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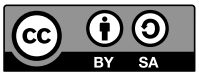

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Editor's Foreword: Confucianism and Education

*Jana S. ROŠKER**

Since Immanuel Kant's seminal essay "What is Enlightenment?", independent, autonomous and critical thinking has stood at the forefront of any "progressive" (and even any reasonable) theory of education. In today's neo-liberal and globalized world, the common trend of making everything a marketable commodity has also affected this, notwithstanding the fact that the ability to establish one's critical and independent judgement remains the very basis of becoming an autonomous individual, and represents a central pillar of democracy. As such, critical thinking has become a product that can be bought, sold or even stolen—just like its traditional breeding ground, namely institutionalized education. It may thus be time to mourn the loss of the critical mind, and so mark the sad end of a certain kind of education, one which gave a key place to the humanities.

However, instead of grieving for such losses and memorializing the end of the European subject, who has obviously lost his free will in the whirlwind of the all-embracing market economy, and sadly died in front of the barbed-wire fences defending his homeland from thousands of unarmed, weakened, starving and freezing refugees, we are searching for alternatives.

As such, we present in this issue another kind of education. Admittedly, the values Confucian education aimed to foster did not include much absolute independence, but it still laid emphasis on autonomous critical thinking and genuine humaneness. While many believe that Confucianism is incompatible with the critical mind and personal autonomy, this issue aims to show that this wide-spread prejudice is rooted in a lack of knowledge. The most common image of Confucianism is that it was advocating a strict, rigid and hierarchically structured society based on the absolute obedience of those at the subordinate levels of the system, and, analogously, on absolute power of their superiors. However, we would like to present another picture of Confucian education, one that is more academically justified and closer to the truth. It is important to recall that this model was originally, and especially in the classical Confucian teachings, rooted in the principles of complementarity and reciprocal responsibility. Moreover, while the autocratic model of hierarchy, by which

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the ruler's authority was absolute and their responsibility towards their subordinates reduced to a mere formalism or symbolism, has undeniably held sway in Chinese history, we must also bear in mind that Confucianism in its role as the state doctrine represented the interests of the ruling class, and as such was defined by legalistic elements that are not found in original Confucianism. We must not forget that hierarchic structures are also present in Western democratic systems, and most importantly, authority based on experience, knowledge and abilities is not necessarily a negative ideal, or a threat to individual autonomy.

The Confucian classics stress the important role of ideational and axiological elements, like rituality, relational ethics, the virtues of humaneness and justice, and the crucial role of education as a basic means of cultivating and thus improving (inborn) humaneness in order to achieve progress and social development. While they also lay stress on the so-called "Six Arts"—ritual, music, archery, chariot-riding, calligraphy, and computation—it is clear that the Confucian classics see morality as the most important subject. Confucian didactic methods are rather remarkable. Like Confucius, a Confucian teacher never lectures at length on a subject. Instead, he or she poses questions, quotes passages from the classical works, or applies fitting analogies, and then waits for the students to find the right answers "independently"—by themselves.

According to the *Analects*, Confucius pointed out that thinking without learning is blind, and learning without thinking dangerous. Besides, he also asserted that attacking the views of others is harmful. This tolerance is based on a notion of moral autonomy, which is typical for the Confucian ideal personality, and implicit in most of the Confucian discourses. As such, promoting education is one of the most important Confucian values, and it is better to educate one's children than to give them wealth. However, education is not only the wealth of a person, but also that of the cultures and societies he or she lives within. It is the most valuable inheritance we can give future generations. Moreover, in today's globalized world, in which different traditions can interact and learn from each other, this kind of inheritance can be exchanged, combined, synthesized and thus enriched. Therefore, this special issue wishes to present different approaches to achieving and preserving this, in the West, at least, hidden treasure. It also aims to raise awareness regarding a particular, culturally and historically conditioned model of institutions, didactic structures and axiological priorities, which differs profoundly from traditional Euro-American educational models.

This special issue is structured around three broad themes. The first is linked to the *Contemporary Implications* of Confucian Education, and includes two contributions, written by Kirill O. Thompson and Jana S. Rošker, respectively. It opens with

Thompson's article, entitled "Lessons from Zhu Xi's Views on Inquiry and Learning for Contemporary Advanced Humanities Education and Research". This paper deals with important questions regarding the crisis of contemporary humanities, the sense, purpose and function of which seem to be gradually getting lost in our globalized world. Because of widescale social transitions, which inevitably also influence education at all levels, formal schooling is increasingly often reduced to just the training of efficient professional experts, without considering that every society also needs responsible, thoughtful and cultivated people. As a meaningful alternative, the author introduces Zhu Xi's model of "advanced learning", which is comparable to the contemporary college education and not only provides students with the necessary factual knowledge about society and the world, but also cultivates them in order to develop their sensibility, logic and abilities of autonomous judgement. The author shows that Zhu Xi's educational theories imply the importance of such cultivation, which is a necessary and elementary part of every sensitive, responsible, reflective and self-aware human being. Jana S. Rošker, the author of the second article on this broad theme, writes about "Contemporary Confucianism as a Form of East Asian Social Knowledge", and likewise grounds her contribution in the problematic global tendencies seen in contemporary education. Proceeding from the notion of Confucianism as a form of social knowledge in East Asia, she aims to explain why and how the Modern Confucian emphasis on the traditional Confucian link between comprehension and the ethical evaluation of being is of great importance for a gradual restoration of the "credibility" of ancient Chinese thought in the context of modern social knowledge.

The second theme, entitled *Body and Mind*, proceeds from the introduction of the corporeal aspects of Confucian teachings, through the tacit knowledge implied in their explicit and implicit epistemological methods, and then directly to its linkages to ideologies. It opens with Margus Ott's article "Confucius' Embodied Knowledge". In this the author argues that the modern embodiment theory could help us to understand some critical aspects of Confucianism and the Confucian theory of knowledge, and vice versa. Through a systematic analysis of classical sources, Ott shows that—in contrast to Western ideational history—China in general and Confucianism in particular has a very long tradition of embodied knowledge and embodied cognition. David Bartosch's paper, "Explicit and Implicit Aspects of Confucian Education", investigates Confucian methods of manifest and latent knowledge in order to identify possible approaches for their adaptation, modernization and their fruitful synthesis with modern educational science. The last paper in this set was written by Selusi Ambrogio, and deals with another kind of latent knowledge, investigating the process of (often hidden) forms of ideologically guided misuse of Confucian teachings, and the related teachings of moral education in contemporary

China. This article is entitled "Moral Education and Ideology: The Revival of Confucian Values and the Harmonious Shaping of the New Chinese Man".

The last theme of this special issue deals with Confucian education in the broader geopolitical context of Eastern and South-East Asia, and thus in different regions belonging to the area that was historically influenced by Confucian teachings. As such, its title is *Broader Perspectives*, and it contains three contributions. The first two were written by Marko Ogrizek and Kristina Hmeljak Sangawa. They both explore certain transformations and the fate of Confucian teachings in pre-modern Japan. Ogrizek's article, "Following the Way of the Ancient Kings: The Concept of 'Learning' in the Teachings of Ogyū Sorai", introduces Sorai's concept of learning, which is based on studying "the Way of the ancient Kings". Since Ogyū Sorai is among the most famous and influential Japanese Confucian philosophers of the Edo period, his teachings had wide ranging implications both for the educational and the political system of pre-modern Japan. In order to gain an insight into the ethical and political consequences of Sorai's interpretations, the author demonstrates how and why he was basing his interpretation of value and meaning, as prescribed by the ancient sages, chiefly on the reverence of the unknowable, and his concept of following the Way mainly on faith in the sages. Kristina Hmeljak-Sangawa's paper also deals with the problem of Confucian teachings and education in pre-modern Japan, although from quite a different perspective. In her article entitled "Confucian Learning and Literacy in Japan's Schools of the Edo Period", she investigates the social functions and implications of Chinese Confucian teachings that were written in the kanbun style, on the development of the Japanese educational system and strategies of literacy. Last, but not least, we have to introduce the article "A Vietnamese Reading of the Master's Classic: Phạm Nguyeễn Du's *Humble Comments on the Analects* as an Example of Transformative Learning", which was written by the Vietnamese scholar Nam Nguyen. It offers a remarkable insight into an area, which is still widely unknown in Western scholarship, namely the Vietnamese reception and re-interpretation of Zhu Xi's Neo-Confucianism.

We hope that this diverse issue, which illuminates Confucian teachings and views on education from several different perspectives, will help readers to obtain a better understanding of this important element of ancient and traditional East Asian cultural heritage. It is an especially valuable heritage, which can—*inter alia*—enable us to understand that education is much more than a few years of training in professional expertise. It is a lifelong process, because learning to be truly human is a never-ending project.

Jana S. Rošker, Chief editor

Contemporary Implications

Lessons from Zhu Xi's Views on Inquiry and Learning for Contemporary Advanced Humanities Education and Research

Kirill Olle THOMPSON *

> We don't read poetry because it's cute. We read and write poetry because we are members of the human race. And the human race is filled with passion. So medicine, law, business, engineering… these are noble pursuits and necessary to sustain life. But poetry, beauty, romance, love… These are what we stay alive for. (Kleinbaum 1989)
>
> Whenever we proceed from the known into the unknown, we may hope to understand but we may have to learn at the same time a new way of understanding. (Werner Heisenberg)

Abstract

We are bearing witness to the rapid rise of a brave new world of education as flashy websites and interactive software replace individual study and classroom lectures. The expansion of college lecture halls has been stretched thin with video lessons and distance learning, and the siren call of massive open online courses (MOOCs) by star Ivy League professors renders the traditional classroom barren in the eyes of savvy students who have the system pegged.

Several questions arise in this context. Can the students of today receive a college education in the full sense? Does learning still have the same quality without close interactions with teachers and classmates in small to medium sized classrooms? Does research hold the same significance today when much of the work is done and so much information supplied by computers? What lessons do Zhu Xi's teachings on inquiry and learning have for this educational world of e-texts and cyber-lessons? While not a Luddite tract, the present study raises questions and concerns about the goals and conduct of higher education today which, as Heisenberg avers, should not only aim at transmitting knowledge understood in set ways, but also at inculcating new ways of thinking and understanding.

A college education, as Zhu Xi holds for "advanced learning", is as much about cultivating a thoughtful, responsible person as producing a professional expert. Such education should include cultivating a student's sensitivity, logic, and judgment, as well as knowledge

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about humanity, society, and the world. It is often forgotten that such sensitivity, logic, knowledge, and commitment not only make the student more thoughtful and responsible, in short more self-conscious, but also give her additional perspectives and enhance her professional expertise.

Keywords: Zhu Xi, the humanities, advanced research, self-consciousness, moral perspective

Predavanje z Zhu Xijevega vidika o povpraševanju in učenju za sodobno napredno humanistično učenje in raziskovanje

Izvleček

V sodobnem svetu smo priča eksplozivnemu naraščanju izobraževalnih sistemov krasnega novega sveta. Bleščeče spletne strani in interaktivni programi so v nekaterih primerih že nadomestili individualne pedagoške pristope ter učenje v predavalnicah in učilnicah. Tako študij vse pogosteje poteka preko posnetih predavanj in učenja na daljavo. Skušnjave množičnih spletnih tečajev odprtega tipa so že premamile marsikaterega študenta in marsikdo že meni, da so tradicionalne učilnice zastarele in premalo učinkovite.

S tem se odpira vrsta vprašanj. Ali imajo študentje na sodobnih fakultetah sploh še možnost pridobivanja celovite univerzitetne izobrazbe? Ali je pouk brez osebnega stika med učitelji in učenci v fizičnih učilnicah res enako kakovosten? Ali je raziskovanje dandanes, ko lahko veliko dela namesto nas opravijo računalniki, ki nas zalagajo z nepregledno množico informacij, še vedno enako pomembno, kot je bilo prej? In kaj bi nas lahko v svetu digitalnih besedil in spletnih tečajev naučil Zhu Xi? Študija sicer nima namena najti rešitve za vse probleme, ki nastajajo v procesu omenjene tranzicije, vendar obravnava vprašanja, povezana s cilji in postopki sodobnega izobraževanja, ki naj bi, kot poudarja Henderson, pomenilo več kot zgolj posredovanje znanja. Pravo izobraževanje bi moralo namreč temeljiti tudi na uvajanju novih načinov razmišljanja in razumevanja.

