 中說 “Zhōu gōng” chapter 周公篇 there is a similar line, with the pair functioning as verbs: “the [young] masters said to the gatekeeper, ‘to make **foliated flowers** out of one’s words, and to make **minor accomplishments** out of one’s tao, this is indeed difficult!’” 子謂門人曰，榮華其言，小成其道，難矣哉。 In this passage, *xiǎo chéng* and *róng huá* are functioning as modified-head construction in the formula “to take XY as Z.” Late Qing philologist Wáng Xiānqiān 王先謙 explains, “*xiǎo chéng* refers each individual holding fast to what they accomplish as the tao without realizing the greatness of the tao” 小成謂各執所成以為道，不知道之大也。¹⁰⁷ I have chosen to preserve the parallels in my translation.

- f. This refers to the different emphases upon values between the Ruist and Mohist schools, with disputations about subjects such as universal care, destiny, and music lasting to the beginning of the Han dynasty. For the Mohist school, to *biàn* means to “discriminate” between 是 *shì* ‘is-this’ and 非 *fēi* ‘is-not-this,’ where *shì* is the correct alternative, and *fēi* is the incorrect alternative.¹⁰⁸ A thing can either be X (*shì* X), or not-X (*fēi* X). Both sets are mutually exclusive. A thing cannot be both X and not-X at the same time.¹⁰⁹ The translations of these terms as ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ are secondary usages when applied to practical actions. It is pertinent to keep in mind that *shì* and *fēi* are essentially demonstratives when we are considering pre-Han texts. To avoid the misleading

¹⁰⁷ Wáng Xiānqiān 王先謙, *Zhuāngzǐ jì jiě* 莊子集解 (Taipei: Dongtu tushushi, 2006), 13.

¹⁰⁸ See also the end of textual note 6 (above).

¹⁰⁹ Graham, “‘Being’ in Western Philosophy Compared with *Shih/Fei* 是/非 and *Yu/Wu* 有/無 in Chinese Philosophy,” in *Studies on Chinese Philosophy* (see n. 90), 334-343; see also *Disputers*, 183-6 (see n. 86).

tendencies in English to associate ‘right’ with ‘good’ and ‘wrong’ with ‘evil,’ I have mostly kept the demonstrative aspect in my following translations and discussions.

Commentary

What distinguishes the “Qí wù lùn” from the rest of the inner chapters is a very serious, yet playful, discussion on the function of language, and the problems associated with it insofar as it is taken to be a tool by which humans communicate complex thought. We suppose that “saying says something,” that the speaker is not just blowing hot air. The substance of language articulated through speech is such that it has the capacity to express some meaningful content. The thing that is signified through speech cannot be fixed by its representable sign. Take for example the simple demonstratives “is-this,” as in the appositional sentence, “this [thing that is in question] is a horse” 是馬也. Its negative counterpart is “is-not-this,” as in the sentence “[this thing that is in question] is not a horse” 非馬也. For Zz the issue of disputing between what “is-this” and “is-not-this” is a relative matter. Contrary to proving the correctness of one alternative as belonging (included) to one set over another (excluded), all these disputations do is merely affirm the relativity of names, not of the thing itself. We are told in the Zz passage that the tao is hidden as soon as the distinction is drawn between “this” and “not-this.” As we will see later, tao is that which is before distinctions arise, the conglomerate mass of undifferentiatedness. Once there is a separation between “this” set and “not-this,” i.e. “that,” set there is a “real” and “false,” “correct” and “incorrect.” With the need for petty accomplishments and verbal embellishments, the tao is obscured.

Implicit is a critique of the assumption that language fully reflects ideas, and conversely that these ideas can be captured into the categories of affirmation and negation of

demonstratives.¹¹⁰ Disputation presupposes one discernible reality, and proponents then argue for what they believe to be the correct reality, e.g. whether a white horse is indeed a horse. For Zz, reality is multifaceted, and so is language. Too much focus on the meaning of words takes away from understanding the pure essence of things. There is a complex relation among a sign, the signified, and the signifier that is necessarily violent such that the represented is waiting to break through any moment.

彼亦一是非，此亦一是非。果且有彼是乎哉，果且無彼是乎哉。彼是莫得其偶，謂之道樞。樞始得其環中，以應無窮。是亦一無窮，非亦一無窮也。故曰莫若以明。
以指喻指之非指，不若以非指喻指之非指也，以馬喻馬之非馬，不若以非馬喻馬之非馬也。天地，一指也，萬物一馬也。¹¹¹

"That" can also be "this." But then, "that" is also one kind of "this" and "not-this." Is there indeed a "that" and a "this?" Or perhaps there is indeed not a "that" or a "this?" Where neither that nor this finds its opposite is called the axis of the Way.^a Once the axis is attained at its center, by way of this it responds to the infinitude: "this" is also one kind of infinitude; "that" is also another kind of infinitude. Thus I say: "the best means is Illumination." Instead of using pointing to show the not-pointing of pointing, it is better to use not-pointing to show the not-pointing of pointing.^b Instead of using horse to show the non-horse of the horse, it is best to use not-horse to show

¹¹⁰ In this light, the "Qí wù lùn" seems to slide closer to with "continental philosophy," or perhaps as we shall see, it is the perfect bridge between the continentals and analytics. See n. 10 above.

¹¹¹ From "Qí wù lùn." HYCT 2:29-33.

the non-horseness of the horse.^c Heaven and earth are but one pointing, the myriad things but one horse.^d ¹¹²

Textual Notes

- a. Guō glosses 偶 *ǒu* as 對 *duì* “opposite, contrary”. The JDSW glosses 樞 *shū* as 要 *yào* “the essential.” This seems to be how Wang understands it in his explanation, “in accordance to the opposition of names of *shì* and *fēi* (*bǐ*), the essence of tao is in its opposing position” 案是非（彼）乃對待之名，道之要在去對待也。 Literally, *shū* means ‘door-hinge; pivot,’ with an extended meaning of the ‘center,’ or fixed point by which something is able to move around.¹¹³
- b. 喻 *yù* is also written as 諭 *yù*, meaning ‘to instruct about; elucidate, expound; illustrate.’ It also has an extended meaning of ‘to explain or suggest by means of analogy or parable; analogous.’ These following lines seem to resemble the argument in the *Gōngsūn Lóngzǐ*, though in the latter, instead of *yù*, we more often see *zhǐ* paired with 名 *mìng* ‘to name,’ 謂 *wèi* ‘to call,’ and 為 *wéi* ‘be deemed.’¹¹⁴
- c. The highly fragmented and problematic text *Gōngsūn Lóngzǐ* contains two *piān* with the titles “White Horse” 白馬 and “Indicating Matters” 指物. At first glance, it may seem as if the author of “*Qí wù lùn*” is quoting directly from these *piān*, but as Graham and Ch’ien Mu have pointed out, it is difficult to establish the chronology in support of having a *Zhuāngzǐ* discussing the works of a *Gōngsūn Lóng*. The former is supposed to

¹¹² ACG, 53; cf. r.ACG, 120.

¹¹³ WSM, 1:60, n. 9.

¹¹⁴ Translations are Graham’s in his “Three studies of Kung-sun Lung” in *Studies in Chinese Philosophy*, 210-11 (see n. 90).

have lived sometime during the mid-fourth century BCE while the latter is recorded to have been a guest of the Lord of Píngyuán (d. 251 BCE). Graham also notes that the name of Gōngsūn Lóng never appears in the *Zz* except in the “Below in the Empire” 天下 and “Autumn waters” 秋水 chapters, sections with problematic dating. He suggests that the arguments about the white horse may have been older than the purported dates of the *Gōngsūn Lóngzǐ*.¹¹⁵

- d. JDSW: “Cuī Zhuàn writes, ‘In pointing out one body from a hundred, a horse is one thing out of a myriad things’ 指百體之一體，馬萬物之一物。Wang Shu-min comments, “This is saying that if the myriad things amount to one horse, then the distinction between more and less is disrupted.” 等萬物於一馬則多少之執破矣。¹¹⁶

Commentary

Like *shì* and *fēi*, *cǐ* 此 ‘this’ and *bǐ* 彼 ‘that’ are also demonstratives, but whereas the first two are indefinite pronouns, *cǐ* is a near referent ‘this, these’ one(s) here, and *bǐ* is a far referent ‘that, those’ other one(s) over there. The latter two are used specifically to indicate different standpoints of the same items in question. We are then introduced to a curious term, 道樞 *dào shū* ‘axis of the Way.’ As we have discussed in note a. above, *shū* literally means ‘door-hinge,’ a reference point around which a door or gate pivots. The analogy of a circular rotation is significant: there is no distinct front or back, left or right, up or down, it or not-it—“where

¹¹⁵ Graham, *Disputers* (see n. 86), 85-94, 179 and Ch’ien Mu, *Zhuāngzǐ zuǎn zhàn* 莊子纂箋 (Taipei: Dongda tushu youxian gongshi, 2011), 14. For Graham’s close analysis and discussion about the person and text of *Gōngsūn Lóng*, see also his “Three studies of Kung-sun Lung” in *Studies in Chinese Philosophy*, 125-210. For bibliographic information, see also his entry in *Early Chinese Texts: A Bibliographic Guide*, 252-7 (see n. 90 for full bibliographic reference for both works).

¹¹⁶ WSM, 1:61, n. 12.

neither ‘that’ nor ‘this’ finds its opposite is called the axis of the Way” 彼是莫得其偶，謂之道樞。 There is no affirmation or negation in the tao; only pure movement from the center in responding to the infinite. With no opposing this to that, no boundary separating the two, both belonging to an infinite expanse of space. The best means to understand this is indeed “illumination,” but this in itself is anything but enlightening.

We are then given a lesson in pointing (指 *zhǐ*) as a means of illustrating (喻 *yù*) things. The whole business on the paradox of pointing is also found in the “Zhǐ wù lùn” 指物論 [discourse on pointing things out] section of the *Gōngsūn Lóngzǐ*. The word 指 *zhǐ* has two grammatical functions. As a verb, it indicates the action of pointing something out, ‘to point.’ As a noun, it indicates ‘the thing that is pointed out’ (the English equivalent of which means ‘meaning’), or ‘the act [itself] of pointing out,’ which has been noted by Graham to be ambiguous. Moreover, if we maintained the less awkward translation of *zhǐ* as ‘meaning’ instead of ‘what is pointed out,’ Graham points out that “this device makes it difficult to hold in mind that *chih* is always pointing out, meaning one thing rather than another,” the ambiguity being both indefinite and definite uses.¹¹⁷

Indefinite uses of *zhǐ* indicate a referral to some non-specific unnamed thing: 指 *zhǐ* ‘to point something out’ (verbal), ‘what is pointed out’ (nominal subject or direct object); 指物 *zhǐ wù* ‘to point out a thing’ (verb-object); 物指 *wù zhǐ* ‘to point something out from other things’ (verbal), or ‘what a name points out from among things’ (nominal direct object). Among definite uses, those relevant to our *Zz* passage include: X 非指 ‘X is not what is pointed out by Y,’ where

¹¹⁷ Graham, “Three Studies” in *Studies in Chinese Philosophy* (see n. 90), 210.