Zhu Xijevo tako imenovano »napredno učenje«, ki je primerljivo s sodobnim univerzitetnim izobraževanjem, se ne osredotoča zgolj na proizvodnjo strokovno podkovanih specialistov, temveč tudi na kultivacijo razmišljajočega, odgovornega človeka. Takšna izobrazba mora vključevati tako razvoj logičnega mišljenja in razumnega odločanja kot tudi razumevanje človeka, družbe in sveta. Dandanes se pogosto pozablja, da je treba faktično znanje in logično razmišljanje povezati tudi s senzibilnostjo in predanostjo; takšna celovita izobrazba pomaga študentom do večjega samozaupanja, hkrati pa odpira nove perspektive in s tem izboljšuje tudi njihovo strokovno znanje.

Ključne besede: Zhu Xi, humanistika, napredno raziskovanje, samozaupanje, moralne perspektive

Introduction

We contemporary scholars feel empowered by our access to digitized data and research materials, not to mention the research aids, search engines, and data

crunchers at our fingertips. We enjoy unprecedented data reach and computational capacity, as well as tools for compiling and arranging materials for our research work and writing. Indeed, I can only imagine the sorts of digital research paper templates now available, and wonder what would Zhu Xi make of these rich data troves and analytic tools? How would he assess the computer assisted approaches people now take in conducting research, reflection, and writing, in the humanities in particular?[1] Would he regard it as adaptable to one's larger purpose of dedicated self-cultivation and person-making, or as inimical to this?[2]

One might respond that Zhu Xi's notion of inquiry and learning is closely bound up with his concept of self-realization under a specific set of values and cultural practices, at some remove from the free-spirited, liberal sort of education that typifies this day and age. For the present discussion, however, let us grant that Zhu Xi's value orientation and notion of knowledge and learning are sufficiently general to be relevant for assessing the advanced level approaches to research, reflection, and writing that are now adopted, and especially in the humanities.

Believing that nature and human life operate according to given sets of patterns, formations, and principles, which make them essentially understandable,[3] Zhu Xi would tend to consider that "humanities" research, reflection, and writing in general should elicit similar sets of patterns and formations, and provoke, whether implicitly or explicitly, similar patterns of cultivational, humanizing self-reflection, development, and realization. That is, while Zhu Xi does adhere to a specific set of Confucian values, cultural practices, and cultivation goals, we here make the assumption that he would tend to see similar sets of values, practices, and goals in play in almost any sincerely and openly conducted humanities reflection, research, and writing. I would venture to add that university and advanced level humanities research and writing in today's universities are thought to involve a project of self-cultivation, reflection, and realization as the student/researcher *ipso*

1 I highlight humanities research, reflection, and writing in particular because they are construed to have, to a certain extent, a cultivational, humanizing effect on the researcher/writer (Nussbaum 1998). Research, reflection, and writing in other fields should have this effect, as well, in terms of the logic and values involved in conducting research, reflection, and writing with honest objectivity, yet with a sense of compassion and good purpose. Humanities research, reflection, and writing tend to involve additional personal self-examination and value reflections.

2 In the Southern Song, Zhu Xi was already concerned that the easy availability of mass printed books was detrimental to learning and cultivation, for students increasingly no longer needed to memorize and recite texts or take them so deeply to heart. He also feared the proliferation of commentaries that could be misleading as often as they were enlightening.

3 Zhu Xi understood these patterns and formations as mapped into focus-fields, *li-qi* (理氣) orders and aesthetic order, and as manifested variously and to be discerned in diverse lights and perspectives. On focus-field and aesthetic order, see Hall and Ames 1987. On *li-qi* orders, see Thompson 2015, 150–6.

facto breaks through her original naive, parochial, biased views and values along the way to establishing the epistemic objectivity, value awareness, and authority necessary for preparing her dissertation, launching her career, and becoming a fully responsible, self-conscious human being.[4]

Cultural and Cultivational Context of Zhu Xi's Approach to Inquiry and Learning

Zhu Xi's approach to inquiry and learning is bound up with what he regards as the core cultivation efforts of abiding in *jing* 敬 (reverence), nurturing the root, and examining the self. For the present considerations, we can regard *jing* as covering the attitudes of concentration, openness, and alertness. Mindfulness has been offered as a suggestive cover term for *jing* cultivation and practice.[5] Nurturing the root is about preserving one's native moral propensities, sense of fairness, and impulse toward goodness and truth.[6] It is to free oneself of acquired prejudices, biases and self-centeredness.[7] Moreover, self-examination refers to assessing the probity of one's motivations and the sincerity of one's intentions, particularly in learning and inquiry in this case, but also in one's life conduct in general. Moreover, Zhu Xi also came to understand that, in order to have purpose and be fruitful, one's inquiry and learning need to have dedication and purpose, so he stressed establishing resolve (*lizhi* 立志) as crucial, and cast off his practice of offering learning packages or outlines:

> …it is essential for learners to establish resolve. Consider the saying, "Strive to restore the roots of one's basic propensities (*xing* 性) and

4 Back in the 1970s, some professors of metaethics stressed that metaethical analysis was purely objective, and to be conducted irrespective of any particular set of normative rules. One professor of mine even gave the example of the ethicist McTaggart, a century earlier, shooting neighborhood cats in the night, arguing that the best metaethical analyst might have no personal ethical commitments. At the time, colleagues and graduate students countered that simply by virtue of being a responsible member of a family, community, etc., such an analyst would still recognize and follow basic normative rules that make civilized life possible. Virtually all humanities disciplines deliver insight into the importance of values and rules. The best metaethicist should thus know the importance of values and rules in her bones.

5 I use the Romanized Chinese term *jing* 敬 in the following, taking reverence or reverential regard as the core, and concentration, seriousness, and mindfulness as connotations that, respectively, gain relevance in context.

6 This harks back to Mencius' teachings on basic human propensities, the four beginnings (*siduan* 四端), and inborn knowledge of the good (*liangzhi* 良知) (Lau 1970). These are basic planks in most liberal humanistic outlooks.

7 One thinks of Plato's dialogue *Meno* (Guthrie 1956), which shows how faulty knowledge can lead people astray.

> endowment (*ming* 命),[8] aspire to surpass the achievements of the sages and worthies." One who establishes resolve will make determined efforts. It doesn't do to just aim to be a good person and rest content after realizing several *daoli* (道理; general truisms).[9] Such a person won't make further progress. Consider, rather, Yan Hui's "inability to give up, even if he had wanted to" (*Analects* 9.11; Ames 1998, 128f), and the petty man's "working tirelessly for his own benefit", constantly bearing it in mind (*Mencius* 7A:25; Lau 1970, 187). The cultivation effort of those who lack in resolve will not succeed in the long run. (Zhu 1986, ch. 118)

The resolve that drives one's conduct of inquiry and learning is existential, and will continue to empower one throughout life. Indeed,

> In the conduct of all sorts of affairs, one must first establish resolve. One maintains *jing* in the midst of conducting affairs and things… One's resolve, however, transcends the matters at hand; thus, it can't be overwhelmed and shattered into tiny pieces. (ibid., ch.118)

Zhu even maintained that the achievements of Confucius, the sage, could be attributed, not just to his gifts, talents, and special destiny, but to the existential resolve of his deepest purpose.

> In the world are countless roads and crossings, why didn't the sage take other roads? He only arrived at this particular juncture because his [existential] resolve expressed his deepest purpose. (ibid., ch. 23)[10]

At the same time, Zhu cautioned that one's resolve and dedication should not be translated into an exclusive concern with certain focal texts and topics. While pursuing core projects and concerns, the learner/researcher should stay open, alert, observant, and develop a practical grasp of the things around her, so as to add texture and depth to her knowledge, and thus enhance her versatility in responding

8 This carries the connotation of one's life mission, particularly in terms of interpersonal responsibilities to family, society, and career.

9 Zhu Xi is contrasting empty, wooden truisms with the deeper array of organizing patterns that constitute life and value, and motivate cultivation. Zhu Xi's use of *daoli* here diverges from modern Mandarin, in which questioning whether an idea or proposition has any *daoli* is to asking whether it is reasonable, that is to say, reasonably grounded.

10 Much is made of Confucius' nurturing a hoary tradition, but he learned from many teachers and his greatness lay in continuously reorienting tradition on an ethical foundation of mutual care and responsibility. His example proves Sartre's observation, "There is no traced out path to salvation; one must constantly invent one's own path. But, to invent it, one is free, responsible, without excuse, and every hope lies within him" (Flynn 2014).

to all matters. Such a grasp and versatility distinguish a vital learner from an empty pedant, and make one's life increasingly resonant and fluent.

> Generally, in free time one should strive to grasp the things at hand. By developing a practical grasp of things, whenever you encounter new affairs your knowledge will be extended case by case. But, people nowadays feel disinclined to grasp things in their leisure time. When they encounter affairs they balk at investigating their *daoli*[11] anew and take ease in their own shallowness and vulgarity. Such people don't mature or make much progress; in the end, they have no achievements. The problem is that they lack resolve and waste their lives in vain. (Zhu 1986, 15)

Moreover, establishing resolve does not involve casting off guided programs of learning *per se*. Rather, it empowers one to get more out of such systematic learning while not becoming narrow and enclosed within it as an epistemic cocoon.

> Having established resolve, one should still endeavor to learn gradually step-by-step, bearing the general framework of appropriateness and pattern (*yili* 義理)[12] in mind. Thus determined, one who feels trepidation can engage in discussion, nurture the root, practice self-examination, and expect to make some progress. Those who are satisfied to be dabblers need to wake up and redouble their seriousness, *jing*, dedication, and nurturing, lest their progress be intermittent and their efforts wasted for lacking the certitude of clear comprehension and the efficacy of personal experience. (Zhu 2002, ch. 55, letter to Chen Zhaozeng)

Zhu Xi's primary cultivations of abiding in *jing*, nurturing the root, examining the self, and establishing resolve are attitudinal, orientational, and existential. They keep one grounded and centred as one embarks on inquiry and learning, and facilitate one's efforts at knowledge acquisition, self-transformation, and self-realization. When Zhu Xi speaks of staying open to the things going on, it reminds us of the long-term value of acquainting oneself with a variety of fields to establish a well-rounded knowledge of humanity, society, and nature, and have a context for appreciating one's own chosen field.[13]

11 In this passage, *daoli* pertains to the operative general patterns that shape and guide phenomena and events. The meaning thus differs from its alternative usage discussed in note 9, above.

12 Appropriateness (*yi* 義) pertains to one's sensitivity and discernment as to what is most fitting in context, all things considered, against the backdrop of immanent patterning (*li* 理), that structure and balance phenomena and events.

13 James Austin underscores the positive role of side interests and knowledge in enhancing one's ability to see connections and creativity (Austin 2003). As Austin shows, Alexander Fleming's side interests, extracurricular knowledge, and quirks were indispensable to his discovery of penicillin.

Even in this brave new world of computerized learning and research and digitized data, advanced students and researchers understand the need to stay committed and motivated to achieve their educational goals. They have demonstrably less cognizance, however, of the need to abide in *jing*, nurture the root, and examine the self. That is, they lose sense of the need to stay alert and be aware of everything one does, to maintain one's basic sense of innocence and humanity, and to reflect on what one is thinking and doing. Computerized learning and digitized data are highly mediated and automated, and stir a sort of distancing from the self and mindlessness that can lead to self as well as other alienation. Moreover, the more one keeps directly interacting with digital machines through keyboards and monitors, the more one's crucial interpersonal intercourse becomes indirect and mediated. In this sort of increasingly impersonal cognitive environment, any notion of nurturing the root would tend to go by the wayside, and self-examination would have more to do with data management skills and control than with examining the probity of one's ethical conduct and conscience.[14] Yet, without doubt, such attitudinal, orientational, and existential cultivations remain necessary to the proper and personally enriching conduct of advanced reading, reflection, and research in the humanities.

Conducting Inquiry to Attain Knowledge

The notion of "attaining knowledge" (*zhizhi* 致知)[15] is central to Zhu Xi's approach to cultivating mind, and he insists that one attains knowledge by actively investigating things. For Zhu, attaining knowledge is tantamount to exploring their constituent patterns and propensities. Zhu's account of knowledge seeks a sort of working "knowing that", getting things right, the value of which lay in the Rylean facet of "knowing how". That is, the getting things right is in order to inform one's responses. Since so much Confucian knowledge has to do with propriety and appropriateness in conduct, the accumulation of such knowledge,

14 This does not necessarily mark an East-West difference in approaching humanities research. I would instead put it that traditional, pre-computerized humanities research in the West tacitly involved the assumption of Zhu Xi's attitudinal, orientational, and existential cultivations. By the same token, contemporary students of Zhu Xi will use computers and digital data to access his writings and his ideas. Whereas traditional students had to plod and ponder his texts, turning to printed dictionaries along the way, the new breed roams enhanced texts with built-in dictionaries and explanations that appear at the press of a key. However, with the exponentially expanding use of study aids of all sorts, too many standard answers are given and facile understandings arrived at. The reduced pondering, too, results in less intimacy and resonance with the text, as one's own tacit assumptions and lines of approach remain unchallenged as one heedlessly plows ahead.