Y is the subject referred to outside of the phrase.¹¹⁸ The final conclusion of the *Gōngsūn Lóngzǐ* shows that “all the terms used in the argument confirm that there can be no pointing out in detachment from the things we point out.”¹¹⁹ To return to the lines in the *Zz* we see the following objection by illustrating the paradox of pointing:

以指喻指之非指，

Instead of using pointing to show the not-pointing of pointing,

不若以非指喻指之非指也。

it is better to use not-pointing to show the not-pointing of pointing.

The author then uses the stock example of a horse prove his point. Instead of using attributes included in the definition of a general “horse” to indicate the non-horseness of this specific horse, one have only to show what is “not-horse” to indicate the non-horseness of this specific horse. It is never quite clear whether by “horse” is meant: a universal, abstracted horse that contains a set of members (attributes) included in the definition of “horse” that distinguishes horses from oxen; or a particular Horse with members (attributes) excluded from the definition of “horse” that distinguishes it from other horses. The writer is well aware of these difficulties, and in any case makes one final poetic claim that “heaven and earth are the one meaning, the myriad things are one horse.” Point at anything, and within this act includes a referral to something outside of the act, and unfolds a paradoxical relation among the signified Horse/horse, the sign uttered in place of and represents it “Horse/horse,” and the signifier, the unnamed subject doing executing the pointing. In disputation, once we call something a “Horse/horse” there is immediately a

¹¹⁸ For a full chart of the different functions of *zhǐ* paired with other words along with Graham’s explanations, please see *ibid.*, 211-12. I have retained Graham’s translations with insignificant modifications.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 215.

distinction between this from all other things. In establishing one alternative, we exclude the other.

The problem of nomination is also discussed in the following passage:

天下莫大於秋毫之末，而大山為小，莫壽乎殤子，而彭祖為夭。天地與我並生，而萬物與我為一。既已為一矣，且得有言乎。既已謂之一矣，且得無言乎。一與言為二，二與一為三。自此以往，巧歷不能得，而況其凡乎。故自無適有，以至於三，而況自有適有乎。無適焉因是已。夫道未始有封，言未始有常。為是而有畛也。¹²⁰

Nothing in the world is bigger than the tip of an autumn hair, and Mount Tai is small;^a no one lives longer than a doomed child, and Pengzu died young,^b heaven and earth were born together with me, and the myriad things and I are one.^c

Now that we have become one, perhaps I can say something?^d Since I have already called us one, perhaps I did not say anything. One and the saying makes two, two and one make three.^e Proceeding from here even an expert calculator^f cannot obtain [the final sum], much less a commoner.^g Therefore if we proceed from nothing but arrive at something, and in this fashion arrive at three, what would happen if we began from something and reaching something [more]! Take no progression, and the *yīn shì* [business]^h will end.ⁱ The way has never had frontiers, saying has never had norms. It is by a contrived 'that's it' that a boundary is marked.¹²¹

¹²⁰ From "Qí wù lùn." HYCT 2:52-55.

¹²¹ ACG, 56; r.ACG,123.

Textual Notes

- a. On the meaning of 秋豪 *qiū háo*, the JDSW tells us that 豪 *háo* should be understood as 毫 *háo* ‘fine hair’ following Sīmǎ Zhēn’s 司馬貞 commentary, “the fur of the hare grows in autumn” 兔毫在秋而成. Before the hare changes into its winter coat, its fur is thin and soft. The point here that what we perceive to be enormous, even something as big as Mount Tai, is really only as small as the tip of a strand of hair.
- b. The JDSW gives a gloss on the meaning of 殤子 *shāng zǐ* to be one who lived a short life, or one who has lived no more than 19 years. According to the SWJZ there are even different levels of a “doomed child”: a lifespan from 16 to 19 years is called 長殤 *cháng shāng*, from 12 to 15 years is called 中殤 *zhōng shāng*, and from 8 to 11 years is called 下殤 *xià shāng*.¹²²
- c. Graham believes these lines that I have italicized to be something like an opening topic, or idea, that the author is addressing, either to refute or to support his own thoughts. Here is an instance where we see the author as both a poet and a philosopher. I have formatted what Graham believes to be the poetic portions in italics.¹²³
- d. The function of 得 *dé* is interesting. Graham does not translate it in the usual verbal sense of ‘to obtain, acquire.’ Here he translates 且得有言乎 as “can I still say something,” and

¹²² WSM, 1:71, n. 9. Cf. the *Huáinánzǐ*: “No one lives longer than a **child who dies in infancy**; Ancestor Peng was short lived” 莫壽於殤子而彭祖為夭. The only difference between the *Huáinánzǐ* version and the Zz is the former’s replacement of 乎 *hū* with 於 *yū*, both words have the same meaning. Translation taken from *The Huáinánzǐ: A guide to the Theory and Practice of Government in Early Han China*, translated and edited by John S. Major, et al. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 667.

¹²³ See ACG, 32-3. In his article “Two Notes on the Translation of Taoist Classics,” he writes that “different literary forms of the sections of a chapter need to be distinguished typographically.” And further on, “the point is that unless the two [poetic and prose-like] sections are contrasted formally we find ourselves back in the Rambling Mode, which absorbs first the rhymed verse, then the piece of commentary, and digests them so completely that they become successive paragraphs of prose indistinguishable in style...” See Graham, “Two Notes on the Translation of Taoist Classics,” in *A Companion*, 147-8 (see n. 88).

且得無言乎 as “did I succeed in not saying something.” It appears before the verb 有 *yǒu*, and thus seems to be functioning as an adverb. The entry for 得 *dé* in the Kroll *Dictionary* has: “modal adverb indicating uncertainty, possibility, or mild suggestion.”¹²⁴ But this modal feature is listed as a medieval usage in Kroll, while this section of the *Zz* is generally accepted as dating from the pre-Qin era. So perhaps this kind of modal usage is earlier than what is indicated in Kroll’s dictionary.

- e. Guō Xiàng’s commentary: “Generally, to say one by way of speech, but the one is not [the ‘one’ that is uttered by] speech, then one together with ‘one’ constitutes two [‘ones’]. One is already ‘one,’ but once spoken of makes it two, and [as soon as] there is one, there is two, then does this not add up to three?” and *ad infinitum*? 夫以言言一，而一非言也，則一與言為二矣。一既一矣，言又二之，有一有二，得不為三乎。
- f. On 巧歷 *qiǎo lì* ‘expert calculator’ Chéng Xuányīng comments, “going on from three, suppose there have been those who pretend to excel in calculation, even he would be unable to record and obtain the proper numbers, much less ordinary sorts!” 從三以往假有善巧算歷之人亦不能紀得其數而況凡夫之類乎。
- g. 得 *dé* appears in this line again, but is no longer functioning as a modal adverb. Perhaps it is coincidental, but it is interesting to entertain the idea of a purposeful pun.
- h. 因是 *yīn shì* is here “inconveniently” (Graham’s own wording) translated by Graham as ‘**that’s it**’ in contrast to 為是 *wéi shì* ‘**contrived** that’s it’ in order to emphasize the connection with the pronoun 是 *shì* ‘this, it,’ and belongs to a set of technical terms of

¹²⁴ S.v. 得 in Paul W. Kroll, *A Student’s Dictionary of Classical and Medieval Chinese* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2015). Also in accordance to Wáng Lì’s 王力 explanation: “expresses the uncertainty of a situation, containing meanings of potentiality and possibility” 表示情況允許，有能夠，可以的意思。See his *Gǔ Hànyǔ cháng yòng zì zìdiǎn* 古漢語常用字字典 (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 2011).

disputation along with 公是 *gōng shì* ‘universally recognized *shih*’ and 移是 *yí shì* ‘shifting *shih*.’¹²⁵ In Graham’s earlier essay “Chuang Tzu’s Essay on Seeing Things as Equal” (1969) he translates 因是 *yīn shì* as ‘**adaptive *shih*,**’ and 為是 *wéi shì* as ‘**contrived *shih*.**’ In isolation, the term “*yin* is to base one’s actions on the changing situation, to adapt to circumstances without imposing fixed principles; *wei* is to act on inflexible principles, forcing one’s will against the spontaneous course of things. [...] It may therefore be suggested that the two phrases refer to **opposite kinds of *shih***...: *yin-shih* is ‘to approve **adapting to the situation**’” whereas “*wei-shih* is ‘to approve according to **contrived principles**’ [that is,] to judge between alternatives according to one’s fixed preconceptions...” But later in his 1981 translation of *Zz*, he remarks that he is “now more inclined to connect them with the technical uses of *yin* and *wei* in the *Canons* and other remains of the literature of disputation.”¹²⁶

- i. On the phrase 無適焉 *wú shì yān* Wang Shu-min suggests what this means is that once one stops in his footsteps in accordance to the natural course of the world, then one will not lose sight of the ultimate principle.¹²⁷

Commentary

We envision and experience the world as a large expanse of three-dimensional space and linear time, but differences of extension are relative. Mount Tàì may appear to be enormous to us, but to the universe it is even smaller than the tip of a strand of hair. Then, in a seemingly unrelated

¹²⁵ For the translation, see *ACG*, 52-4. For his explanation, which was published separately, see “Textual Notes” in *A Companion*, 14 (see n. 88). Boldface mine for emphasis.

¹²⁶ See “Chuang Tzu’s Essay” in *A Companion*, 110-11 (see n. 88). Boldface mine for emphasis.

¹²⁷ *WSM*, 1:72, n. 13.

declaration, the Zz collapses all time into one moment and one entity: “heaven and earth were born simultaneously with me, and the myriad things become one with me” 天地與我並生，萬物與我為一。Toying with the notion of the one, the author now moves forward and explores the implications of the multiplicity of the one. All things in time and space condense into one, we call it the “One.” Yet as soon as we have named it, we have two things: the One, and the act of uttering “One.” This statement itself is another “one,” plus the other two makes three, *ad infinitum*. The act of nomination is futile insofar as in this feverish desire to distinguish between things “this” and “that,” and to classify them into groups of horses, oxen, dogs, etc. we have an “contrived-this” 為是. Graham ends this section with the line 無適焉因是已 “take no profession, and the yin-shih [business] will end.” But the next line 夫道未始有封，言未始有常，為是而有畛也 seems to be a further explication: “the Way has never had frontiers, saying has never had norms. It is by a contrived ‘that’s it’ that a boundary is marked.”

We can dispute about this and that, but disputation will never lead us to the Way of the world. If we lived unpretentiously in accordance to the spontaneous ways of the world, there would be no need for either an “adaptive-this” or a “contrived-this.” But “even *yin-shih* [adaptive-this] comes to an end in the state (presumably of withdrawal from action into contemplation) in which any distinction between It and Other is seen to be illusory and all language dissolves in the immediate experience of an undifferentiated world.”¹²⁸ The meaning of 無適焉因是已 is not explicitly clear, not is Graham’s stance on the matter. We can speculate however, the point at which no progress is made (or where there is no longer any destination to reach) is the point of origin prior to any beginning at which no “point” in space and time can be discerned.

¹²⁸ Graham, “Chuang Tzu’s Essay” in *A Companion* (see n. 88), 111.

Is it not remarkable, as Graham has also observed, that a few centuries ago on the other side of the world Plato wrote about the same problem of the “one” in the *Sophist*, the and throughout his other dialogues?¹²⁹ In the *Sophist*, an unnamed Eleatic Visitor poses to Theaetetus the claim that “*that which is not* can’t be applied to any of those which are.” In a move both to explain the problem with this claim and to have Theaetetus examine clearly his own claims, the Visitor clarifies,

“Are you agreeing because you’re thinking that a person who says something has to be saying some one thing?”

“Yes.”

“Since you’d say that *something* is a sign of *one*, and that a *couple of things* is a sign of *two*, and *some things* is a sign of *plurality*?”

“Of course.”

“And it’s absolutely necessary, it seems, that someone who does not say *something* says *nothing* at all.”

“Yes.”

“Therefore, don’t we have to refuse to admit that a person like that speaks but says nothing? Instead, don’t we have to deny that anyone who tries to utter *that which is not* is even speaking?”¹³⁰

For this part of the dialogue, it is a question of the unseen paradox of the whole and the part on the issue of division. Division is an act of combining and separating the like and unlike. When we say that X belongs to Y, are we saying that X is a part of the whole Y (like a slice of pizza is to the whole pizza); or are we saying that X participates in Y (like one student in a classroom of

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 112. See also Plato’s *Sophist*, 237d. Many scholars contend that the *Sophist* should be read in conjunction with another dialogue, the *Statesman*. At the beginning of the dialogue, Socrates asks the Visitor, who is supposed to be a famous philosopher, whether there is a difference amongst the philosopher, the sophist, and the statesman. While we have dialogues on the latter two entitled “Sophist” and “Statesman,” there is no dialogue called “Philosopher.” Moreover, in reading these two dialogues, one should expect the Visitor to talk about the philosopher, which he does not do. John M. Cooper suggests, “Perhaps Plato’s intention is to mark the philosopher off for us from these other two through showing a supreme philosopher at work defining them and therein demonstrating his own devotion to truth, and the correct method of analysis for achieving it: for Plato these together define the philosopher.” See his introductory preface to the *Sophist* in *Plato, Complete Works*, edited, with introduction and notes, by John M. Cooper (Indianapolis, Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 1997), 235.

¹³⁰ *Sophist*, 245b.

many students)?¹³¹ Can we then not see this dialectic to be similar to the Zz lines, “Now that we have become one, perhaps I can say something? Since I have already called us one, perhaps I did not say anything. One and the saying makes two, two and one make three. Proceeding from here even an expert calculator cannot obtain [the final sum], much less a commoner. Therefore if we proceed from nothing but arrive at something, and in this fashion arrive at three” 既已為一矣，且得有言乎，既已謂之一矣，且得無言乎，一與言為二二與一為三？

If we were to make one generalization from the above passages from the “Qí wù lùn” we could say that the problem of languages lies in its inability to fully capture the essence of things, illustrated by the arbitrariness of demonstrative pronouns. This is by no means a representative selection—on the contrary, the chapter is rich in aesthetic imagery distinct in focus from the quibbles of disputation.

2.2 On The Curious Identity Of The *Zhēn rén* 真人 ‘True Man’

Sages have long been embodiments of wisdom throughout Chinese history. In the Zz, the *shèng rén* 聖人 ‘sage’ appears throughout the Inner chapters (except for the third chapter, “Yǎng shēng zhǔ” 養生主), mostly in chapter six, “Dà zōngshī.” This is also the only chapter where the *zhēn rén* 真人 is mentioned in a total of nine times. This section focuses on the identity of the *zhēn rén* who possess a true kind of knowledge *zhēn zhī* 真知 that teaches one how to live according to the tao. This “true knowledge” is akin to a particular perspective on life where one does not prefer one over an other, and looks to the myriad things with a nonjudgmental mind.

¹³¹ This discussion of the divisibility of the one is in turn a part of a larger question of what has famously been called Plato’s “Theory of Forms.” It is a very complex issue, and requires a deep investigation into many other dialogues, including but not limited to the *Republic*, the *Symposium*, the *Phaedo*, and the *Philebus*. Unfortunately, to do justice to Plato and his “theory,” this topic must be saved for another time and context.

知天之所為，知人之所為者，至矣。知天之所為者，天而生也，知人之所為者，以其知之所知，以養其知之所不知，終其天年而不中道夭者，是知之盛也。雖然，有患。夫知有所待而後當，其所待者特未定也。庸詎知吾所謂天之非人乎。所謂人之非天乎。且有真人，而後有真知。何謂真人。古之真人，不逆寡，不雄成，不謨士。若然者，過而弗悔，當而不自得也。若然者，登高不慄，入水不濡，入火不熱。是知之能登假於道也若此。¹³²

To understand heaven's doing and to understand man's doing is the utmost in knowledge. To understand heaven's doing, that sort of thing is to live according to the 'natural.'^a The one who knows what is man's doing, by way of his own knowledge knows; by way of nourishing what is not known of his knowing, lasts out his ordained years without being cut short mid-way, this is utmost knowledge.

Yet this being so, I have been vexed. In general, knowledge has that which it must rely upon in order to subsequently be plumb, but that which it relies upon is never stable. How would I know what I refer to as Heaven is not in fact Human, and what I refer to as Human is not in fact Heaven? Moreover, only with a True Man can there then be True Knowledge. Who is the True Man? The True Men of ancient times were not defiant in the face of deficiency, did not act like a robust bird in regards to achievements, did not scheme their actions.^b Such men as that did not regret it when they transgressed, were not complacent when they hit plumb on. Such men as that climbed heights without

¹³² From "Dà zōng shī," translated by Graham as "The teacher who is the ultimate ancestor" 大宗師. HYCT 6:1-6.

trembling, entered water without wetting, entered fire without burning. Such is the knowledge that is able to rise out of the world on the course of the Way.^{c, 133}

Textual Notes

- a. 天而生 nucleus-*ér*-nucleus construction which can be construed as “upon acting in a manner that is in accordance with the Heavenly way, one lives life.”
- b. On 不雄成: In the SWJZ 雄 refers to a bird’s father, more generally the male counterpart of birds. As a characteristic, it also means ‘valiant; robust; strong.’ Negated by a 不 *bù*, 雄 *xióng* must be a verb, which means that *chéng* must be a noun. We would then translate the three-character phrase as “to not [act like] a male bird [i.e. boldly, robustly] in regards to accomplishment/completion.” I diverge from Graham’s translation of “did not grow up with more cock than hen in them” for I am not quite sure where the “hen” is (perhaps it is implied as the opposite of the cock), although his translation implies that the *zhēnrén* should act less like a cock (i.e. forcefully, aggressively) and more like a hen (i.e. gentle, mild).¹³⁴ Graham following Zhū Guìyào 朱桂曜: 不謨士 = 不謀事 “they did not plan affairs.”¹³⁵ According to SWJZ: 士事也. Wang has 不謨士, and says that it is the same as 不謀事.¹³⁶

¹³³ ACG, 84.

¹³⁴ WSM, 1:207, n.9.

¹³⁵ See his “Textual Notes,” in *A Companion*, 26 (see n. 88).

¹³⁶ WSM, 1:207, n. 10.

- c. On 登假 *dēng jiǎ*: Chéng glosses 假 *jiǎ* as 至 *zhì* ‘the extreme, utmost.’ In *Huáinánzǐ* “Jing shen pian” 精神篇：此精神之所以能登假與道也。高注：假，至也，上至于道也。 Song scholar Chǔ Bóxiù’s 褚伯秀 notes that when 假 *jiǎ* < kaeX < *Cə.kʰraʔ is defined as 至 it should be read as 格 *gè* < kaek < *kʰrak. Ignoring the Baxter and Sagart addition of an unidentified preinitial consonant, the OC pronunciations of 假 and 格 have the same initial and vowel, differing only the endings. The respective MC pronunciations kaeX and kaek also sound close, differing again in only the endings and tones. Yet by the time we get to the modern times the pronunciations of *jiǎ* and *gè* seem quite different.

Commentary

The greatest knowledge is to know everything – both causes and purposes in divine processes and human action. But how can we be certain we know what we think we know, or know what we do not know? We read: “knowledge has that which it must rely upon in order to subsequently be plumb” 知有所待而後當. But whatever it relies on is not stable. We are never explicitly told just what this reliance is, other than it is never stable. One can imagine a couple of possibilities: language, and senses. For the context of the Zz, the former seems more likely. Language is unstable because of its relativity and ambiguity in representing and indicating things, as we saw earlier from the “Qí wù lùn.”

“True knowledge” (真知 *zhēn zhī*) on the other hand has something to do with human action and mindset toward situations. “True men of ancient times were not defiant in the face of deficiency, did not act like a robust bird in regards to achievements, and did not scheme their actions.” What matters is not what we know categorically (theory), but how we act—whether our actions are contrived, adaptive, or spontaneous (practice).

古之真人，不知說生，不知惡死，其出不訢，其入不距，儻然而往，儻然而來而已矣。不忘其所始，不求其所終，受而喜之，忘而復之。是之謂不以心捐道，不以人助天。是之謂真人。¹³⁷

The True Men of ancient times did not know to enjoy life, did not know how to loathe death; in regards to their departure they were not joyful, to their entrance they were not depressed.^a Nonchalantly they leave, nonchalantly they come—that's all there is.^b They did not bother to remember the source where they began,^c nor seek the destination where they would end. Upon reception they were pleased with the gift, but forgot it as they gave it back. This is what is called "not using what is of the heart to forgo the Way,^d not using what is of man to assist Heaven." This is what we call a True Man.¹³⁸

Textual Notes

- a. On the parallel couplet 其出不訢，其入不距: Wang Shu-min's notes say that Zhāng Tàiyán remarks, "訢 *xīn* is a loan for 忻 *xīn*. According to the SWJZ, 忻 *xīn* means 闢 *kǎi* 'to open, to expand'... 距 also means 閉 'to close' and forms an opposite parallel with 距 *jù* meaning 'to close.'" ¹³⁹ Chéng Xuányīng had taken 忻 *xīn* in its alternative meaning of 'to delight, take pleasure in,' explaining that "the timely response of the coming-of-birth

¹³⁷ Chapter 6 of the *nèi piān*, "Dà zōngshī" 大宗師 (Graham's translation of the title is "The teacher who is the ultimate ancestor"). HYCT 6:7-9.

¹³⁸ ACG, 85.

¹³⁹ Zhāng's quote: 訢借為忻，說文：忻，闢也... 距亦閉也，忻，距相對為文。In parenthesis, Wang Shu-min includes a supplement: "距 is a loan graph for 距, which has the same meaning as 拒, such as in the *Shuō wén* definition for 距 as 'to stop, halt.' Thus, there is a sense of 'closure.'" 距乃距之借字，拒與距同，說文：距，止也。故有閉義。WSM, 1:210, n. 2.

originally lacks dispositions and joyful delight” 時應出生，本無情與忻樂。闔 *kāi* can also have an extended meaning when applied to human emotions to mean ‘(en)joy(ment), jubilant.’ For 距 *jù* the JDSW tells us that it is also written as 拒 *jù* ‘to resist,’ but this definition does not make a very good parallel when paired with the ‘happy’ meaning of 忻 *xīn*. Wang Shu-min supplements that 距 *jù* is also a loan graph for 距 *jù* ‘to cross over,’ which is similar both in graphic form and semantic meaning to 拒 *jù* ‘to reach, arrive.’ In the SWJZ, 距 is glossed as 止 *zhǐ* ‘to stop’ with a sense of ending, or closure. Wang prefers Zhang’s respective definitions for 訢 *xī* and 距 *jù* as ‘to open’ and ‘to close.’¹⁴⁰ Although Graham does not give any notes on this line, he seems to want to keep the ‘happy’ connotations in his translation “they were neither **glad** to come forth, nor reluctant to go in.”