15 The connotation of "extending knowledge" is often implied.

be it knowing how or knowing that,[16] lays the ground for attaining performative "tacit knowledge", *a la* Michael Polanyi (1966, 2002). Zhu remains concerned with accuracy and getting it right; for not only do we depend on such proper understanding to inform our instincts and emotions, and guide our judgments and actions, many moralists make mistaken judgments and make inappropriate responses precisely because they do not know the warp and woof of the world in depth, but only general truisms and customs of the tradition.[17]

What then does Zhu mean by "investigating things"? He generally supports Cheng Yi's account of "investigating things", which involves striking a balance between subjectivity and objectivity, perspective and detail. Zhu Xi is attentive to striking this sort of balance in his own approach to investigating things to attain knowledge. By developing the notion of pattern as the nexus of order and knowledge, and stressing a commonality of pattern, patterning in the heart-mind and in phenomena and affairs, Zhu epistemically seeks a sort of *inner resonance* in investigating phenomena and affairs. Achieving such an inner resonance is important, since patterns are implicated not just formally and cognitively, but also emotively and interactively, in their instantiations (basic propensities) and settings. The knowledge one attains involves grasping such patterns and propensities in the contexts, or matrices, of their interactive relations, as well as one's impulses of appropriate response.

To be sure, Zhu Xi broadened Cheng Yi's account of investigating things and made it more inclusive. In this effort, he gave the first definitive Neo-Confucian account of investigating things in the "Supplement on investigating things" he appended to chapter 5 in the Advanced *Learning* (大學 *Daxue*), which reads:

> The expression "attaining knowledge lies in investigating things" means that, if one intends to attain knowledge, it lies in exploring the patterns of the things one encounters. Indeed, there is nothing the discerning human mind cannot comprehend, for there is nothing in the world that doesn't possess patterns. It is just because there remain some patterns one hasn't explored that one's knowledge is not exhaustive. This is why the first step in advanced learning is, regarding everything in the world, for

16 Gilbert Ryle's famous distinction between knowing that and knowing how (Ryle 1949). Knowing that is cognitive and discursive and involves confirming the facts. Knowing how is behavioral and often cannot be put into words. I would put that for Zhu Xi a continuum exists between the knowing obtained by study and knowing how, in that all sorts of "knowing that" inform one's considerations, judgments, even impulses, in taking action. He would agree with biologists that every bit of knowledge feeds into our epistemic maps for navigating and responding to events as best we can; for Zhu Xi, it would be "as appropriately we can, and with utmost propriety".

17 The Buddha was similarly concerned with accurate knowledge to support enlightened awareness and conduct.

> the learner to proceed in each instance on the basis of what he already knows of their patterns, to explore them further in order to understand them to the utmost. Having exerted oneself at this for a long time, one will suddenly have a penetrating comprehension. One will penetrate the latent and the manifest, the seed and chaff of all things and understand the whole substance and far-reaching function of mind. This is what is called "investigating things", it is what is called, "the utmost of knowledge" (adapted from Chan 1963, 89).

Notably, since the self-same patterns/patterning constitute the heart-mind as form the living world, the investigation of things and affairs discloses not only their patterns of formation and intercourse but *ipso facto* the patterns constituting the heart-mind and its perceptual and responsive operations. For Zhu Xi, object realization as much as other realization is a mirror to reflexive self-realization. At the same time, how can one hope to comprehend "all things in the world", even in principle? Zhu Xi explains that patterns/patterning are patterned, comprehended, and manifested throughout reality. Since the patterns unfold organically in the flux of phenomena and the formation and development of things, they are all organically related, parallel, symmetrical in form, and can be traced back to their originating form as the single pattern.[18] Hence, every new bit of knowledge one acquires, every new facet of pattern one grasps, casts additional light onto the new phenomena and the constituent patterns that one encounters.

> These subtle, fine-mesh *daoli* are utterly inexhaustible. There is no dimension in which they aren't manifested. They penetrate and connect all the myriad complexities (Zhu 1986, ch. 22).
>
> The manifold complexities ultimately all trace back to the one pattern (ibid., ch. 41).
>
> *Daoli* is distributed amongst all things and affairs. It definitely isn't concentrated in one place (ibid., ch.120).
>
> Such *daoli* penetrate everywhere equally—seed and chaff, small and large—in every direction. Grasp all four sides together in comprehending them (ibid., ch. 116).

For Zhu, this extension, unfolding, and dispersal, not to mention folding and return, of patterns throughout the world mean that patterns are at once integrated and also manifested variously in multi-perspectival ways. For this reason, one

18 The originative single pattern would be supreme polarity (*taiji* 太極), which triggers the *yin-yang* polarity in *qi*.

has to be constantly prepared to adjust one's pre-conceptions and stance to see through the phenomena appropriately, and grasp their patterns effectively. Zhu observed this need for multiple perspectives for understanding human affairs, natural phenomena, and even artefacts.[19]

> The learning of the common person usually deviates toward one set pattern and stresses one position. Therefore, fierce debates break out because people don't see all four sides.[20] The sage [Confucius] stayed balanced, upright, in harmony and fair, and thus remained free of deviation or bias. (Zhu 1986, ch. 8)[21]
>
> Although the myriad patterns are ultimately expressions of the single [originative] pattern, learners still must attend to the manifold complexities within the myriad patterns. By drawing together all four sides, they will naturally realize the single pattern. Not attending to those myriad patterns but attending solely to one set pattern is groundless imagining. (ibid., ch.117)
>
> Gather examples of all species in order to observe the spirit of transformations in nature. Collect all kinds of construction materials to understand their respective functions in the building of a house. One must release one's mind and spirit in order to pay attention. (Zhu 1986, ch. 117)
>
> What is important is to comprehend inner and outer, root and branch, hidden and manifest, seed and chaff, completely and comprehensively in each respect. (ibid., ch.18)

Interestingly, in Zhu Xi's account of patterns/patterning in the "Supplement to Chapter 5" quoted above, he elaborates on patterns/patterning in more or less general and specific, abstract and concrete senses.[22] Zhu Xi also stresses time and again that "understanding [a] pattern exhaustively" must be undertaken on the basis of investigating things; he sees no sense in examining the idea of pattern *simpliciter*, in abstraction from phenomena; for the significance of patterns/patterning surely lies in its formative role in processes, cycles, phenomena, and affairs. *Li* must be implicated in phenomena or affairs to be discernible and have epistemic value, practical traction, and ethical significance.

19 See Zhuangzi's similar position in ch. 17, "Autumn Floods" (Watson 1968), and also see Thompson (2015, 150–6).

20 "Four" stands for multiple.

21 A reference perhaps to Confucius' four abstentions (*Analects* 9.4; Ames 1998, 127).

22 This can perhaps be likened to Russell's notion of type levels and Hegel's notion of levels of abstract universals and concrete universals

Is any of this instructive for the contemporary computer-assisted conduct of research, reflection, and writing? I would tend to say yes. While we might not subscribe specifically to Zhu Xi's ontology of pattern, or pattern and *qi*, his underlying conception of patterns/patterning, set in real dynamic contexts, remains instructive and provides a handle for understanding and responding to things and affairs.[23] The notion of pattern cuts to the chase of human perception and knowledge, as contemporary neural science tells us that our perceptions are coded on the basis of pattern recognition, which apparently goes much deeper and is more exacting than, say, the venerable Aristotelian categories.[24] I would add that whenever we conduct research and reflection, we arrange sets of relevant distinctions and categories for the data for the purpose of that project. We could say that the logic, categories, and structure that we project in our understanding of the data tend to shape both the data sets (the phenomena) we are dealing with and our mindset as we attempt to conceptualize the data and work with them. In that sense, the selfsame patterns are at work together both in (our views of) things and affairs and in our minds and conceptualizations, particularly as our understandings get closer to the truth. So, it is important not only to get things right, but also to think about the things in a relevant and effective, systematic order.

Importantly, Zhu Xi at the same time understands that we can and do get things wrong and invariably need to rethink everything when the data, or experiential or experimental results, turn out very differently from our conceptual or hypothetical expectations. Zhu Xi understands the provisional nature of human understandings of the structure and processes of the world; hence, he knows that an accurate account of a pattern with respect to knowledge and, by extension, value, would refer it to the final outcome of ongoing inquiry and reflection, rather than something given as understood at the outset.[25] It is important to realize that Zhu Xi's notion of the this same patterns/patterning permeating world and mind is reminiscent of the early Wittgenstein's claim of a common logical space answering to world, language, and thought, by virtue of which language—and knowledge—mirrors reality and allows us to talk about real facts. Zhu's notion of the basic intelligibility of the world by virtue of the patterns which permeate and run through it parallels Wittgenstein's idea that every state of affairs in the world, in principle, can be expressed as a fact in

23 See David Wade, *Li: Dynamic Form in Nature* (2003).

24 Think of the thousands of faces we can distinguish based on raw pattern recognition as compared to the relatively few we could distinguish using Aristotelian categories. Neural research shows our categorical understanding is parasitic on our pattern recognition, without which it could not take place. See Hawkins 2004, 60f.

25 This result is consistent with the "Supplement to Chapter 5" of the *Great Learning* and exemplified in some of Zhu Xi's observations of natural phenomena.

language, and so that my language constitutes my world. Zhu Xi would be committed to the notion that we express our cognizance of patterns/patterning propositionally, and manifest that understanding performatively through speech and action.[26]

Responsive Chord within Cognition

A decisive plank in Zhu's "Supplement to Chapter 5" of the *Advanced Learning* is, "On the basis of what one already knows of their patterns, to explore them further". This key insight harks back to the notion of instinctual human responses,[27] as well as knowing how and the tacit knowledge one builds up of how things happen in the world.[28] Though this might seem to be a departure from foundational, "objective" Western styled research, in the humanities one tends to conduct research on topics that one feels an affinity with and responds to, that strike a chord, that resonate. I would propose that the researcher's resonance with his or her chosen research area contributes to his or her arriving at an approach and basic argument about the data.[29] Furthermore, this notion of resonance helps to explain the underlying human reasonableness of giving charitable readings or interpretations. Such readings are not merely charity work conducted out of sympathy, but reflect that the critic's responsiveness to the author's basic feelings and take on the material. Uncharitable readings and interpretations are often false to the extent that they depart from the inclination and spirit of the original and push it in alien directions, which might be formally justified but are just false to the spirit of the material, even to the spirit of the argument. For example, many critical expositions of arguments in Plato are only correct when the arguments have been abstracted from their dialogical contexts and ironed out to fit logical stencils, however they miss subtleties and nuances of the dialogue and its context, and thus turn out to be irrelevant or merely a sidelight to Plato's own intentions and project. For his part, Zhu explains:

> One must pay attention on the basis of one's instincts (Zhu 1986, ch. 8).
>
> One must infer from what one knows in order to eventually reach the level of knowing all (ibid., ch. 15).

26 Thus answering to the later as well as early Wittgenstein.

27 This refers to preserving the root and Mencius' four beginnings, etc., mentioned above. See note 6.

28 See Zhuangzi's comments on the knowledge of nature and the knowledge of the human, and the knowledge that one knows *vis-à-vis* the knowledge one does not know in the opening paragraphs of *Zhuangzi*, chapter 6, "The Venerable Teacher" (Watson 1968). Wittgenstein offers similar reflections in *On Certainty* (Wittgenstein 1971).

29 This goes on as well in much research that is deemed *prima facie* objective. Even mathematicians and physicists speak of the beauty (aesthetics) of a compelling, well-formed argument or theory.

> What learners mean by "investigating things" nowadays lacks initial clues and is merely blindly investigating by inquiring into things (Zhu 1986, ch. 15).

To date, all verifiable knowledge is human knowledge, and to that extent subject to human sensitivity.

Investigating Things to Extend Knowledge

Zhu's "Supplement to Chapter 5" of the *Advanced Learning* enjoins us to, "Seek to reach its ultimate". This imperative involves making efforts to attain an understanding of the full range of the implications of a phenomenon, concept, or value. This is not pointing to an essentialist platonic ideal, but rather the full range, the full gamut of what a phenomenon, concept, or value involves. As Zhu Xi explains:

> Everyone knows that a son knows to be filial, and a father knows to be affectionate. The problem is that people just don't understand these virtues thoroughly. What's important is to want to understand these virtues in depth. Consider a light shining through a hole. The light grows brighter when the hole is enlarged. All things have their patterns, and people are acquainted with their own [constitutive life] patterns, such as filiality and affection. But, if one's knowledge is not very penetrating it is as if one remains mostly in the dark. (ibid.)