- b. The Zz appears to be the first time this phrase 翛然 *xiāo rán* is used adjectivally. JDSW: 翛 sounds like *xiāo*, and is also originally written as 儻 *shū*.¹⁴¹ Lù then quotes from Xiàng Xiù, “*xiāo-rán* refers to a self-so, heartless, yet natural [demeanor]” 翛然, 自然無心而自爾之謂。Chéng quotes Guō Xiàng’s explanation, “the appearance of moving back and forth without difficulty” 往來不難之貌。Sīmǎ Biaō glosses 翛 *xiāo* as 疾 *jí* ‘hurriedly.’ Lǐ Yí gives a sound gloss of 悠 *yōu* (which can mean ‘far off,’ or ‘relaxed, leisurely’) for 儻 *shū*. The *Éryǎ* 爾雅 “Shì gù” 釋詁 glosses 悠 *yōu* as 遐 *xiá* ‘far.’ This usage appears in the *Shǐjì* biography of Sīmǎ Xiāngrú 悠遠長懷, where Zhāng Shǒujié 張守節 gives a gloss for 悠遠 *yōu yuǎn* meaning “carefree appearance” 放散貌也。This meaning is

¹⁴⁰ WSM, 1:210, n. 2.

¹⁴¹ 翛音蕭，本又做儻。

compatible with the explanations of Chéng, Guō, and Xiàng. In the *Liè nǚ zhuàn* 列女傳 “Biàn tōng piān” 辯通篇 there is a reduplication of 儻 *shū* in describing the movements of a fish: “In the ancient times, there was a poem of the white river: “tumbling and turning is the white river; unbounded and unconfined is the fish” 古有白水之詩，浩浩白水，儻儻之魚. Based on the context of these usages of 儻 *xiāo* and 儻 *shū*, we can then understand 儻然 *xiāo rán* to mean something like in a **carefree, unrestrained** manner, and in a movement that is ‘**free, brisk**.’¹⁴² Graham’s translation combines these two related senses.

- c. On 不忘其所始，不求其所終: According to Ch’ien Mu 忘 *wàng* ‘to forget’ is a graphic mistake for 志 *zhì* ‘to remember.’ Wang understands *zhì* and *qiú* to be “parallel words, and the meaning of the text accords with the rules [of parallelism]” 求對言，文義以律. But placed in front of the negative 不 *bù*, *zhì* has to be a verb meaning ‘to remember, to keep in mind,’ or to ‘record in writing.’ The parallel between 不忘 *bù wàng* and 不求 *bù qiú* could be translated as “do not remember... do not seek.” Graham translates 不忘 *bù wàng* as ‘to not forget,’ but here I have followed Ch’ien and Wang’s interpretation as 不忘 [=志] *bù zhì* ‘to not remember.’
- d. On 捐 *juān* ‘to cast aside’: Guo’s commentary has 背道 “carries the tao on one’s back” instead of 捐道 “to cast away the tao”: “the true man knows to use his heart, and therefore **carries the tao on his back**; he assists Heaven and therefore does not act on what harms life” 真人知用心則背道，助天則傷生故不為也. This line has become

¹⁴² WSM, 1:210, n.3.

puzzling for philologists. Chéng's subcommentary tells us that 捐 *juān* means 棄 *qì* 'to forgo.' Guō construes 背 *bèi* as 揖 *yī*, which Cuī says can also be written with a tree classifier as 楫 *jí* 'boat paddle.' Qing philologist Yú Yuē 俞樾 contends that this is nonsensical: "I suspect this problem comes from the mistake of the word *bèi* 背, which is the same as the word *bèi* 背..." Wú Rúlún 吳汝綸: "Guō's usage of 揖 *yī* is correct. Although Cuī may have 楫 *jí*, but 楫 *jí* and 揖 *yī* are both interchangeable with 輯 *jí* ('to gather, bring together'). Zhang Taiyan tries explaining that "捐 *juān* comes from what Guō has as 楫 *jí*. SWJZ defines 楫 *jí* as "arms clasping one's chest" 手箠匈也... Thus 'to not **forgo** the tao with one's heart' 不以心捐道 should instead be understood as 'to not **embrace** the tao with one's heart' 不以心箠道." Wang Shu-min states that there is no need to go to such lengths. On Guō's usage of 背道 instead of 捐道, Lù conjectures that Guō really means 揖 *yī*. But *yī* 'hands joined at chest' is quite different from *bèi* 'to carry (on one's back).' If we followed Chéng's gloss for 捐 *juān* as 棄 *qì* 'to forgo; to leave behind', it is compatible with 背 *bèi* 'to separate oneself from something.'¹⁴³ Graham's translation of 捐道 *juān dào* as "to damage the Way" construes *juān* in the sense of 'to get rid of; extirpate.'¹⁴⁴

Commentary

The *zhēn rén* are described as emotionally detached beings who take no preference for one over another, moving with the natural course of the world. When endowed with certain gifts, they

¹⁴³ Kroll, 13 (see n. 115).

¹⁴⁴ WSM, 1:211-12.

used them accordingly. When these gifts are taken away, the *zhēn rén* dispense with these materials without hesitation. Genuine freedom means to not be bound by the ways of the world, to accept all facets of life wholeheartedly. They differ from commoners not because they care less for logical, disputable knowledge, but because they possess an intuition that appreciates the aestheticity of world experience. By this they are able to move in accordance with the tao, which essentially knows no distinctions but only pure movement around the pivot, the *zhēn rén* are able to live life and to die a death with compliance.

2.3 Illumination, Knowledge, And Truth

古之人，其知有所至矣。惡乎至，有以為未始有物者，至矣盡矣，不可以加矣。其次以為有物矣，而未始有封也。其次以為有封焉，而未始有是非也。是非之彰也，道之所以虧也。道之所以虧，愛之所以成。果且有成與虧乎哉，果且無成與虧乎哉，有成與虧，故昭氏之鼓琴也，無成與虧，故昭氏之不鼓琴也。昭文之鼓琴也，師曠之枝策也，惠子之據梧也，三子之知幾乎。皆其盛者也，故載之末年。唯其好之也，以異於彼，其好之也，欲以明之彼。非所明而明之，故以堅白之昧終。而其子又以文之綸終，終身無成。若是而可謂成乎，雖我亦成也。若是而不可謂成乎，物與我無成也。是故滑疑之耀，聖人之所圖也。為是不用而寓諸庸，此之謂以明。¹⁴⁵

The men of ancient times, their knowledge had arrived at something: where had they arrived? There were some who thought that there had never been any things—the utmost, the exhaustive, there is no more to add. Next, they thought that there were things but there had never been borders. Next, they thought that

¹⁴⁵ From the “*Qí wù lùn*.” HYCT 2:40-47.

there were borders between things but that no thing had ever been 'that's it' or 'that's not it.'^a The lighting up of 'That's it, that's not it' is the reason why the Way is defective. The reason why the Way is defective is the same reason why care develops. Is anything really developed or defective? Or is nothing really developed or defective? To recognize as complete nor flawed is to have as model Master Zhao's strumming the zither; to recognize as neither complete nor flawed is to have as model Master Zhao's not strumming the zither. Zhao Wen's strumming on the zither, Music-master Kuang propped on his stick,^b Hui Shi leaning on the desk,^c did not the knowledge of these three have only a short distance to go? They were all men in whom it reached a culmination, and therefore was carried on to too late a time.^d It was only in being preferred by them that what they knew about differed from an Other; because they preferred it they wished to illumine it, but they illumined it without the Other being illumined, and so the end of it all was the darkness of chop logic^e: and his own son too ended with only Zhao Wen's zither string, and to the end of his life his musicianship was never completed. May men like this be said to be complete? Then so am I. Or may they not be said to complete? Then neither am I, nor is anything else.

Therefore the glitter of glib implausibilities is despised by the sage.^f The 'That's it' which deems he does not use, but finds for things their places in the usual. It is this that is meant by 'using Illumination.'¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁶ ACG, 54-5; r.ACG, 121-2.

Textual Notes

- a. 有 X “there is/are X”; 未始有 X “there has not yet begun to have X,” i.e. there never was any X existentially.
- b. 師曠之枝策 is also translated by Graham alternatively as “music master K’uang tapping the time.”¹⁴⁷ Chéng Xuányīng suggests that this may refer to the sticks used to strike a drum, or a stick used to tap the rhythm.¹⁴⁸
- c. Guō comments, “[leaning on the] sterculia, he closed his eyes” 據梧而瞑. On the 據梧 *jù wú*, the JDSW says that it means “to lean on a zither.” 梧 *wú* ‘sterculia’ (= 梧桐 *wú tóng* ‘parasol tree’ *sterculia platanifolia*), is the wood from which zithers were made. By metonymy it often stands for “zither.” Alternatively, Graham suggests that it might also have been used to make desks or armrests.¹⁴⁹ This image of Huì Shī leaning on a sterculia also appears in the “Dé cōng fú” 德充符 (translated by Graham as “The Signs of Fullness of Power”) section of the *Zz*. Here we see a dialogue between the author and Huì Shī in discussing the “essentials of man”: “The Way gives us the guise, Heaven gives us the shape: do not inwardly wound yourself by likes and dislikes. But now you go pushing your daemon outside, wearing your quintessence away. You loll on a tree-trunk and mumble, drop off to sleep held up by a shriveled, moldy desk. It was Heaven that chose you a shape, but you sing chop logic as your native note.”¹⁵⁰ The author seems to be

¹⁴⁷ See r.ACG, 122.

¹⁴⁸ Guō Qīngfān 郭慶藩, *Zhuāngzǐ jí shì* 莊子集釋, in *Zhūzǐ jí chéng* 諸子集成 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2006), 3:126. We might then imagine Master Kuang as a drummer setting the beat, or as a conductor orchestrating a piece of music.

¹⁴⁹ WSM, 1:67, n. 10.

teasing Huì Shī for spending so much time on disputing what is or is not called a ‘man’ that he falls asleep on his desk.

- d. On 三子之知幾乎 “had the three men’s knowledge much farther to go”: Guō glosses 幾 *jī* as 盡 *jìn* ‘to reach the end of.’ Graham follows this definition.
- e. What is here translated by Graham as “chop logic” is the term 堅白 *jiān bái* is literally “hardness and whiteness.” This binome appears in the Mohist *Canons* as well as the *Gōngsūn Lóngzǐ*, and is explained by Graham as “inseparables which sophists try to prove separate, [and is] also used as a term for sophistical hair-splitting in general.”¹⁵¹
- f. On 滑疑之耀聖人之所圖也: Graham translates 滑疑之耀 as the “glitter of glib implausibilities.” Wang Shu-min has a note saying that Mǎ Qíchǎng 馬其昶 agrees with Wú Rúlún 吳汝綸 in identifying the meaning of 滑疑 *huá yí* as equivalent with 滑稽 *huá jī*. The etymology of the binome 滑稽 *huá jī* has long been disputed by many scholars, with a recent extensive study by modern scholar Timoteus Pokora.¹⁵² As he has discussed in his article, the binome 滑稽 refers to a specific kind of people, and should be pronounced as *gǔ yí*. 滑疑 *gǔ yí* is a phrase that appears in the *Shǐjì* “Shū Lǐzǐ liè zhuàn” 樗里子列傳 in a description of Shū Lǐzǐ as a “*ku-chi* [who] had much knowledge. The people of Ch’in called him ‘a Bag of Knowledge.’”¹⁵³ Yán Shīgǔ 顏師古 gives a somewhat unhelpful explanation for 滑 *huá* as 亂 *luàn* ‘disorder,’ and 稽 *jī* as 疑 *yí* ‘to

¹⁵⁰ 道與之貌，天與之形，無以好惡內傷其身。今子外乎子之神，勞乎子之精，倚樹而吟，據槁梧而瞑。天選子之形，子以堅白鳴。HYCT 5:58-60. English translation from ACG, 82.

¹⁵¹ Graham, “Chuang Tzu’s Essay,” in *A Companion* (see n. 88), 106.

¹⁵² Timoteus Pokora, “The Etymology of *ku-chi* or (*hua-chi*) 滑稽,” *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft* 122 (1972): 149-72.

¹⁵³ As translated by Pokora, see *ibid.*, 153.

wonder, be uncertain.’ The *Suóyǐn* 索引 explains “in talking about this as if it were that, and that as if it were this, one muddles similarities and differences” 言是若非，言非若是，能亂同異也. The *Zhèngyì* further explains “滑 *huá* should be read as 澀 *gǔ*, the running water comes out by itself; 稽 *jī* means 計 *jì*, ‘to plan’ and that is to say that their plans spread universally like the water which flows from the source without exhausting it.”¹⁵⁴ While the pre-Han usage is unclear, Pokora suggests that we may find traces in the Han dynasty sources, which refer to “the mental capacities of unconventional men who were intelligent, of wide knowledge and eloquent speakers” sometimes associated with “a kind of cunning” and “wit and humor.” Yáng Xióng’s usage of the *gǔ jī* as a wine vessel, or ‘syphon’ as translated by David Knechtges, coupled with the usage in the *Chǔ cí* 楚辭 meaning of ‘slippery’ combines the “material and spiritual qualities [of] syphon and cunning.”¹⁵⁵ For 圖 *tú* Wang notes that it be taken as 𠄎 *bǐ*, which is an ancient form for 鄙 *bǐ* ‘[to regard X as] lowly, vulgar.’¹⁵⁶ We can now understand the line 滑疑之耀聖人之所圖也 as expressing the unfavorable viewpoint of sages on those who are filled with knowledge and speak with eloquence and cunning wit.

Commentary

Two musicians Zhao and Kuang, and one rhetorician Hui Shi are all regarded as experts in music and speech. To be an expert in something presumably means that they have mastered a particular skill wholly, and that they have acquired a complete set of knowledge in their area of

¹⁵⁴ As translated by Pokora, see *ibid.*, 161. 滑 *huá* < hwat < *Nə-gʷrut, and (澀) 骨 *gǔ* < kwot < *kʷut.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 163.

¹⁵⁶ WSM, 1:69, n. 16.

expertise. They then become the exemplars of perfection in music and rhetoric, against which other performances may be judged as “complete or flawed.” This is all a part of disputing who is the best at something, which requires a distinction between being in-tuned with the musical notes or rhythm, or on the mark with their demonstratives. As Graham comments, “Systems of knowledge are partial and temporary like styles on the zither, which in forming sacrifice some of the potentialities of music, and by their very excellence make schools fossilize in decline. Take as model Chao Wen not playing the zither, not yet committed, with all his potentialities intact.”¹⁵⁷

吾生也有涯，而知也无涯。以有涯隨无涯，殆已。已而為知者，殆而已矣。為善无近名，為惡无近刑。緣督以為經，可以保身，可以全生，可以養親，可以盡年。

¹⁵⁸ 故足之於地也踐，雖踐，恃其所不踞而後善博也。人之於知也少，雖少，恃其所不知而後知天之所謂也。¹⁵⁹

My life flows between confines, but knowledge has no confines.^a If we use the confined to follow after the unconfined, there is danger that the flow will cease; and when it ceases, to exercise knowledge is purest danger.

Doer of good, stay clear of reputation.

Doer of ill, stay clear of punishment.^b

Trace the vein which is central and make it your standard.^c

¹⁵⁷ ACG, 55.

¹⁵⁸ From Chapter 3, “Yǎng shēng zhǔ” 養生主, translated by Graham as “What matters in the nurture of life”. HYCT 3:1-2.

¹⁵⁹ From “Xú Wú guǐ” 徐無鬼, HYCT 24:105-111. This section has been extracted by Graham and placed into context with the prior lines from “What matters in the nurture of life,” HYCT 3:1-2. See his textual notes in *A Companion*, 17 (see n. 88).

*You can protect the body, keep life whole, nurture your
parents, last out your years.^d*

Hence, as the ground which the foot treads is small, and yet, small as it is, it depends on the untrodden ground to have scope to range, so the knowledge a man needs is little, yet little as it is he depends on what he does not know to know what is meant by 'Heaven.'^e 160

Textual Notes

- a. The JDSW records that 涯 *yá* was originally written as 崖 *yá*. 涯 *yá* 'water's edge, shore, riverbank.' 崖 *yá* 'steeply banked land.' Both have the semantic relation of 'edge, border, margin' with the same Middle and Old Chinese pronunciation *yá* < ngea < *ŋʳar.
- b. On 為善无近名，為惡无近刑: Most scholars have understood this parallel couplet with two contrasting sets: 善 *shàn* 'good' and 惡 *è* 'bad,' and 名 *míng* 'fame, reputation' and 刑 *xíng* 'punishment.' Following these definitions, we can translate the first line 為善无近名 as "the one who acts well does not approach fame." But if we translate the second line as "the one who does ill does not approach punishment." The relation between 善 *shàn* 'good [actions]' and 名 *míng* 'fame, reputation' is such that the latter is a consequence of the first, but since the sage should avoid *míng*, it would make sense for the Zz to advise for distancing oneself from fame. If we apply the same line of reasoning to 惡 *è* 'ill [actions]' and 刑 *xíng* 'punishment,' the latter remains a consequent of the first, then one wonders of the subject is still the sage, or if it is now the opposite of the sage, i.e. a petty person, then it would be difficult to understand the phrase 无近刑 *wú*

¹⁶⁰ ACG, 62.

jìng xíng as an imperative, which is what Graham's translation seems to suggest. Guō Xiàng comments that one is to "Forget the good and the ill whilst remaining in the middle, flow with the automatic/natural/spontaneous behavior of myriad things, blandly become one with the most apposite; thus one distances oneself from punishment and fame, thereupon the completion of *lǐ* is within the body." 忘善惡而居中，任萬物之自為，悶然與至當為一，故刑名遠已，而全理在身也。¹⁶¹

This logic is what Wang Shu-min finds forced: "if we take *shàn* and *è* as opposite meanings [of 'good' and 'bad'], the first phrase [of the main text] may be easy to understand, but the consecutive line is difficult to explain, for it would then seem to be leading others to do horrid things" 以善惡對言，上句猶易明，下句最難解，似有引人為惡之嫌. He then attempts to offer his own explanation: "what is called *shàn* and *è* are references to what nourishes life. *Wéi shàn* means 'to regard as good the nourishment of life,' and *wéi è* means to not regard as good the nourishment of life."¹⁶² Then, 為善无近名，為惡无近刑 could then be understood as an appositional phrase "X 無 Y 也": "as excellence, there is no approaching fame; as malevolent, there is no approaching harm."

Usually, when 名 *míng* is used in contrast to 刑 *xíng*, we translate this pair as 'name' and 'shape.' In the *Hán fēi zǐ* 韓非子 these terms are used specifically for "checking against names in contrast with correcting them." Graham explains, "Although a Legalist system certainly assumes an accepted usage for fitting names to objects, titles to offices, Han Fei is generally concerned not with name correctly but with 'aligning' (*t'san* 參) and 'matching' (*wu* 伍) the 'shape' (*hsing* 刑) of a man's performance against

¹⁶¹ Guō Qingfān (see n. 148), 3.55.

¹⁶² 所謂善，惡乃就養生言之。為善調善養生。為惡調不善養生。WSM, 1:100, n.3.

its [i.e. the ‘shape’ of the performance] ‘name’, the verbal formulation of his own proposal or the ruler’s command.”¹⁶³ The ‘name’ of something is the actualization of a fact into words, specifically an official title or a state law. The ‘shape’ of something is the shape, or form, that the name takes in actual implementation. For Hán Fēi there needs to be a complete correlation between the ‘name’ and its ‘shape’ in order for state rulership and bureaucracy to be effective. Keeping this context in mind, another alternative translation for the disputed line 為善无近名，為惡无近刑 would be something like: “in acting in excellence, there is no advancing toward being named [as in reputation], in acting in malevolence, there is no advancing toward taking shape [in practice].”

One could even go further in taking 惡 as *wù* ‘to abhor’ functioning as subject complement to 為 *wéi*, then the phrase 為惡无近刑 would be construed as “acting in revulsion without advancing toward taking shape” so that that which is revulsed by the action is not further materialized. 為善无近名 would likewise be translated as “acting in excellence without advancing toward being named.” The implication is to act spontaneously without worrying about consequences, and in this way one is able to take the middle path while avoiding extremes.

- c. Guō Xiàng’s commentary replaces a few words into a new construction: 順中以為常也. JDSW: Lǐ Yí explains that *yuán* means *shùn* ‘to follow,’ *dū* means *zhōng* ‘center,’ and *jīng* means *cháng* ‘constant, standard.’ 緣順也，督中也，經常也.¹⁶⁴ The definition for 督 *dū* as ‘center’ has caused some philological confusion. The following are three possible definitions: (1) If we take 督 *dū* as a loan graph for /示毒/ (if the phonetic

¹⁶³ Graham, *Disputers*, 283 (see n. 86).

¹⁶⁴ Guō Qīngfān, 55 (see n. 149).

element for this strange word is the right hand side 毒 *dú* < dowk < *[d]ʰuk we can assume that /示毒/ might have had a similar pronunciation), which the SWJZ defines as 衣躬縫 the seam along the body of a robe. 督 *dū* can also be written as 𦉳 *dú* < sowk < *[s]ʰuk (or *dú* < towk < *tʰuk) which the SWJZ says that it refers to the **back seam**. Either way, we can here understand it to be something that holds two halves of a whole robe along the center.¹⁶⁵ (2) Another meaning is that pertaining to Chinese medicine, where 督 *dū* is one of two **main veins** 脈 *mai*. The meaning of *dū* is such that it occupies a central position along the vertices of the back governing breathing functions. (3) And finally, the word can be used with the meaning of ‘**center, middle**’ as in Zhèng Xuán’s 鄭玄 commentary in the “Kǎo gōng jì” 考工記 section of the *Lǐ jì* 禮記. On the line “the main hallway is ten-plus-two units” 堂涂十有二分, Zhèng comments “the length of dividing the [two] parts from the center” 分其督旁之脩。 Jiǎ Gōngyán’s 賈公顏 subcommentary: “The **name of the center** is called *dū*, it is that which *dū* follows along two halves” 名中央為督，督者所以督率兩旁。¹⁶⁶ Thus we see in all three senses listed above, *dū* suggests a meaning of something that holds a central position, both literally and figuratively, through which all else flows.