Hence, Zhu's imperative "to reach its ultimate", is intended to encourage people to reach a penetrating comprehension of the concept or matter or value under consideration. If one's penetration is shallow one's comprehension will be weak and unsteady, like the narrow beams of light peeping through tiny holes. While students tend to be uninterested in thinking about basic issues like filiality and eager to consider more exotic, esoteric matters, Zhu Xi considered that people who remain unclear or in the dark about such basics as filiality and filial affection would tend to be fuzzy headed and unable to grasp the deeper things very well. Therefore, he set up genuine or authentic working knowledge as a goal,

> "Attaining knowledge" is the means by which one seeks authentic knowledge.
>
> Authentic knowledge involves penetrating things to the marrow to comprehend them thoroughly. (ibid.)
>
> Knowledge, to be authentic, must penetrate to the marrow. Thus, the Master further said, "Investigating things is just attending to

> phenomena, while the knowledge attained is this mind's penetrating comprehension". (ibid.)

Cutting through the metaphors, we may consider Zhu Xi's notion of penetrating knowledge as in-depth knowledge that is at once detailed and comprehensive. For Zhu Xi, this would involve sensitivity to fine details, distinctions, and differences. He stressed the importance of achieving penetrating, in-depth knowledge, sensitive to fine distinctions, because he saw that many people judge things crudely and act on vague, general concepts, and thus while they might make judgments and perform actions that are *prima facie* in accord with custom and virtue, on a closer look they actually violate or contradict the values of propriety and humaneness.[30] In the case of values, in particular, one arrives at a penetrating comprehension by drawing inferences in a variety of cases cued by one's basic impulses in response to what one intuits and knows within.

> Consider King Xuan's seeing an ox and feeling that he couldn't bear the suffering of others [*Mencius* 1A:6]. To extend this feeling such that all things are covered by its empathetic concern is precisely what is meant by "investigating" and "attaining". This is to investigate, infer, explore, and attain to the utmost. Each person has his own store of knowledge and experience to draw on; nobody can be called completely ignorant—even the infant knows to love its parents and, as it grows up, to respect its elder brothers and so forth, down to knowing the basic distinctions between good and bad and right and wrong, which one then discerns clearly. But, as to one who doesn't go on to infer, extend, and expand on such feelings, experiences, and knowledge, one's experience and knowledge will, ultimately, remain like this. [...What is important is to explore and investigate on the basis of the clues of one's initial feelings]. (ibid.)

This passage goes beyond one's usual study and inquiry to consider the inborn moral sensitivities that begin to inform the researcher and develop in her thinking in the course of conducting humanities research. I stress moral sensitivities as opposed to strict virtues or principles, because this involves filling out and refining one's basic responsive life knowledge with the deeper lessons and insights that take place as one undertakes research and reflection in the humanities. We might say that Zhu Xi stresses the importance of sensitivity and empathetic inquiry, and the bottom line is that one put oneself fully into it.

30 For this reason, Zhu Xi, following Mencius, spoke of the need to overturn ritual to fulfill humaneness in cases in which a standard observance of the ritual would cause harm or suffering.

> In investigating things, what is important is to pay close attention *through the self.* (Zhu 1986, ch.15; italics added)
>
> To just explore the patterns of the myriad things in the world broadly, without endeavouring to grasp them *through the self*, is what is described by… [the Cheng Masters] as "galloping off with no point of return." (ibid., ch. 18; italics added)

Putting one's heart into it is clearly a departure from the disinterested objectivism that is encouraged by so-called advanced, computer-driven research in today's digital data. However, as Zhu Xi would remind us, the very nature of humanities materials calls for sensitivity and empathetic reading and inquiry. The humanities researcher who does not read, reflect, and respond in a responsive, humane way will not be up to the task.

Putting one's heart into it turns out to be epistemologically justified for Zhu Xi, in that his notion of heart-mind is emotionally (and responsively) as well as cognitively (and rationally) *wired into* the living world of *qi* and patterns/patterning such that,

> …there is nothing the discerning human mind cannot comprehend, for there is nothing in the world that doesn't possess patterns. It is just because there remain some patterns one hasn't explored that one's knowledge is not exhaustive. This is why…, regarding everything in the world,… the learner proceeds in each instance on the basis of what he or she already knows of their patterns, to explore them further in order to understand them to the utmost. (*Daxue zhangju*, ch. 5)

Not only is putting one's heart into it epistemologically justified for Zhu Xi; since the same pattern/patterning constitute the heart-mind and knowledge as the world, phenomena, and affairs, one's exhaustive knowledge of the world is tantamount to exhaustive knowledge of the heart-mind and self, not to mention humanity.

> Since the heart-mind is limitless, how could it be exhausted? Since things are countless, how could they be exhausted? But, one who reaches the level of penetrating realization and really grasps it will understand it all. This is to be exhaustive. (Zhu 1986, ch. 60)
>
> One can't exhaust the function of heart-mind; what can be exhausted are just the patterns/patterning of the heart-mind. (ibid.)
>
> Ultimately, we, "Investigate things in order to illuminate this very heart-mind." (ibid., ch. 118)

"Illuminate this mind" refers to the inner realization that one has arrived at penetrating knowledge, authentic knowledge, which gets into the marrow. This is the sort of knowledge one acquires by investigating things to explore patterns/patterning. One who has explored the patterns of numerous phenomena, and reached the level of a sudden penetrating realization, in effect, has fully grasped the patterns/patterning of the heart-mind; thereafter, one is equipped to see through the myriads sorts of matters that arise. For Zhu Xi, one who is armed with this sort of penetrating realization is equipped to grasp quite readily any new things as they arise.

Nobody conducting inquiry and research in the humanities, or even the human sciences, would today make such sweeping claims for the general applicability of their epistemico-ontological assumptions, such as Zhu Xi's basic ideas of patterns/patterning, *qi*, basic propensities, and heart-mind. However, these assumptions do not make Zhu's ideas or system rigid or limited. They stir the imagination, and provide useful ways to look at the facts and assess our feelings. One must keep in mind at the same time that Zhu Xi's ideas of patterns/patterning and *daoli* do not form a linear, logocentric system, but rather are multivalent, holistic, and regarded as organically unfolding as well as re-enfolding. As noted above, this extending and dispersal, as well as folding and return, of patterns/patterning throughout this flowing world mean that patterns/patterning are regarded as at once integrated and also manifested variously in multi-perspectival ways, such that one has to constantly adjust one's ideas and stance to grasp the phenomena and their basic propensities and guiding patterns sensitively and appropriately. Zhu Xi thus observed the need for multiple perspectives for understanding human affairs, natural phenomena, and even artefacts.[31]

> Although the myriad patterns ultimately are expressions of the single [originative] pattern, learners still must attend to the manifold complexities within the myriad patterns. By drawing together all four sides, they will naturally realize the single [originative] pattern. Not attending to those myriad patterns but attending solely to the single originative pattern is groundless imagining. (Zhu 1986, ch. 117)
>
> The learning of the common person usually deviates toward one set pattern and stresses one position. Therefore, fierce debates break out because people don't see all four sides. The sage [Confucius] stayed balanced, upright, in harmony and fair, and thus remained free of deviation or bias. (ibid., ch.8)

31 See Zhuangzi's similar position in ch. 17, "Autumn Floods" (Watson 1968).

The argument might be made that Zhu Xi's system and approach allow for multiple perspectives and understandings, for multivalency and different reads of the basic propensities and patterns, because they are more about life *praxis* than theoretical understanding, which is the typical goal of advanced inquiry at present. They are not about reaching the sort of definitive explanation and understanding that are the earmarks of traditional Western philosophy and contemporary advanced research, in the humanities as in other fields. For the moment, I would propose that Zhu Xi's system and approach are aimed at precisely the sort of subjective comprehension (objectively validated, nonetheless) that lends itself to enhanced self-realization and self-conscious personhood and practice that remain the everlasting, though increasingly tacit, goal of work in the humanities, whether creative or academic.

Zhu Xi on the Conduct of Learning and Reading

Again, for Zhu Xi, learning and reading are part of one's self-cultivation efforts and goal, essentially to become a sensitive, responsible, and self-conscious person, dedicated to humane values and living. The value to be derived from mastering the subtleties of the texts lay in the basic truths of life they convey, their ethical import. Zhu Xi was critical of those students of ancient texts who seek esoterica and "enjoy mysteries and subtleties. They even probingly speak of the imageless and formless (which are unspeakable)." (ibid., ch. 26)

By contrast,

> The sage (Confucius) expressed himself plainly and uprightly. But, people nowadays insist on seeking marvels and expounding on the lofty and far-reaching. When interpreting texts, they insist on explaining even the obviously shallow commonplace passages in profound phrases. Concerning the outer, they insist on discussing the inner. (ibid.)

Above, we saw that Zhu Xi's approach to inquiry was bound up with the core cultivation efforts of abiding in *jing*, nurturing the root, and examining self. One's serious learning and reading, especially of the classics, should involve the project of establishing one's great root, in effect, grounding and centring oneself in those patterns, principles, values, and way of life. As Zhu elaborates,

> In the conduct of learning, one first must establish the great root. In the beginning, one is quite narrow. In the middle phase of learning, one expands and broadens while at the end one again narrows down. Recently

> learners have liked to pursue the narrow, but without seeking to go on to broaden themselves; how are they then to confirm their narrow understanding? There are also those who seek only to broaden themselves without returning back to the narrow. Their ailment is even worse than that of being too narrow and lacking in breadth. (Zhu 1986, ch. 11)

Zhu regarded the middle stage of learning, the effort of broadening oneself, as the most crucial and painstaking part of learning. This is where one learns about the differences and fine distinctions that make one more discerning and one's responses more appropriate. The narrow "great root" is orientational and pertains to the laying and setting of one's foundation. The process back from breadth to narrowness refers to one's integrating and synthesizing one's wide learning, making it viable for refining one's judgments and actions, making them acute and propitious; this process would be a major step in fulfilling one's existential resolve to be a sensitive, responsible, self-conscious person.

Reading, for Zhu Xi, is an inherent part of the other cultivation efforts, linked to the broader conduct of inquiry, culminating in investigating things to understand their patterns exhaustively. It is a little-known fact that Zhu was the only prominent Neo-Confucian master to register the central role of reading, and to discuss it extensively. His account of reading with regard to interpreting and understanding classical texts is particularly relevant to discussions on the study of humanities texts today. Importantly, he teaches keeping an open mind about a text, being wary of forcing one's preconceptions and personal views on it, and the important of reading a text over and over again, and immersing and steeping oneself in it. For example, Zhu Xi writes,

> In reading, one mustn't foist one's personal views onto the text. Look at it according to the actual meaning of the words; distinguish the meaning of the text clearly on the basis of the words. Review it tirelessly in this way for long days and deep months. (ibid.)
>
> If you read with preconceptions, since they aren't necessarily correct you shouldn't stubbornly stick to them. Just set them aside and read the text over again in order to arrive at a fresh view. (ibid.)
>
> It's like draining muddy water, after which the clear water appears. (ibid.)

For Zhu Xi, besides staying open-minded and free of pre-conceptions, the reader must stay concentrated and focus on the text at hand.

> Review and reread the passages one comprehends. (Zhu 1986, ch. 10)
>
> Just read according to the sequence of the text; each guiding pattern then will appear naturally in context. In this way after a long time, one will experience an overall grasp. (ibid., ch. 11)

One needs this sort of solid mastery of a text for dealing with the problems of interpretation that arise. Moreover, such problems and doubts are inevitable for a serious reader who questions consistency and implications, as well as basic meanings. For example,

> The points at which the explanations of various masters differ or agree are worthy of note. Supposing *A* explains it in one way, just grasp *A*'s position and examine his account thoroughly; then, suppose *B* explains it in another way, just grasp *B*'s position and examine his account thoroughly. Having explored these two masters' positions completely, proceed to investigate the text further and consider the matter exhaustively. Certainly one of the accounts will turn out to be correct. (ibid.) [32]

Encountering doubts and problems are the bread and butter of serious reading, which make it an intriguing exercise, and an utterly unproblematic philosophy text would seem facile and vapid.