- d. It is unclear how this verse fits in with the rest of the passage. Wang Shu-min’s explanation, although more substantive than other commentaries, still seems unsatisfying. Chapter 3 of the *Zz* is acknowledged to be heavily fragmented, and thus as Graham asserts we need to rely partly on the theme of the chapter as a whole. For Graham, this

¹⁶⁵ It is perhaps significant that the OC pronunciation for /示毒/ *[d]ʰuk and 𦉳 *tʰuk are quite similar, and if 督 *dū* was really written as 𦉳 *dú*, this would strengthen the hypothesis that 督 *dū* was a loan graph for /示毒/ *dú* (?).

¹⁶⁶ WSM 1:101, n. 4.

theme is the “recovery of the spontaneity of vital process when we abandon analytic knowledge and trust to the daemonic insight and aptitude which enters us from beyond, from Heaven.”¹⁶⁷ As already mentioned, these lines constitute a distinct literary form from the rest, and indeed consist of rhymes.

- | | |
|--------------|----------------------------|
| 1 為善无近名， | míng < *C.meŋ |
| 2 為惡无近刑。 | xíng < *-eŋ ¹⁶⁸ |
| 3 緣督以為經， | jīng < *k-l'eŋ |
| 4 可以保身，可以全生， | shēng < *sreŋ |
| 5 可以養親，可以盡年。 | nián < *C.n'i[ŋ] |

Given that the OC reconstructions are relatively accurate, we can see that all five lines have the same ending rhymes, the ending of *nián* < *-i[ŋ] is a bit different with a slightly more fronted vowel i instead of e, but the rhyme is not inconceivable.

The first couplet clearly shows that *shàn* and *è/wù* should contrast with each other semantically. Following Wang Shu-min above in note b., we can translate ll. 1-2 as “to regard as good/bad without approaching fame/punishment.” This means to be able to act without preference for any specific result. Usually, if what follows from good actions, one expects some kind of gratification, e.g. fame as a kind of reward. Likewise, one expects punishment from ill deeds. It is this anticipation for either consequence that requires a balance system of reward and punishment. It is thus better to follow the middle

¹⁶⁷ ACG, 62. Lù Démíng’s introductory line to Chapter 3 simply says, “Nourishing life takes the following as the most important” 養生以此為主也. As quoted in Guō Qíngfān (see n. 148), 54.

¹⁶⁸ The OC reconstruction for *xíng* is not included in BS, but because it can be found in the same Middle Chinese rime group 耕 as *míng*, I will conclude that whatever the initial, the reconstruction of the ending should be similar to the ending *-eŋ. See David McCraw, *Stratifying Zhuangzi: Rhyme and Other Quantitative Evidence* (Taipei: Institute of Linguistics, Academia Sinica, 2010), 61.

way (緣督 *yuán dū*), indifferent from either extreme without valuing either alternative, and without judgment. To take this way as one's standard 經 *jīng* is to allow all else to unfold according and naturally. In this way one is able to “protect the self” 保身, “make whole one's life” 全生, “nourish one's parents” 養親, and “last out one's years” 盡年. Considered in isolation, this “poem” makes perfect sense. But its position as sandwiched between two other passages that have to do with knowledge, these lines seem rather out of context, making it difficult to reconcile. Unless we take this verse as expounding a wisdom of life.

- e. This line forms a pair of near-perfect parallel construction:

足之於地也踐，雖踐，恃其所不躡而後善博也。

人之於知也少，雖少，恃其所不知而後知天之所謂也。

The **ground** where the foot treads is small, yet small as it is, it depends on the untrodden ground to have scope to range;

The **knowledge** that a man needs is little, yet little as it is, he depends on what he does not know to know what is meant by ‘Heaven.’

We can illustrate the relation between the two analogies with the following formula:

Feet : Ground :: Human : Knowledge.

There must then also be a direct semantic relation between the word 踐 *jiàn* and the word 少 *shǎo* ‘scarce, little.’ But 踐 *jiàn* is generally understood as a verb meaning ‘to step, tread on’ and by extension, ‘to perform, fulfill.’ Yú Yuē 俞樾 (1821-1907) suggests that the two words 踐 *jiàn* and 躡 *zhǎn* can both mean 淺 *qiǎn* ‘slight, small,’ and that either there is a graphic confusion, or that they were mutually

interchangeable 通用 in ancient times.¹⁶⁹ Qing scholar Lín Yún míng 林雲銘 further explicates that in order for feet realize that its footsteps are quite small, the road would have to provide the seemingly unbounded spatial conditions of far and wide.¹⁷⁰ Likewise, for humans to realize the infinitude of knowledge, they must first be able to recognize that there are many things they do not know.

Commentary

To know heaven is to know its ways, and how to live in accordance to the ways of heaven. It is an unwritten practical know-how of the way of life. The “untrodden ground” is analogous to the vast unknown and unbounded Way. The small area of ground where we have walked upon, or the part of the whole corpus of knowledge that we have investigated, is minute. The unbounded Way as vast and inexhaustible, whatever is meant by “heaven” cannot be fully exhausted by human knowledge, which puts into perspective the infinitude of knowledge. But this is acceptable, and should not bother us. Heaven is the inexhaustible infinitude of knowledge. We should take comfort in this, and gaze up in awe and wonder. For we must remember: we are but finite human beings, and not immortals. In accepting the fact that we cannot exhaust knowledge, we will spend less time on “chop logic” (disputing whether two different qualities are mutually inclusive or exclusive). Instead of “flowing between confines” which will be disruptive to the natural course of things, we should flow amongst the unconfined universe, and become one with the myriad things.

¹⁶⁹ Guō Qīngfān (see n. 148), 377.

¹⁷⁰ WSM, 2:989, n. 1.

夫道，有情有信，無為無形，可傳而不可受，可得而不可見，自本自根，未有天地，自古以固存。¹⁷¹

As for the Way, it is something with essence,^a something to trust in, but does nothing, has no shape. It can be handed down but not taken as one's own, can be grasped but not seen. Itself the trunk, itself the root, since before there was a heaven and an earth inherently from of old it is what it was.¹⁷²

Textual Notes

- a. Xī Tóng 奚侗 gives a comment on 情 *qíng* as a loan graph for 精 *jīng*. Ch'ien Mu objects that this is an unnecessary step, remarking that a graphic loan does not change the semantic meaning of the word.¹⁷³ Graham translates 情 *qíng* as 'identity.' In an Appendix to Graham's article on "The Mencian Theory of Human Nature," he explicates on the pre-Han usage of *qíng* meaning 'the facts' as a noun, 'genuine' as an adjective, and 'genuinely' as an adverb. "In philosophy *ch'ing* is generally used not of situations ('the facts') but of things. The *ch'ing* of X is 'what is genuinely X in it,' 'what X essentially is,' often contrasted with its *hsing* 刑 'shape' or *mao* 貌 'guise, demeanor.'" Graham has asserted that *qíng* definitely cannot mean 'passions,' and suggested that the most closely associated English equivalent for *qíng* is 'essence,' (which is actually quite close to the meaning of 精 *jīng*) and warns against the Aristotelian association, which he does not

¹⁷¹ HYCT 6:29-30.

¹⁷² ACG, 86.

¹⁷³ WSM 1:230, n.1.

further explain.¹⁷⁴ The word we use today for Aristotle's "essence" comes from the Roman translation *essentia* for the original Greek phrase *to ti ên einai*, 'the what it was to be' of a thing. In Aristotle's own words, the "essence of each thing is what it is said to be in virtue of itself."¹⁷⁵ And further on, "essence will belong, just as the 'what' does, primarily and in the simple sense to substance, and in a secondary way to the other categories [e.g. quality, quantity, time, space, etc] also..."¹⁷⁶ Aristotle's notion of substance and essence is extremely complicated, and due to the limited scope of this paper cannot be fully explored. It suffices to say for the moment, at the risk of generalizing, that in the *Metaphysics*, essence is used in relation to the definition of things themselves, not words, and is primary to a thing's identity. This seems quite compatible with Graham's rendition of the *qíng* of X as 'what is genuinely X in it,' and so remains puzzling what part of the Aristotelian association he finds problematic.

Commentary

The meaning of the tao is quite frequently abstracted, sometimes mystifies, particularly when the word appears in texts deemed to be of "philosophical" nature, such as the *Lǎozǐ*. Much ink has already been spilt trying to articulate the meaning of the tao, despite the famous opening to the *dào jīng*: "the way that can be 'way'-ed is not the constant Way; the name that can be named is not the constant name."¹⁷⁷ One could certainly choose this approach, but another alternative is to

¹⁷⁴ See Graham, "The Background of the Mencian Theory of Human Nature" in *Studies in Chinese Philosophy*, 59-65 (see n. 90).

¹⁷⁵ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1029b14.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 1030a29-30. See also Christopher Shields, "Aristotle", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2015 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2015/entries/aristotle/>>.

¹⁷⁷ 道可道非常道，名可名非常名. As translated by Graham in *Disputers*, 219 (see n. 86).

understand tao as ‘way’ or ‘method’ with practical implications like “how to walk the way,” “what is the method to proceed,” or as Graham would have it, “Where is the Way” to “order the state and conduct personal life”?¹⁷⁸ Classical Chinese thought was much preoccupied with the tao as Western philosophy was (and still is) with “being,” though I am not making any claims on equivalence in usage or meaning between these two preoccupations. I quite agree with Hu Shih that tao “simply means a way or method; a way of individual life, of social contact, of public activity and government, etc. In short, philosophy has set out in quest of a way or method of ordering the world, of understanding it and bettering it.”¹⁷⁹ The point is that there is no need to obscure the meaning of tao.

In this short passage we are told that abstracted tao has “essence” (*qíng*), can be trusted, lacks movement and form, can be transmitted but not sensed. When embodied within a situation or thing, it takes shape and gives form. “The Way gives [man] the guise, Heaven gives him the shape.”¹⁸⁰

南伯子葵問乎女偶曰，子之年長矣，而色若孺子，何也。曰，吾聞道矣。南伯子葵曰，道可得學邪。曰，惡，惡可，子非其人也。夫卜梁倚有聖人之才，而無聖人之道，我有聖人之道，而無聖人之才，吾欲以教之，庶幾其果為聖人乎。不然，以聖人之道告聖人之才，亦易矣。吾猶守而告之，參日而後能外天下，已外天下矣，吾又守之，七日而後能外物，已外物矣，吾又守之，九日而後能外生，已外生矣，而後能朝徹，朝徹，而後能見獨，見獨，而後能無古今，無古今，而後能入於不死不

¹⁷⁸ Graham, *Disputers*, 3 (see n. 86).

¹⁷⁹ Hu Shih, *The Development of the Logical Method in Ancient China* (Shanghai: The Oriental Book Company, 1928), 17.

¹⁸⁰ ACG, 82. This line appears in the fifth chapter of the *Zz*, translated by Graham as “The signs of fullness of power.”

生。殺生者不死，生生者不生。其為物，無不將也，無不迎也，無不毀也，無不成也。其名為櫻寧。櫻寧也者，櫻而後成者也。南伯子葵曰，子獨惡乎聞之。曰，聞諸副墨之子，副墨之子聞諸洛誦之孫，洛誦之孫聞之瞻明，瞻明聞之聶許，聶許聞之需役，需役聞之於謳，於謳聞之玄冥，玄冥聞之參寥，參寥聞之疑始。¹⁸¹

Tzu-k'ui of Nan-po^a asked the woman Chü,^b "You are old in years, how is it that you look fresh as a child?"

"I have heard the Way."

"Can the Way be learned?"

"Mercy me, it can't be done, you're not the man for it! That Pu-liang Yi had the stuff of the sage but not the Way of a sage.^c I have the Way of a sage but not the stuff of a sage. I wanted to teach it to him; could it be that he would really become a sage? Nonetheless, it is easy to tell the Way of a sage to someone with the stuff of a sage. Still, I wouldn't leave him alone until I'd told him: three days in a row and he was able to put the world outside him. When he had got the world outside him, again I wouldn't leave him alone, and by the seventh day he was able to put the things we live on outside him. When he got the things we live on outside him, again I wouldn't leave him alone. By the ninth day he was able to put life itself outside him. Once he had got life itself outside him, he could break through to the daylight,^d and then he could see the Unique, and then he could be without past and present, and then he could enter into the undying, unliving. That which kills off the living does not die, that which gives birth to the living has never been born. As for the sort of thing it is, there is nothing it does not escort,

¹⁸¹ From "Dà zōng shī." HYCT 6:36-45.

nothing it does not welcome, nothing it does not destroy, nothing it does not complete. Its name is 'At home where it intrudes.' What is 'at home where it intrudes' is that which comes about only where it intrudes into the place of something else."^e

"Where did you of all people come to hear of that?"

"I heard it from Inkstain's son, who heard it from Bookworm's grandson,^f who heard it from Wide-eye, who heard it from Eavesdrop,^g who heard it from Gossip, who heard it from Singsong,^h who heard it from Obscurity, who heard it from Mystery,ⁱ who heard it from what might have been Beginning."¹⁸²

Textual Notes

- a. Chéng's subcommentary tells us that 葵 *kui* is a graphic (?) mistake 字之誤 for 綦 *qí*, and identifies this 南伯子葵 to be the same person as the 南郭子綦 who appears in the "Worldly business among men" 人間世 *rén jiān shì* and also at the beginning of the "The Sorting Which Evens Things Out" chapters. In the "Worldly business among men" and "Xū wú guǐ" there is also an individual by the name 南伯子綦. Contrary to Chéng's identification of a graphic mistake, the JDSW quotes Lǐ Yí saying that 葵 *kui* < gjwǐj < ***g**wǐj is a phonetic mistake 聲之誤 for 綦 *qí* < gi < ***g**ǝ. But other than the OC initial *g- the vowels and endings are different, thus the pronunciations are only 30% alike. On the other hand, 郭 *guō* < kwak < ***k**w^sak and 伯 *bó* < paek < ***p**'rak are similar in pronunciation, both containing *-**s**ak. As for the initials, a labial and a bilabial velar, these two places of articulation have been shown to have common correspondences

¹⁸² ACG, 87.

throughout the development history of languages. And as William G. Boltz explicated on the direct relation between phonetics and semantics of words, “all other things being equal, the closer the pronunciations (typically, but not necessarily, when coupled with a common graphic element), the likelier the possibility of a semantic, i.e., a cognate or etymological, relation among the words in question.”¹⁸³ Thus, it is easier to accept the possibility of an equivalence between 郭 *guō* < *kʷak and 伯 *bó* < *pʳak than to accept Lǐ’s hypothesis of a phonetic mistake between 葵 *kuí* < *gʷij and 綦 *qí* < *gə.

- b. Chéng identifies 女偶 as a woman of ancient times who had embodied the *tao*. Xu says that 偶 *yǒu* should be pronounced as 禹 *yǔ* < hjuX < *C.Gʷ(r)aʔ (this word is not listed in BS, but I am guessing its OC pronunciation would be similar based on the same reconstructed MC pronunciation for 兩 *yǒu* which is listed in their appendix), but Li says that it should be pronounced as 矩 *jǔ* < kjuX < *[k]ʷ(r)aʔ instead.
- c. Boltz has a very intriguing discussion on abstract space in the Later Mohist Canons, and for our interest here particularly the etymological relation between 在 *zài* < *ddzə-q ‘to be located somewhere,’ 才 *cái* < *ddzə ‘talent,’ 材 *cái* < *ddzə ‘innate capacity,’ and 財 *cái* < *ddzə ‘inherent material worth,’ all belonging to the same *xiéshēng* series. He explains that these words “all fundamentally [refer] to a kind of innate or ingrafted quality of one kind or another. The underlying sense for all of these is ‘implanted, inset,’ thus for *zài* 在 the precise sense is ‘implanted’ > ‘set, located, positioned.’”¹⁸⁴ I have retained Boltz’s OC reconstructions. The word 才 *cái* would refer to an innate ability

¹⁸³ William G. Boltz, “Review: Logic, Language, and Grammar in Early China,” *JAOS* 120.2 (Apr. – Jun., 2000): 226.

¹⁸⁴ William G. Boltz and Matthias Schemmel, “The Language of ‘Knowledge’ and ‘Space’ in the Later Mohist Canon” (Berlin: Max-Planck-Institut für Wissenschaftsgeschichte, preprint 442), 35.

‘implanted’ within an individual, or ‘talent’ as Boltz has translated it, but appears to occupy an independent space from *tao*. We may even suggest that whatever *tao* is, it is not necessarily something innate, but is rather acquired, and can be taught. This is why despite having the ‘stuff’ (Graham) or ‘talent’ (Boltz) of a sage, he does not yet have the *tao* of a sage. 夫卜梁倚有聖人之才，而無聖人之道。

- d. On 朝徹 *zhāo chè*: JDSW “朝 *zhāo* means sunrise, and 徹 *chè* means to arrive at the marvelous *tao* 達妙之道. Similarly, Yú Yuē following the *Éryǎ* gloss takes *zhāo* as ‘morning,’ and *chè* as ‘to reach, arrive at.’ On a slightly different note, Xī Tóng following the SWJZ entry for 朝 as dawn (旦 *dàn*) or brightness (明 *míng*) construes 朝徹 as 明徹 “brightness arrives.” Wang agrees with Xī Tóng, and says that it means 明達 “brightness is penetrated.”¹⁸⁵ Graham translates it as “to break through to the daylight.” It seems to be forming a parallel to 見獨 in the following line, meaning “to see the solitary.” If we follow SWJZ in understanding *zhāo* as *míng* ‘to illuminate’ then we can see the correspondence in meaning with *jiàn/xiàn* ‘to see, to be seen’ both have to do with the visual senses. Then *chè* and *dú* would have to both be nouns (if we suppose a parallel construction), ‘arrival’ and ‘the unique,’ respectively.
- e. On 撓寧也者，撓而後成者也. Chéng’s subcommentary glosses 撓 *yīng* as ‘to disturb’ 擾動 *yáo dòng*, and 寧 *níng* as ‘silence’ 寂靜 *jí jìng*, which we could then translate as “to disturb the silence/tranquil.” Wang says that 寧 *níng* is a loan graph for 寧 *níng*, and quotes the SWJZ entry for 寧 as 安 *ān* ‘security,’ and the *Éryǎ* entry for 安 as 定 *dìng* ‘stable.’ Then on the usage of 成 *chéng* Wang quotes a commentary from the *Guóyǔ* 國

¹⁸⁵ WSM, 1:239, n.10.

語 glossing 成 *chéng* as 定 *dìng* ‘stable.’ So that 擾而後成 means something like 擾而後定 “upon being disturbed, it is then stabilized.”¹⁸⁶ Graham objects that the translation “the ‘stable in disturbance’ is what comes about only after being disturbed” is a “strange description of the tao,” and that there is nothing about disturbance in the entire dialogue. He points out that the word 攖 is used in the *Canons* as ‘to coincide,’ and defined as ‘to occupy each other’ 相得. He then suggests as a translation, “The ‘at home where it intrudes’ 攖寧 is that which comes about only where it intrudes into the place of something else.”¹⁸⁷

- f. Chéng’s subcommentary: “to copy out is called ‘making a second copy,’ reciting a text is called ‘repeated incanting.’”¹⁸⁸
- g. On 聶許: Ch’ien Mu following Mǎ Qíchǎng 馬其昶: from the SWJZ we can understand 聶 to mean “secretly [whisper] small talk behind ears” 附耳私小語, and from the *Guáng yǎ* 廣雅 gloss, 許 means ‘to hear’ 聽也.¹⁸⁹
- h. On 於謳: Wang comments that 於 *yū* should be pronounced like 烏 *wū* < ‘u < *q’a. Wáng Xiānqiān defines 謳 as 謠謠也. 謠 *gē* means ‘slander,’ and 謠 *yáo* can either mean ‘folksong, ballad’ or ‘rumor.’¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁶ WSM, 1:240, n. 17.

¹⁸⁷ See his “Textual Notes,” *A Companion* (see n. 88), 27.

¹⁸⁸ 臨本謂之副墨，背文謂之洛誦. WSM, 1:240, n. 2. I thank Professor David R. Knechtges for supplying this translation.

¹⁸⁹ WSM, 1:240, n. 3.

¹⁹⁰ WSM, 1:241, n. 4.

- i. 參寥 *cān liáo*: JDSW “Li says that *cān* means ‘high.’ Something with the appearance of high altitude, and is empty and wide cannot be named” 參寥，李云參高也。高邈寥曠不可名也。Chén Bìxū 陳碧虛 further says, “*xuán míng* refers to peaceful and solitary, *cān liáo* refers to reaching the extreme” 玄冥謂幽漠，參寥謂造極。¹⁹¹ 副墨，洛誦，瞻明，聶許，需役，and 於謳 are all not only fictitious names made up by the author of *Zz*, but also only occur once in the text of the *Zz*, with the *Zz* being the only place these items occur within the pre-Qin classical texts. This is probably why there have been many attempts to explain the etymology of these items. Graham translates these as personifications (in order of appearance): Inkstain, Bookworm, Wide-eye, Eavesdrop, Singsong, Obscurity, Mystery, and Beginning.

Commentary

It is not readily apparent to me what the relations are amongst these eight personified entities. We may speculate there to be some kind of lineage, or transmission. Starting from the end of the passage with “what might have been Beginning” and proceeding backwards to Mystery and Obscurity, we can say that these three are all abstract entities, masses of unnamed and undifferentiated stuffs. Then, we see the “telling” of the tao by means of senses: Singsong, Gossip, Eavesdrop, and Wide-eye. Finally, with Bookworm and Inkstain, the tao is recorded by brush and bamboo.

Admittedly, this explanation is rather impressionistic. For all we know, these names could simply have been created by the author out of whim during one of his more rhapsodic

¹⁹¹ WSM, 1:241, n.5.

literary moments, or “rambling modes,” as Graham has called it.¹⁹² The conversation begins with a woman claiming that she has “heard” the way. We assume that the kinds of people who wish to learn of the way want to become sages. If they are to succeed, they must possess both the stuff and the tao of a sage, as we saw in note c. We can understand “stuff” and “tao” as two kinds of attributes, or qualities that can occupy the same space/person without coinciding. One becomes a sage by acquiring the ability to do the following: make external from oneself the entire sub-celestial realm; make external from him material objects; and make external life itself.

¹⁹² Graham, “Two Notes on the Translation of Taoist Classics,” in *A Companion* (see n. 88), 141-55.

CONCLUSION: WHAT IS PHILOSOPHY?