> Read up to the point at which numerous doubts arise, such that you neglect to sleep and eat. In this way, you can make rapid progress…. It is like deploying troops: you have to score a major kill to be deemed adept at gaining victory. (ibid., ch. 10)
>
> Although one shouldn't concoct groundless explanations, when doubts arise in reading one will form opinions of one's own. At such times, one can't help but form an explanation. Those who haven't formed an explanation simply haven't encountered any doubtful places in their reading. (ibid., ch. 11)

Such valid doubts reflect the seriousness with which one reads. At the same time, the reader's doubts must be well founded and not made up and arbitrary. One who commences reading a text with doubts, in current jargon simply problematizing for the sake of problematizing, is not going to grasp anything or make serious headway in reading. Indeed, feeling and expressing doubt with a true point and purpose depend on a basic initial mastery of the overall text.

32 There is no reason there might not be more than two possible interpretations or readings of a text.

Otherwise, one won't be equipped to extend doubt meaningfully, not to mention to explain the problem.

Ultimately, such valid exercises of doubt involve bringing one's cultivated knowledge, values, logic, and powers of judgment into play. One's development as a resourceful, passionate thinker proceeds as much through such exercises of doubt as by reading the noble thoughts of the sages.

During their famous symposium at Goose Lake, Zhu Xi wrote the following poem in response to the poems by Lu Xiangshan and his brothers, which celebrated insight learning:

> Discuss past learning to increase your subtlety;
>
> Nurture new understandings to increase your depth.

For Zhu, the first line expresses a requirement for carrying out the second. It is best for the intellectual and moral vanguard to nurture their new understandings in the light of the long experience and lasting truths of earlier generations. This is true whether one is basically accepting or rejecting the truths of the past; otherwise, each successive generation will find itself in the position of reinventing the wheel.

Zhu Xi's discussions on reading become more pointed and begin to approximate modern hermeneutics when he considers reading the ancient classics, yet he also finds much to criticize in the predilections of classical commentators of his day. The *Book of Changes* remains among the most challenging of the classics. As Zhu notes, understanding this text is not simply a matter of understanding the words on the page and the underlying principles; it is a matter of grasping patterns of change and transformation in nature and human life.

> The *Book of Changes* contains detailed information about material facts and covers human affairs thoroughly. All the matters mentioned really occurred. Learners today just review and recite every day beneath their lamp or window without personally having responded or adapted to changes in the world. Suddenly given this book to read, they are ill-prepared to grasp it. (Zhu 1986, ch.11)
>
> The *Book of Change* describes the patterns/patterning of things and affairs according to transformations of yin and yang. Great and small, seed and chaff, the *Book of Changes* covers them all. In particular, one can't read it with a biased mind, stressing the inner but neglecting the outer, bored of action and craving ease and tranquillity. (Zhu 2002, ch. 43, letter to Li Kelian)

Clearly, for Zhu, it is useless to study the *Book of Changes* in a scholastic way, quietly under a lamp or window. Zhu understands the limits of bookish learning and becoming a well-versed reader without knowing how things actually transpire in the world, and so places equal emphasis on practical experience.

Moreover, Zhu understands that not all canonical texts are equal and present the same sorts of problems to the reader and interpreter. For instance,

> Naturally, some books are suitable for anyone to read, such as the *Advanced Learning, Analects, Mencius* and *Zhongyong.* Indeed, how could one simply not read them? By reading these four books, one grasps the indispensable *daoli* of daily life, as well as the proper sequence of learning. Afterwards, one can go on to read the *Odes*, *Documents*, *Rites*, and *Music*. Although I heard others claim they'd read the *Book of Changes*, I took them to be mistaken because they hadn't observed the proper sequence of learning. The *Book of Changes* doesn't directly present these *daoli* and is by no means a common textbook. (Zhu 1986, ch. 67)

Indeed, recognizing that the *Book of Changes* was originally a divination manual, Zhu first studied the images and the calculations (*xiangshu* 象數) in the work, treating them as more important than the significance attributed to the text by Cheng Yi. He explains, "…the *Book of Changes* is especially difficult. Before opening the scripts, one must have made a serious effort to master the images and calculations." (Zhu 2002, ch. 35, letter to Chen Mingzhong)

Since the *Book of Odes* is a literary text, Zhu Xi's account of his efforts to interpret it is also relevant:

> When I interpreted the *Odes*, I'd just read the original text forty or fifty times and gain a sixty to seventy percent comprehension. Then, I'd see how my impressions jibed with the various commentaries. After I'd gained a general grasp of an ode in this way, I'd reread it thirty or forty more times and become conversant with its main idea, and get it for myself. (Zhu 1986, ch. 80)

Zhu's tended to study individual odes in the *Book of Odes* in three stages. He'd first recite the ode many times. After attaining a basic mastery of the ode, he would consult the commentaries, which was the second stage. He tended to draw on all of the commentaries, old and new. Having mastered these interpretations, he would reread the ode thirty or forty times more; the third stage. At this point, he usually felt adequately conversant with the *daoli* of the ode, that he'd "got it for

himself". Zhu approached the other classics in much the same way he approached the *Odes.* Consequently, his learning drew upon the traditional readings and was solidly based on original texts. Yet he also ventured to come up with innovative readings of his own.

> What's important in becoming well versed in an ode is to immerse oneself completely in reading it a hundred times through. In that way, the exquisite parts will come out and its subtleties and peculiarities will appear. In reading this one ode, you should spare no effort in reading it over and over until you've thoroughly mastered it. Read it like there is no second ode; that would be the best. But, if you just read this first ode and then go on to the second one, you will never succeed in reading it with comprehension. This would be to be lacking in concentration. It is important to slay your "mindset to wander off and pursue other things", so you can just settle down to read. (Zhu 1986, ch. 80)

As a methodical reader, Zhu understands that the *Odes* has its own inner structure, as does the *Book of Changes*. In approaching each classic one should first inquire into its inner structure. Consequently, to read the *Odes* and the *Book of Changes* simply according to one's initial subjective impressions would not be a valid application of "investigating things to understand pattern exhaustively". Moreover, in reading the *Odes* Zhu understands that their literary merits transcend the didactic intent of most Confucian interpreters.

> In reading the *Odes*, besides their didactic significance, it's even better to appreciate their literary composition. (ibid.)
>
> An ancient said one may be inspired by reading the *Odes* (*Analects* 8/8); what's important is that in reading the *Odes* one feels inspired at certain points. That is to read the *Odes.* (ibid.)
>
> The *Odes* contain moving sentiments. One who reads them without being moved simply is one whose sensibility was slain by the various Confucian commentators. (ibid.)
>
> Completely wash away the old interpretations and the sense of the *Odes* will come to life. (ibid.)

Zhu Xi's approach to these two classics reveals that his commitment to truth goes well beyond the ideology and didacticism of the Confucian tradition, and that he is keenly interested in the actual patterns, principles, and propensities operative in the world and the deeper sentiments of human life, as expressed through poetry

and song. Naturally, the books of Confucius, Zisi, and Mencius express valid patterns, principles, and ideals that Zhu Xi embraces and identifies as his own, yet at the same time he examines and comments on these texts with the same keen critical eye. We thus see Zhu registering several levels and valences of truth corresponding to the course of nature and human life, the deeper sentiments of humanity, and Way and teachings of Confucius and the sage kings and formative Confucian masters.

Concerning Zhu Xi's quest for truth in these ways, Peng Guosheng usefully compares his approach to reading and interpreting the Confucian classics with Hans-Georg Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics. While Zhu Xi engages in what may be termed Gadamerian baseline textual interpretation to elicit the original meaning(s) of the extant text, and second order textual reconstruction to clarify and elaborate the guiding principles at work it, particularly with respect to the *Four Books*, and with an eye to praxis, Zhu exhibits a sort of exuberance in his readings and commentaries that is not evident in drier Gadamerian approaches (Peng 2015, 326). Peng accounts for Zhu's exuberance in his reading and interpreting as due to his not just participating in, but devotedly cultivating himself, in "sacred" Confucian traditions.

In my view, Zhu Xi's exuberance about not just learning and reading but inquiry in general traces back to his inveterate hunger to probe to the marrow, and understand deeply and practically the world and human existence. His existential resolve to realize himself as a sensitive, responsible, self-conscious person is not just to fulfil the Confucian ideal, but more broadly to be conversant with the flux of reality in nature as well as himself. Certainly, he would advise today's advanced humanities researchers and writers not only to delve whole-heartedly into their focal concerns, but also have a healthy interest in a broad array of matters and phenomena.

Zhu Xi on Extracurricular Learning

Zhu Xi was rather unique in the Confucian tradition for seeking a firm grasp of the patterns of change and transformation that constitute the world and human life.[33] Most of his Neo-Confucian brethren devoted themselves more narrowly to what they considered orthodox learning, and often sought to purge "extracurricular

33 It might be contested that this impulse underlay the production and use of the *Book of Changes*, and that Shao Yong anticipated Zhu Xi with the notion of observation. I would reply that among Confucian scholars Zhu Xi did the most to think about and develop a method of investigating things to extend knowledge. He developed this notion in greater depth and applied it more broadly than had Shao Yong or any other Confucian in traditional China.

materials". Some regarded even literary and historical inquiries as borderline extracurricular, creating for themselves the appearance of empty moralizers and lifeless pedants. By contrast, Zhu Xi sought to understand the dynamics and depths of life and conducted his own learning in a broad and encompassing way. To his Neo-Confucian peers, he would ask, "How can one claim to grasp and carry out the Way if one doesn't have a handle on the ways of the world and society in which one lives, if one doesn't register the pulse of everyday life?" As emphasized by Qian Mu, the scope of Zhu's "investigating things to understand pattern exhaustively" was potentially all-embracing, and so his pursuit of learning extended into what other Confucians would regard as borderline areas and beyond. Two extracurricular realms of particular interest to Zhu Xi were roaming freely in the arts and investigating natural knowledge (Qian 1991, 215).[34]

Confucius advised his students to roam freely in the arts in their free time. Zhu Xi saw value in such roaming, in that it encourages one to notice the little things, the details, the finer things at hand in daily life, and that it allows one to continue cultivating oneself whether in action or repose. In this way, every moment becomes a precious occasion to be unlocked and appreciated. Indeed, Zhu considered that learners who thus stay in the moment during downtime as well as up-time would tend to have a firmer sense of priorities, and be prone to nurture root and branch, inner and outer together.

For his part, Zhu Xi took joy in painting and drawing, and did some self-portraits. He also enjoyed the lute and was versed in harmony and melodies. When a master of the lute, Cai Yuanding (Jitong, 1135–1198), came to study with him, Zhu received him as an old friend and later discussed the instrument in a letter to the master that linked the principles of the lute with the appropriateness and patterns of the myriad things:

> Generally speaking, as to the myriad affairs in the world, their appropriateness and patterns are inexhaustibly subtle; it isn't easy to determine them thoroughly in a word. One must peer through them as through a crystal screen such that they do not obstruct one another; that is a confirmation of investigating things. (Zhu 2002, ch. 44, letter to Cai Jitong)

Zhu also studied the major works on health, medicine, and the principles of nourishing life, and discussed them knowledgeably. He even investigated the art of quiet-sitting to nourish life, and discussed this with Cai Yuanting in connection with the Daoist text *Can-tong-qi* 參通契 (*The Three Ways Unified and*

34 The following examples were drawn from Qian 1991, ch. 30.

Harmonized). When Cai was about to go into exile, Zhu discussed the *Cantong-qi* with gusto when seeing him off. Incredibly, Zhu later wrote a commentary on this text under the *nom d'plume* Kongtong daoshi Zou Xin 空同道士鄒訢 (Daoist master of vacuity and identity Zou Xin). Some later scholars ridiculed him for writing this commentary; however, they hadn't grasped that Zhu's version of Neo-Confucianism was all embracing, and thus included these other dimensions.[35]

As noted above, Zhu's method of investigating things was applicable in principle to everything from the cosmos and heavens above, to humanity and the myriad creatures below. Moreover, Zhu's entire effort manifested and authenticated his resolve to attain and extend knowledge by "investigating things to understand patterns exhaustively". It must be noted that while Zhu's teaching of "investigating things" was more about culture and ethics than scientific matters, he did make some salient scientific or proto-scientific observations at a time when few Chinese intellectuals concerned themselves with such things, and officialdom did not hold technologists or engineers in very high regard (Kim 2000). Zhu Xi made numerous observations of natural phenomena couched in (and to a certain extent rationalized) in his *li-qi* conceptual framework. He always sought the underlying patterns and *qi* permutations of the natural phenomena he observed—as well as of the human conduct and texts he investigated. The following are several examples of Zhu Xi's observations of and reflections on natural phenomena.

At several times, Zhu Xi observed fossil shells on mountaintops, and with some amazement inferred a notion of geological evolution in light of received principles of transformation. He writes, for example,

> I often see the snail and clam shells atop high mountains, or embedded inside stones: these stones are made of the soil of an earlier time. But, snails and clams live in the water. Thus, the low transforms into the high, the soft transforms into the hard. These matters, if one thinks deeply about them, involve facts that can be confirmed. (Zhu 1986, ch. 94)
>
> Now there are often various types of oyster shells embedded in stones atop high mountains. Oysters must certainly live in the mud but, there they are, in stone. Heaven and earth are changing and rotating; how can anything remain constant? At the time when the mountains, rivers and the great Earth were first produced, their settings must have been quite soft. (Zhu 1985, ch. 1)

35 This text could be regarded as an extension or application of Zhou Dunyi's *Explanation of the Diagram of the Supreme Polarity*, the cornerstone of Zhu Xi's system of thought.

Moreover, while Zhu held that the earth was stationary *vis-à-vis* the rotating heavens above, later when he considered that the earth lies nested below or within the heavens, he raised the question that while

> Heaven rotates on the outside, isn't the earth revolving along with it? Sitting here now, we don't feel that the earth is moving, but how do we know that while heaven rotates on the outside the earth isn't revolving along with it? (Zhu 1985, ch. 86)[36]

Zhu Xi also offered a probing reflection on the formation of the cosmos. Reminiscent of Spinoza's notion of immanent reason and Wittgenstein's logical space, he regarded patterns/patterning as penetrating everything and not conditioned or limited by extension, dimension, or direction. By the same token, he understood that almanac makers only catch certain discernible annual cycles and seasonal patterns in the world; they cannot register anything deeper or get into the hows or whys these phenomena.

Someone said, "Shao Yong spoke of that which 'lies beyond the six directions.' I fear there is nothing beyond them." The Master replied, "Assuredly, pattern is free of inner and outer. The pattern of the six directions certainly has inner and outer. When almanac makers calculate the *qi*, they just calculate the revolutions of the sun, moon, and stars. Beyond this, they cannot calculate. And, how could these matters be free of inner and outer?" (Zhu 1986, ch.1)

As to comprehending heaven, the cosmos, and its revolutions more generally, Zhu speaks exuberantly of expanding one's mind and feelings, one's consciousness; by extending from all that one feels, sees, knows, and can imagine, one can begin to get a sense of its immensity. This appears to be an application of Zhu Xi's method of "investigating things to attain knowledge" to nature *writ large*:

> Heaven is just a vast entity; one must enlarge one's mind and feelings to begin to gaze upon it. As to the revolution of heaven, in one day it definitely revolves in one cycle. But, there are also major revolution cycles; one cannot approach this matter from just one perspective. (Zhu 1985, ch. 1)

It is fascinating to consider the sorts of existential reflection that would accompany such reflective observations of nature itself.

Interestingly, besides making such discerning scientific remarks, Zhu Xi sometimes also came up with what might be deemed a scientific or proto-scientific

36 This is the sort of question that Copernicus, Kepler, and Columbus were asking themselves.

model or thought experiment to facilitate understanding of natural phenomena. In one such case, Zhu uses a steaming rice pot as a model for understanding precipitation:

> When *qi* vaporizes and produces rain, it is just like when the rice pot is covered: the *qi* pressurizes, condenses, and produces droplets. When *qi* vaporizes and produces fog, it is just like when the rice pot isn't covered: the *qi* disperses and is not recovered. (Zhu 1985, ch. 111)[37]

Zhu Xi was at once rational and empirical in spirit. He observed events carefully with a keen eye and yet sought underlying patterns and offered reasoned speculations on the workings of natural phenomena. He found such inquiries into natural truths invigorating, almost empowering, touching reality in ways that cultural, textual truths never could. Zhu was deeply interested in the patterns constituting, connecting, and guiding physical phenomena; and he investigated natural phenomena in the spirit of roaming freely in the arts, that is, he didn't neglect to observe even the most trifling matters. And, as in his conduct of textual studies and formation of cultivation approaches, he strove to confirm his ideas and hypotheses against the evidence or the touchstone of effectiveness, often in dynamic terms, more in the sense of asking whether that was "how something worked" *in situ*, rather than whether "it was simply true or false". In any case, he wouldn't accept claims or ideas without some indication of their truth, their practical veracity. For example:

> A while back, there was a monk who claimed, "In the growth of bamboo sprouts one can observe the 'night vapor'. So, I stuck a pole into the ground to record the growth of a bamboo sprout. From morning until night it grew less than one inch. When I observed it at dawn the next day, it had already grown by several inches." Afterwards, I tested the story at the Jade Mountain Monastery, and found that the bamboo sprouts grew the same amount by day or night. Their actual growth differed entirely from that claim of the monk. (Zhu 1986, 138)

Qian Mu notes that this story presents an interesting contrast to Wang Shouren's anecdote about investigating the bamboo in front of his hall. While the young Wang just sat there and stared blankly at bamboo sprouts expecting their patterning to be manifested before his eyes, and gained no knowledge from the

37 It is a shame that nobody realized that the pressurized steam in a vessel could produce power. Laozi planted the seed for this discovery in *Laozi*, ch. 11. But the suggestion was never noticed. See Ames and Hall (2003, 91f).

exercise, Zhu's teaching and practice of "investigating things" involved observing with a clear question in mind, to be tested and confirmed. Thus, after hearing the monk's claim about the growth of the plants, Zhu proceeded to measure the actual growth of the bamboo sprouts by day and night when he had some free time (Qian 1991, 219).

Above, we observed that Zhu Xi would have questioned the narrowness and over-professionalization of current humanities research and writing at the college level. In this age of accelerated advanced degree programs, scholars are no longer limited just to the boundaries of their disciplines, but now to their chosen areas and fields within their disciplines.[38] This trend not only erodes the scholars' awareness of the intellectual-historical context of their chosen academic niches, but also alienates them from the constellations of other disciplines surrounding their own. Zhu Xi realized that his own focal concerns, such as the Confucian Way, self-cultivation, and so on, could only be understood, attested, and made more meaningful within larger contexts of knowledge and awareness. His central preoccupations could only come alive when related to a working sense of the world, history, his tradition, other traditions, human nature, and the like. Consequently, his example demonstrates that humanities students and researchers should acquaint themselves broadly within their own field, as well as with smatterings of other fields, in order to add depth and reality to their thought and research. In my case, my earlier efforts to study some science and the philosophy of science were repaid not only in a firmer grasp of recent developments in this area, but also in the writing of a crucial book review (Thompson 2002) and academia presentation (Thompson 2016). These studies also facilitated my recent work in agricultural and sustainability ethics, which has reinvigorated my academic and professional life.[39]

Calls to expand the purview of one's interests and learning—so as to include not only attending to and grasping the flow of events going on, whether at hand or in the press, but also making oneself aware of and conversant in ever wider swaths of one's own discipline, as well as trends of others—perhaps sound like a siren's call, an impossible dream, in this age of information overload. At present, our focal studies and research efforts are already vastly overwhelmed by the wealth of information at our grasp with the aid of digitization, computers, and the internet. We used to despair at reams of information, now new information pours in by the gigabyte and megabyte! How can we be expected to cast our vision beyond this focal amplitude, this infinite depth, which we can barely begin to get a grip on? In

38 I once heard an American Chinese historian say that he was only knowledgeable about the last fifty years of the Tang dynasty and not to ask him about the early Tang or any other period of Chinese history. Hopefully, he was exaggerating.

39 See also Thompson 2012a, 2012b, and 2013.

this time and age, such calls, as implied in Zhu Xi's teaching and practice, seem delusional if not downright sadistic. However, I maintain that this call is crucial if contemporary humanities researchers and writers are to restore a sense of not only their intellectual balance and equilibrium, but also of their academic commitments and life direction. It is crucial, indeed, to keeping one's academic work and career relevant to life as well as in harness with one's primary resolve to be a sensitive, responsible, self-conscious human being.

Now to the question, how is the contemporary humanities researcher to do this? That is, how is she to keep abreast developments in her own area, not to mention her field at large, while keeping aware the events going on in other fields of knowledge? After all, there are only 24 hours in a day, and seven days in a week! Well, to this end, the internet may be of service. One may subscribe to several news and academic sites to receive periodic newsletters. One may choose news sites that reflect one's outlook and politics, although it would be healthier to also receive postings of contrary views. Among academic sites, one may choose some that directly reflect one's interests, although again it would also be good to receive newsletters with a more general interest in the field, as well as science reports, such as from the *New Scientist* or *Science Newsletter*. One might visit the new books shelf and the current periodicals room at a university library, say, twice per month, to browse everything. It would also be intellectually expansive to read books from other fields at least once or twice a year, not just for expanding one's intellectual breadth, but for challenging oneself to explore outside one's intellectual comfort zone.

Conclusion

Zhu Xi's views and teachings on inquiry, learning, and reading, as understood in the context of his approach to self-cultivation, are highly relevant for rethinking and addressing the state of advanced education, study, research, reflection, and writing in the contemporary academy, especially in the humanities. While the tools of digitization, computers, and the internet grant us access to unimaginable riches of information, and empower us to explore and crunch that data, they and their applications in MOOCs, distance learning, and video classrooms are ultimately dehumanizing in various ways, and detract from the animating spirit of humanities studies. Consequently, we in this day and age are rapidly losing touch with some of the core elements of humanities education and learning. These elements are closely connected with the human touch, the personal touch, and are directly involved with the reasons why one enters the humanities in the first

place. They have to do with the human spirit, with questions of the meaning and purpose of human life, with the reasons why we all find the courage and conviction to get up in the morning to face yet another day—or not. So much of the true and significant humanities work depends on personal immersion in the focal materials, struggling with them, trying to read the author behind the writings, attempting to make personal sense of his or her productions, efforts that easily become vapid on computer monitors when one is easily distracted by other things online. So much of humanities training and interning involves teachers and students, or just the latter, intensively reading and discussing core texts together, trying to make general sense of these texts together while seeking personal meaning for oneself or one's set. Such activities and quests animated several advanced courses I took in philosophy and literature as a university student, for example on Plato, Melville, Thoreau, the Romantics, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Wittgenstein, and others, and as a graduate student, such as on Laozi, Zhuangzi, Seng Zhao, the Neo-Confucians, and so forth.[40] These sorts of activities can be mimicked in online chat rooms, but those dialogues never carry the same feeling or punch as face-to-face conversations.

This sort of humanities spirit and practice underlay Zhu Xi's experience, commitment, practice and teaching, which makes his ideas continue to be relevant and suggestive even today, when this personal and face-to-face sort of learning and study are being supplanted by digital and online tools and apps. Fundamentally, Zhu Xi reminds us that the value of the humanities, and of advanced work in this field in particular, lies precisely in one's establishing the *existential resolve* to see the project through, not merely as an intellectual task to be completed, but even more as part of the *existential humanizing project of cultivating oneself into a more sensitive, reflective, responsible, self-conscious human being*.

In closing, what Kleinbaum wrote of poetry could certainly be said broadly of the humanities, and Zhu Xi would concur:

> …We read and write poetry because we are members of the human race. And the human race is filled with passion. Medicine, law, business, engineering… are noble pursuits and necessary to sustain life. But poetry, beauty, romance, love…. These are what we stay alive for. (Kleinbaum 1989)[41]

40 These readings and activities made these courses absolutely crucial in my personal development as a sensitive, responsible human being, as well as a humanities scholar.

41 A theory obsessed literature colleague called *The Dead Poets Society* a nice, sentimental story. I replied that this story gets at why we as human beings produce, enjoy and study poetry, and literature generally, in the first place. Theory often loses sight of this, and becomes irrelevant to appreciating and responding to what is humanly important and interesting in literature.

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Between Tradition and Modernity: Modern Confucianism as a Form of East Asian Social Knowledge

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Abstract

In the last decades of the 20th century, the revival of traditional Confucianism assumed increasing importance and relevance. The revitalization of its complex philosophical heritage thus became part of the most important theoretical currents in contemporary East Asian societies. Due to its potentially stabilizing social function and compatibility with capitalism, Confucianism is often seen as the Asian equivalent of Max Weber's "protestant ethic". In modern sinology, this view is known as the "post-Confucian hypothesis". The appearance of the "vacuum of values" in modern China and its problematization and connection to the transformation of the structure, role, and function of social knowledge provide a good example of the consequences of explosive social transformation. This also raises the question of whether the Confucian modernization model is indeed capable of generating a non-individualistic version of modernity. Proceeding from this hypothesis, the present paper aims to show that the purported relation between modernity and individualism, which international modernization theories have always viewed as "inevitable" or "intrinsic", is, in fact, little more than an outcome of Western historical paradigms.