The heart of this thesis is essentially centered in the “Introduction,” where we began with the problem of translation and saw how it complicated interdisciplinary and cross-cultural studies, particularly that of the cultures of Classical China and Europe, and the disciplines of Masters studies and philosophy. In 0.1 we looked briefly at the etymology of ‘philosophy’ which primarily means ‘love of wisdom’ as distinct from the evolution of philosophy as an academic discipline. Then, in 0.2 we turned to the East and explored the infiltration of ‘philosophy’ as both a mode of thinking and part of the Western university curriculum first by the Meiji scholars, and then by Chinese intellectuals. We traced the origin of the first translation of ‘philosophy’ as *tetsugaku* by Nishi Amane, and saw how the Japanese had framed Classical Chinese thought against or within what they believed to be ‘philosophy.’ Late nineteenth to early twentieth century Chinese intellectuals then took the Japanese term and within their own discourse on the relation between ‘philosophy’ and Masters studies debated the importance and dangers of conflating these two disciplines. While some seemed enthusiastic and eager to equate ‘philosophy’ and Classical Chinese thought (e.g. Hu Shih 胡適, Fung Yu-lan 馮友蘭, Wáng Guówéi 王國維), others were hesitant, with at least one fairly unsympathetic individual (Fu Ssu-nien 傅斯年). Thus arose the question of whether there was such a thing as ‘Chinese philosophy,’ which has continued into the twenty-first century of today. The implicit problem is a confusion between ‘philosophy’ as a way of thinking, and ‘philosophy’ as an evolving academic discipline.

The former finds itself in the Ancient Greek definition of ‘philosophy’ as ‘love of wisdom.’ A ‘philosopher’ is then a ‘lover of wisdom’ as articulated by Pythagoras, Plato, and Aristotle. It is essentially dialectical, with no claims on truth or knowledge, and an annoying

insistence on the method of *elenchī* (refutation)—its sole purpose is to examine the individual and expose his/her *aporias* (contradictions). The final paradox of philosophy as ‘love of wisdom’ is that wisdom can never be attained, only chased after, and looked at from below in awe. The figure of Socrates as the wisest man in Athens is the epitome of the philosopher as a lover of wisdom, precisely because he knows that he knows nothing. As such, philosophy is a mode of being whereby the individual is constantly engaging in a transformative event, both internally in the mind (such as when one changes her mind through self examination) and externally in actions (the actualization of self-examination in practice).

The latter, ‘philosophy’ as an academic discipline, is a historical systematization that takes ‘philosophy’ as a manageable set of knowledge that can be learnt, dividing it into categorical subsets of speculative subjects including epistemology, logic, ethics, and metaphysics. The paradoxical consequence of this division is the abstraction of philosophy from a practical way of life into theoretical realm of analytic thinking. Envisioned as such, is then no surprise that questions such as “what is philosophy,” “is there such a thing as Chinese philosophy” should become a disputable issue. Both the Meiji scholars and early twentieth century Chinese thinkers (and many self-proclaimed philosophers today) have been misguided in defining philosophy primarily as logical thinking that is “orderly, systematic, and structured” containing some discernible “truth.”

Finally, in 0.3 I noted the imbalance in the dispute of “what is Chinese philosophy” with the lack of scholarly attention on the origin of the Japanese phrase 希哲學 *kitetsugaku* in Tang dynasty scholar Zhōu Dūnyí’s 周敦頤 *Tōng shū* 通書, and the etymology of 哲 *zhé* as ‘wisdom.’ In offering a more engaging discussion of the Eastern counterpart to ‘philosophy,’ I hope to have expanding the horizons in understanding the meaning of philosophy not as an exclusive term

belonging to any specific culture, but as a fundamental mode of living that can be pursued universally.

In chapter one, I briefly discussed the biographical and bibliographical records of both the man and the text with the name of “Zhuāngzǐ,” and gave an overview of the complications associated with the textual history that question the traditional assumption of there having ever been a man named Zhuāngzǐ who had written a homogenous text titled *Zhuāngzǐ*. I noted in particular the significance of the Qing dynasty philologists and how evidential research provided a new set of standards heavily based on verification for the study of classical texts. Lastly, I looked at contributions from modern scholar Guān Fēng and how his methods and conclusions may have influenced or differed from A. C. Graham’s survey of the *Zhuāngzǐ*. The main highlights of this section is to firstly show the importance of philological techniques in reading and understanding classical texts – and actually used in practice in the subsequent translations in chapter two. Secondly, it is to reaffirm the conclusions of the *Zhuāngzǐ* as a heterogenous body of material, and hence to also help limit the scope of this thesis by concentrating on the inner sections, which are believed to be written by one person.

Then in chapter two, as a way to reconceptualize ‘Chinese philosophy’ I focused on selected passages from the *Zhuāngzǐ* that have something to do the two “faces” of philosophy: the analytical, and the irrational. Between these two extremes, we can find a quasi-structural pseudo-system that pretends to conform to the sixth century BCE language games of disputation, but that, like a pesky and obnoxious child, ultimately aims to overturn this system by exposing the inherent contradictions of categorical divisions between “this” and “that,” “right” and “wrong.” The matching of name and object being arbitrary, meanings are formed in the creative acts of expression. This was illustrated in 2.1 with translations from the second chapter of the

Zhuāngzǐ that deal with the problem of language. In 2.2, we looked at the figure of the “true man” (真人 *zhēn rén*) as he appears throughout the respective second and sixth chapters of the “*Qí wù lùn*” and “*Dà zōng shī*.”

The last subject for translation ended with how the *Zhuāngzǐ* addresses the question of knowledge and truth in 2.3. There is “this” kind of knowledge that seeks to answer those questions with a presupposition of having a right or wrong answer (disputation). There is also that kind of knowledge that seeks to question these presumed answers first by exposing the contradictions and ambiguity caused by language, and then to offer its own answer that does not side with any fixed set of facts (pure experience). This “true knowledge” (真知 *zhēn zhī*) presents itself as an axis, a middle way without limits on either side. As such, “true knowledge” is understood as a “way” (道 *tao*) of life, a “method” (道 *tao*) of thinking that does not choose between alternatives, does not bother with 是 *shì* “this/right” or 非 *fēi* “not-this/wrong,” and so does not involve scheming actions but only to live spontaneously and die peacefully. It takes only as its standard the middle path (緣督以為經), a journey along which the range is boundless and infinite.

John Makeham expresses his thoughts on the debate about the place and value of philosophy within the context of the Classical Chinese 諸子學 *zhūzǐ xué* “Masters studies”: “Although the term 哲學 *zhéxué* is a translation of the Western term ‘philosophy’ its written form has historically-embedded normative connotations which are independent of meanings associated with modern Western notions of ‘philosophy.’ [...] Implicit in the concept of *zhéxué* when applied to Chinese contexts are such notions as the authority invested in sages and sage-like historical figures. [...] The epigraph to this introduction is one expression of this goal of

emulating worthies and sages so that one might be *transformed*.”¹⁹³ I agree with everything Makeham has said, but differ in the respect that I strongly believe there is much more to the act of ‘emulation.’ While I cannot deny that the “historically-embedded normative connotations” of *zhéxué* developed independently and differently from that of the Western term ‘philosophy,’ it is not so much the authority that should be emphasized, but rather what happens in the act of emulation insofar as it is an event of imitation.

I say ‘imitation’ in the sense of how the imitator enacts out the imitated in a theater. When one takes up the role of Hamlet, for example, one does not merely ‘imitate’ in the way of “Lawrence Olivier is pretending to be Hamlet.” Rather, Lawrence has been transformed into Hamlet as soon as he steps onto the stage—he is Hamlet, no longer Lawrence. His entire being has been consumed by the other’s identity to the point where all distinctions have vanished. The presence of Hamlet has been completely overtaken in the absence of Lawrence. This is the transformative event that happens in imitation, and this is what distinguishes an exceptional performance from a mediocre one. As the curtains lower, Hamlet returns to the identity of Lawrence. The mask is cast away, now revealing an individual, who once being transformed is no longer the same person prior to his inaction of Hamlet. The character of Hamlet in all his complexity and indecisiveness, all his weaknesses and passions, has moved something in Lawrence so long as John has allowed himself to be transformed, even if for a few hours on stage. The theme of transformation is not alien to the *Zhuāngzǐ*, the parable of the butterfly quite possible the most often quoted lines. For better or for worse, it has even become representative of the thought of the *Zhuāngzǐ*, but in addition to the emphasis on transformation as what takes

¹⁹³ John Makeham, *Learning to Emulate the Wise: The Genesis of Chinese Philosophy as an Academic Discipline in Twentieth-Century China* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2012), 4.

place between waking and dreaming states, it is also a description of the movement from life to death.

Why should it matter whether one turns into a “rat’s liver or a fly’s leg?” For as Master Lai contemplates on his death bed, “That hugest of clumps of soil loaded me with a body, had me toiling through a life, eased me with old age, rests me with death; therefore that I found it good to live is the very reason why I find it good to die. [...] Now if once and for all I think of heaven and earth as a vast foundry, and the fashioner and transformer as the master smith, wherever I am going why should I object? I’ll fall into a sound sleep and wake up refreshed.”¹⁹⁴ The *Zhuāngzǐ* is at last a celebration of life in its fullest, and attempts to address all facets of the humanity: the rational tendency for order, and the irrational susceptibility to wander; the tragic indecisiveness of an individual torn between private and public life, and the comic reconciliation of the absurd dichotomy between life and death, which is nothing but a transformation of one form into another.

Philosophy as love of wisdom is compatible with Classical Chinese thought insofar as it resonates with the human desire to find answers to all aspects of life—the social, political, cultural, and intellectual—whether demonstrable as a set of propositions, or as something that extends outside the grasp of human knowledge. The continued and unending pursuit of wisdom particularly in contemplating the cosmos and the divine presents an impasse beyond which the human mind cannot transgress. “What is outside the cosmos the sage locates a there, but does not sort out. What is within the cosmos the sage sorts out but does not assess.”¹⁹⁵ The individual, as

¹⁹⁴ A.C. Graham, *Chuang-tzu, the Seven Inner Chapters and other writings from the book Chuang-tzu* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1981), 88-9.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 57.

lover of wisdom, is left standing at the feet of the beloved, in admiration and wonder, for the beloved can never be fully possessed, only imitated by the pursuer.

If anything, I hope to have demonstrated the difficulties inherent in reading a classical Chinese text, and affirmed that regardless of what one aspires to gain from such a text – whether it may be intellectual, scientific, or anthropological clues about the past – one must first be able to thoroughly engage with the text in all its linguistic, textual, and historical complexities, and to acknowledge how these variations may or may not effect one's understanding and translation of the text. Equally important is to be familiar with that particular perspective – philosophical, literary, or historical – to say anything meaningful and substantial about the text. It is only when these two faces, textual analysis and content interpretation, are fully addressed that one can begin to truly *read* a text.

I do not hope to have offered any definitive conclusion for the definition of philosophy, but only wish to have refuted the misconceptions that as a Greek term it cannot be understood from within other contexts and is therefore untranslatable. Philosophy, insofar as it is a love for wisdom, a quest for knowledge, defies attempts to confine it within a rigid system. I also hope to have brought back to the forefront the basic and fundamental meaning of philosophy not as a divisible disciplinary subject, but as a way of life that transcends boundaries of East or West, and that even disputes on the status and definition of philosophy, as rational or irrational, Greek or Chinese, is itself philosophy at work. To have been transformed is to have philosophized. To have doubted one's preconceptions and presuppositions is to be in a process of being at home with oneself. It is to accept the contradictions and ambivalence of the heart and mind, and to be at peace with the unreconciled. This way of life, this way of wonderment, is philosophy.

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