Keywords: Confucianism, Modern Confucianism, cultural heritage, East Asian modernization, social knowledge

Med tradicijo in modernostjo: moderno konfucijanstvo kot oblika vzhodnoazijskega družbenega vedenja

Izvleček

V zadnjih desetletjih dvajsetega stoletja postaja preporod konfucijanstva v vzhodnoazijskih regijah vse pomembnejši. Ponovna oživitev njegove raznovrstne idejne in kulturne dediščine postaja v teh regijah vse vplivnejša. Idejno ozadje konfucijanstva pa sodi k osrednjim temam teoretske struje modernega konfucijanstva, ki se uvršča k najpomembnejšim diskurzom sodobne Vzhodne Azije. Njegovo zmožnost, da uravnoveša družbo in da je združljiv s kapitalističnim sistemom, pogosto primerjajo s funkcijami, ki jih je

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po Webru prevzela protestantska etika. V sodobni sinologiji se pogled na konfucijanstvo imenuje »post-konfucijanska hipoteza«. Problematizacija t.i. »vakuuma vrednot« v sodobni Vzhodni Aziji in njegova povezava z družbenim znanjem ter s transformacijo njegove strukture, njegovih vlog ter funkcij nam lahko služi kot dober primer posledic eksplozivnih družbenih sprememb. Vse to nas med drugim napeljuje na vprašanje o tem, ali je model modernizacije konfucijanstva sploh sposoben generirati ne-individualistično inačico modernosti. Izhajajoč iz te hipoteze bo obravnavani članek prikazal dejstvo, da je povezava med individualizmom in modernostjo, ki v večini klasičnih zahodnih teorij modernizacije velja za intristično oziroma nujno, v resnici zgolj rezultat zahodnih zgodovinskih paradigem.

Ključne besede: konfucijanstvo, moderno konfucijanstvo, kulturna dediščina, vzhodnoazijska modernizacija, družbeno znanje

Introduction—Social Knowledge and the Confucian Revival in East Asia

Proceeding from the notion of Confucianism as a form of social knowledge in East Asia, and speaking about its impact upon the specific features of East Asian modernization, we first have to clarify the meaning of these crucial terms within the referential framework of the present paper. In this paper, the term East Asia does not refer to a geographic or geo-political area, but rather to a cultural zone, one that is defined through various common cultural heritages, especially through the common Confucian ideational tradition. In this sense, Vietnam, for instance, is also part of East Asia, although in a strictly geographic sense it belongs to Southeast Asia.

When speaking about a "common Confucian tradition" we must ask ourselves how this term, which refers to a complex ideational system, relates to a common East Asian culture and its epistemology. Confucianism as a form of knowledge is a particularly important part of the ideas and ideologies underlying East Asian societies, and constitutes the main body of traditional learning (Li and Yan 2006, 561). Various parts of this multi-faceted ideational system this form important elements of contemporary East Asian social knowledge. This is a form of knowledge that constitutes an epistemological common thread in societies, cultures, and communities. In contrast to personal knowledge, social knowledge is formed by a common ideational background, which provides a set of evaluative criteria that incoming information is assessed by. In other words: while personal knowledge and justification are based on the coherent integration of individual information, social knowledge and justification are based on the coherent aggregation of social information (Lehrer 1987, 87), as shared by individuals belonging to a certain

social group. Here, we must also point out that this kind of social information is not limited to learning or perceiving what is conveyed or represented in the realm of factuality, but also includes ideas and values.

Confucianism as a form of knowledge has had a profound and widespread impact on traditional Asian societies[1]. However, social transformations in modern times have dislodged traditional and pre-modern forms of Confucianism from the centre of these societies (Li and Yan 2006, 561). On the other hand, the revitalization of traditional Confucian thought is one of the most important intellectual currents in contemporary Eastern Asia. In China, which is the historical "cradle" of Confucian cultures and philosophies, this revitalization began on the threshold of the 20th century, and manifested itself in the intellectual current of the so-called New or Modern Confucianism (*Xin ruxue*[2]).

In international sinology, this line of thought is translated with various names, ranging from *Neo-Confucianism* or *Contemporary* or *Modern Neo-Confucianism*, to *New Confucianism* and *Modern* or *Contemporary Confucianism*. The first set, which includes the term Neo-Confucianism, is impractical because it is often confused with Neo-Confucianism (*sic*), a term that in Western sinology denotes the reformed Confucian philosophies of the Song and Ming periods (*li xue* or *xingli xue*). I therefore generally prefer the term *Modern Confucianism*, given that we are dealing with philosophical discourses that belong to Chinese modernity.

Because the Confucian renaissance as a new, modern intellectual movement started in China, its main representatives are also mainly found among modern and contemporary Chinese philosophers, although the Confucian revival is increasingly shaping the current academic scenes in other East Asian societies. In the present paper, however, we will concentrate upon the work of the central representatives of these currents who lived and worked (or still live and work) in the Chinese linguistic area. In order to clarify the abovementioned research question on the relation between Confucianism as a form of social knowledge on the one hand, and its impact upon the specific features of East Asian modernization on the other, we shall thus examine and introduce some of the most important epistemological elements contained in the writings of the most prominent representatives of this revival. These analyses will be based on the works of many philosophers belonging to all three

1 For scholars such as Joseph Levenson, Myron Cohen, and Margery Wolf, Confucianism is an outdated patriarchal ideology whose gradual disappearance is highly desirable, as this would open up areas for the consolidation of a new and much-needed cultural transformation. Instead, for other scholars, Confucianism is a *sine qua non* for any "Chineseness", and must thus be maintained and further developed in the contemporary world (Ames 2001, 71).

2 新儒學

generations of Modern Confucianism,[3] including Xiong Shili, Zhang Junmai, and Liang Shuming from the first generation, Mou Zongsan, Xu Fuguan, Tang Junyi, and Fang Dongmei from the second, and Tu Weiming and Chen Lai from the third.

Modern Confucianism and the Special Features of East Asian Modernization

Modern Confucianism is defined by a search for syntheses between Euro-American and traditional East Asian thought. It aims to develop a system of values, ideas and concepts that could prove itself capable of resolving the social, political, and axiological problems of globalized modern societies. In order to establish a model in which modernization is not simply equated or confused with Westernization, scholars who belong to this stream of thought often attempt to revive "classical Confucian" values by adapting and reconciling them with the demands of the present time (see Tu 2000 and 2014).

In this context, it is important to consider the fact that since the latter half of the previous century East Asian societies have been constantly changing the map of world progress: as a result, the balance of economic and political power is shifting from the West to the East. This process has its roots in a number of transformations in ideational and material paradigms by which the development of East Asian regions can be defined, and which also strongly influence international relations at the global level. If we want to understand these transformations in the context of their individual cultural backgrounds, we must adopt a broader perspective, for their internal structures are by no means limited to (visible and measurable) economic, political, and ecological issues. On a deeper ideational level, these transformations are also tightly linked to the political and social roles of culturally conditioned values and ideologies. These—often only latently present—ideational factors represent the crucial axiological and epistemological foundations, as well as an inherent binding, of all the specific institutions that are typical for these societies. Confucianism undoubtedly is one of these key ideational foundations. It is based on the incorporation of ideas linked to the concept of a "relational self". The concrete collective social consciousness that underlies this mode of (self)-reflection manifests itself in the condition of the relational individual, who is necessarily and existentially an organic part of a social group. Such consciousness is reflected in the manner in which any given individuals come to view themselves as a part of a group, and in which patterns of commonality among individuals

3 The categorization into "generations" follows a long tradition in Confucian scholarship, which is ultimately rooted in classical Confucianism.

bring explicit unity to inter-personal relations. This specific view of the relation between the individual and society has been of crucial importance for shaping the Modern Confucian version of "Chinese" or "East Asian Modernity", for in this renewed system the concept of individualism can be replaced by individualisation (Abbeg 1970, 210), i.e. in the full realization of each individual's potential within the relational network of their interactions with the "Others".

The prevailing classical Western modernization theories have created a tradition that interprets the relation between past and present (i.e. "tradition" and "modernity") in a Eurocentric manner, one that remains globally predominant even today. Although they differ from each other, they still have a common basis, established upon the supposition that "traditional" and "modern" cultures or societies always represent two systems of interrelated variables. In their various re-formulations of the dichotomy between tradition and modernity, this transition has been understood as a process in which the first one falls into decline and the latter is then established (Bendix 1967, 307–8). As such, according to these theories social systems are grounded on a "before and after" model (ibid. 309). In this model "traditional" and "modern" social structures are distinguished by two sets of dichotomous attributes, and individual societies are classified as more or less "modern" according to the degree to which they exhibit one set of attributes rather than another (Rošker 2015, 13). In this context, tradition and modernity are widely used as polar opposites in a linear theory of social change. In such a view, the concept of change in economically growing societies, such as those seen in contemporary East Asia, can be understood as one which is conditioned by a linear development from a traditional, "conservative" past towards a "highly modernized" future. A significant presumption in this bipolar model of change is that the existing institutions and values that form the "content" of tradition are barriers to progress and social change, and are thus seen as obstacles to modernization (ibid.).

Following such ideas, most dominant Western theories of modernization have naturally assumed that East Asia could only develop a dynamic, modern society if it abandoned its most important traditional heritage, namely Confucianism. Indeed, Karl Marx and several other classical Western modernization theorists firmly believed that this ideational system was hindering any kind of real modernization in this part of the world. For example, Max Weber wrote extensively on Asia, especially India and China, concluding that Asian philosophical, religious, or cultural traditions could by no means serve as an ideational basis for social, political and economic modernization (Makeham 2003, 33).

On the other hand, Joseph R. Gusfield (1967, 351) pointed out that relations between "tradition" and "modernity" do not necessarily imply displacement, exclusiveness or

conflicts. Hence, the "modern" must not necessarily or categorically impair the "traditional". He noted that traditional forms do not always hinder change and progress, but can also provide support for them.

Modern Confucian scholars also follow similar presumptions. Hence Weber's widely known thesis, according to which Protestant ethics were instrumental in the rise and spread of modernization, stands in contrast to a presumption that has appeared in Eastern Asia during recent decades, and which is known as the "post-Confucian hypothesis". This hypothesis argues that societies based on Confucian ethics might prove themselves not only as equal, but even superior, to the West in terms of modernization, industrialization, and affluence.

The abovementioned revitalization of Confucian thought, which first appeared at the threshold of the twentieth century and which developed in the theoretical stream of so-called Modern Confucianism, is certainly among the most important factors within such new modernization ideologies (Li 1996, 544). Contemporary Confucian scholars thus generally believe that the successful development of East Asian societies has been, and remains, mostly due to the particular modernization model that has been adopted, one known as "Confucian capitalism" (e.g. Kahn 1979; Vogel 1979).

This model is characterised by strong state leadership with a well-developed administrative structure, a hierarchical social structure with a well-developed network of social relations, and an emphasis on education. It also stresses virtues such as diligence, reliability and persistence together with cooperation, loyalty and a strong sense of affiliation with one's community or organization (Rošker 2015, 3).

In order to acquire a more coherent understanding of the East Asian Confucian revival, its socio-epistemological functions in the modernization process, and its theories, it is also important to understand that it cannot be seen as a monolithic ideational formation. This revival includes a wide scope of theoretical discourses, which are rooted in a tradition that is already in itself very complex and heterogeneous.

Epistemology and Axiology of Social Transformations

Over the last few decades the developmental process of the Confucian revival has been tightly linked to the dynamic and complex social transformations seen in East Asian societies, in which it functions as one of the most important elements of common cultural heritage and social knowledge. In this context, social knowledge can also be defined as one's ability to understand and predict others' general

patterns of behaviour. Therefore, social transformations are necessarily linked to simultaneous transformations of social knowledge. The revival of traditional Confucian values thus represents one of these ideational transformations.

As already noted, the Confucian revival is rooted in the presumption that East Asian modernization cannot be completely identified with Westernization, and that the process of modernization necessarily includes both universal and culturally conditioned elements. Here, we cannot forget that the term modernity, which generally denotes a period of social transformation, was developed within Euro-American discourses, and thus defining the "general" theoretical evolution of this concept means (once again) addressing the development of Western theory. Hence, we should also stress that in this context that we are not referring to any notion of so-called "classic modernity", i.e. to the Western "New Era". We rather apply this term in the sense of a process of general social transformation or social revival, one linked to certain specific conditions that dictate modernization (e.g. the enlightenment movements, the dominant role and function of intellectuals, the spread of industrialization, and so on). Depending on the concrete specific tradition or specific cultural environment in which they took place, such processes followed different pathways. However, they always involved the transformation of many of the conditions defining transitional societies.

Since the latter half of the 20th century, Southeast Asia has been one of the most dynamic economies in the developing world. This process of economic change has always been accompanied by several other attributes of modernization, such as the spread of education, modern transportation systems, and mass media (Hirschman and Edwards 2007, 4376). The reasons underlying the economic success of some countries and the stagnation of others are still subject to dispute. The East Asian model of state-sponsored export industrialization is widely discussed in academic circles and among policymakers, but the parallels between East and Southeast Asian strategies of economic development remain rather unclear. An important element in this context is the presence of market-driven capitalism. However, the function of the regional governments in managing their economies has also been integral to economic development in the area. Hirschman and Edwards (2007, 4377) also points to the degree to which economic development in the region has been carried out by fairly authoritarian states. "The relationship between democracy and economic growth and development, argued to go hand in hand by modernization theorists, seemed to be challenged by the experience of Southeast Asian tigers towards the end of the twentieth century" (ibid.). However, a lot of research remains to be done to investigate the reasons for and implications of economic development and modernization in this area.

In dealing with the relation between economic growth and democracy, we often come across the phrase "Asian values". This has often been used to express a key concept put forward by a number of authoritarian ideologies, which claims that, in order to contain the presumed threat and risks of "Western" individualism within in their own societies, there is a need to promote the "virtues" of Asian communitarianism and rigorous government.

> "Asian values" as a doctrine of developmentalism can be understood as the claim that, until prosperity is achieved, democracy remains an "unaffordable luxury". This "Protestant ethic" form of "Asian values" attributes high growth rates to certain cultural traits. These characteristics include hard work, frugality, discipline, and teamwork. Western democracy hinders rapid development, claim authoritarian rulers in the East Asia, and thus must be delayed until substantial development has been achieved (Thompson 2001, 155–6).

This ideology thus warns against careless assumptions of "Western" democracy, arguing that it could lead Asian countries down the slippery slope of degeneration. In this way, "Asian values" have become the dichotomous opposite of everything that is seen as wrong with the West. The concept is very problematic, however, as it relies on the (wrongly understood) notion of "cultural relativism", or the idea that human rights are contingent upon Asian cultural heritage (Moody 1996, 166). In such contexts, Western countries are seen as having no right to impose their views, concepts and practices on other cultures.

Even though this notion of "Asian values" has often been closely identified with the Confucian tradition (see for example, Fetzer and Soper 2007; Yu 2000; de Bary 1998; Lee 2003), this expression, in fact, has almost nothing to do with the Modern Confucian scholars or their philosophies. Hence, it is very important to be aware of the significant differences between modern and contemporary adaptations of Confucian theory and the related discourse on Asian values, which is often mistakenly comprehended as forming part of the Modern Confucian stream of thought.

In general, this stream of thought has nothing much against Western influences, as it is even based upon searching for syntheses between Euro-American and traditional Chinese (especially Confucian) discourses. The founders of Modern Confucianism as a system aimed at a more systematic re-interpretation of traditional Chinese philosophy and culture, based on a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of Western philosophy, especially the thought of Plato, Kant and Hegel, as well as other representatives of German Idealism. Given that

Modern Confucians viewed modernization primarily as a rationalization of the world, they explored their own tradition for authentic concepts comparable to the two Western paradigms essential for modernization, i.e. the concepts of subjectivity, and of reason and rationality.

However, this stream of thought also aims to elaborate and modernize some Confucian values that could be used as a counterweight to the general dispersion of values, which is typical for industrial and post-industrial societies. Because one of the central axiological elements accompanying profit-driven capitalistic developments is widespread social alienation, traditional ideational systems have—*inter alia*—been investigated in order to find a solution to the so-called "vacuum of values" that appear as an omnipresent manifestation of this phenomenon. In this context, Modern Confucianism aims to elaborate on traditional epistemological approaches linked to the inherent connections between knowledge and values or knowledge and wisdom, focusing on the cultural and axiological conditionality of comprehension. In this sense, Confucian philosophers have followed the presumption that traditional epistemological and ethical concepts could serve as a foundation for an "East Asian" modernization theory.

Knowledge and Value

In order to obtain a deeper understanding of the contributions of Modern Confucianism to the solving of the global crisis of values, the present paper will critically introduce the epistemological thought of some of its most important representatives. It aims to show the development of the traditional Chinese epistemological presumption that moral cultivation is a precondition for any comprehensive knowledge. An implication of this premise is that human perception and comprehension of reality, which is, in itself, permeated by ethical values[4], is not only rational, for it is, among other factors, also defined by intentions, desires, and feelings. Modern Confucians assume that the very same demarcation line that divides reason and intuition also divides science and philosophy or the humanities.

In general, Modern Confucians do not oppose science, but are against scientism. Moreover, most of them argue that science, which aims at the recognition of objects in the external natural world by applying rational and analytical methodology, will never be able to solve questions linked to the meaning of life, nor have a significant impact on an individual's worldview. While science explores facts,

4 On this basis, the contemporary Chinese philosopher Chen Lai elaborated an ontology of the central Confucian virtue of humanness (*ren*) and introduced a vision of a humanness-based ethics, pertinent to modern times (Lai 2014).

philosophy and the humanities investigate meanings and values. As such, Modern Confucians claim that the boundary between reason and intuition not only separates science and philosophy, but also the realm of phenomena from that of values (see for instance Xiong 1992, 357; Mou 1995, 549; Fang 1936, 160; Xu 1960, 2; Tang 2000, 293 etc.).

Here we shall take into account that in the holistic Confucian tradition epistemology is inseparable from ontology, since every object of cognition is also cognition itself. The concrete manner of an object's existence is therefore tightly linked to our understanding of it. This link is interactive, for it includes mutual co-dependency. We thus cannot oversimplify the Confucian view by claiming that it represents a solipsistic conceptualisation of the world. What is true for the perception of the external world also holds for its comprehension and interpretation, which cannot be separated from the whole, but individualized and thoroughly changeable, existence of the objects of cognition.

The main streams of thought in traditional Chinese epistemology were primarily based on the method of introspection and the intuitive perception of reality. In the Neo-Confucianism of the Song (960–1279) and Ming (1368–1644) Dynasties (upon which the majority of Modern Confucian discourses are grounded), there were two schools: the first was "realistic", and was known as the School of the Structure (*Li xue* 理學) or the School of Reason (*Xingli xue* 性理學). Greatly influenced by the teachings of the most important medieval Chinese philosopher, Zhu Xi, this epistemology emphasizes realistic modes for the perception of reality, and it introduced a new methodology suited to this form of recognition called "exploring objects" (*ge wu* 格物). The latter school, which instead advocated more idealistic and intuitive methods of recognizing reality, was named the School of the Heart-Mind (*Xin xue* 心學), and was led by the most famous philosopher of the Ming Dynasty, Wang Shouren[5]. Most Modern Confucian philosophers are more influenced by this latter school of thought than by the more realistic philosophy of Zhu Xi. Moreover, they derive their concept of reason from German philosophy, which generally occupies an important position in their theories.

While in China, Marxist theoreticians (such as Jin Yuelin) prescribed absolute priority to the rational method, most Modern Confucians (especially Xiong Shili and Mou Zongsan) applied the intuitive one. Some of them, however, like Liang Shuming (1924, 97–102) and Zhang Junmai (Chang 1954, 100), drew attention to the traditional binary understanding of reason and intuition. Here, the two methods of inquiry are not only linked to each other, but are also connected to the method of reasoning as such, because reasoning is always based on distinguishing.

5 Also known as Wang Yangming.

In such a view, philosophers who apply the method of intuition at the same time must also apply methods of formal logic and dual differentiations; and those who apply the rational method simultaneously use the intuitive one, as well as dual distinctions[6]. For Modern Confucians, all these methods—those of dual distinctions and intuition, as well as of formal analysis and inferences—are necessary components for any coherent philosophical activity. However, the recognition obtained from intuitive perception is deeply rooted in cognition, human will, and feelings, and thus represents a synthesis on a high epistemological level. Zhang Junmai, for instance, pointed out that this synthesis cannot be established by study alone, in which intuition and reason appear in a mutually contradictory relation, but only on the basis of much broader platforms (Chang 1954, 100). In this context, Xiong Shili and his student Xu Fuguan upgraded Wang Shouren's method of recognition, which they called *tiren* 體認 (bodily recognition) and *tizhi* 體知 (knowledge obtained through the body), respectively. This method is not based on intuition in the usual sense, nor on rational reasoning about the logical relations between premises and inferences. Instead, *tiren is* a retrospective and active process in which "the subject discovers moral subjectivity in the pseudo-subjectivity of human desires and affirms and develops it" (Ni 2002, 287). Here, the word "*ren*" (recognition) means both realization and recognition. One reveals one's own moral nature through "overcoming the self" and by "reducing sensual desires" (ibid.).

Most Modern Confucian philosophers are also profoundly interested in questions regarding the nature of the relation between theory and praxis, i.e. between "knowledge and action" (*zhi xing* 知行), which also represented one of the central epistemological problems of traditional, especially Neo-Confucian, discourses[7] (see for instance He Lin 1938).

In the traditional Confucian conceptual and referential frameworks, the transcendent and empirical spheres of human performance mostly correspond to the dual antipodes of "inner sage" and "external ruler" ("*neisheng* 內聖" and "*waiwang* 外王"). As Lee Ming-Huei points out (2001, 15), most Modern Confucians see the "inner sage" as a foundation for the concept of the "external ruler". However, the latter cannot be understood only as a kind of extension of the former. Due to their striving to establish an East Asian theory of modernization, Modern Confucians

6 The comprehension of reality based on the method of dual differentiation and distinction, respectively, is rooted in the awareness of binary oppositions like hard-soft, black-white, pleasure-pain, etc. They form a contrast, through which objects can be easily categorized and hence integrated into the comprehensive perception of reality.

7 In the framework of the Neo-Confucian philosophy (i.e. the reformed Confucian discourses from the Song and Ming Dynasties), this view has been elaborated in greatest detail by Wang Shouren and some other representatives of the School of the Heart-Mind (*Xin xue*).

aim to establish within the complementary relation between the two polar opposites something similar to the Western conception of the subject.

> A subject so constituted could thus unite in itself the awareness of the "subject of moral practice" (*daode shijiande zhuti*) in the sphere of spiritual life, the awareness of the "political subject" (*zhengzhi zhuti*) in the field of society, and the awareness of the "cognitive subject" or the "subject of recognition" (*renshi zhuti*) in the realm of epistemology and the natural world. The inner sage thus had to be posited in the complementary relation with a "new external ruler" (*xin waiwang*) who was responsible for the development of science and democracy. (Rošker 2016, 156)

In this process of recognition, the unity of knowledge and action (*zhixing heyi* 知行合一), as well as the subject and object of recognition, merge into unity. If the subject of recognition wants to gain objective knowledge, it must "immerse" (Ni 2002, 292) itself in the object of recognition, i.e. in all that can be recognized in that object. Only in this way can a certain insight becomes genuine knowledge. On such a basis, the separation between knowledge and the subject of recognition can be completely eliminated, and the incorporation of what has been recognized becomes a precondition for its actual and complete recognition.

In the Neo-Confucian philosophies of the Song and Ming Dynasties, the intuitive recognition of reality was closely linked to the concept of innate knowledge (*liangzhi* 良知), which constitutes the core of the moral nature of any individual. This concept, which can be seen as a creative link connecting fact and value, has profoundly influenced the entirety of Modern Confucian epistemology. For Xiong Shili (1992, 548), one of the pioneers of Modern Confucian stream of thought, this innate knowledge, which manifests itself in the infinite heart-mind (*wuxiande zhixin* 無限的知心) and its phenomenal form denoted by the original heart-mind (*ben xin* 本心), is the basic human moral substance and provides a foundation of moral performance; it is transcendent and infinitely universal[8]. Many later Modern Confucians, such as Mou Zongsan (1995, 38) and Tang Junyi (1985, 53–54), have seen it as a kind of moral compass intrinsic to every individual. Similarly, Xu Fuguan appropriated the traditional concept of moral reason (*daode lixing* 道德理性), which serves as a fundamental principle for the guidance and regulation of human life within the moral heart-mind, and manifests itself

8 The human heart-mind (*xin*) as a necessary and constitutional part of the inner moral substance (or the inherent individual moral Self) is the key component in the recognition process. When recognizing other human beings, this sensual compatibility must also be based on empathy, a core notion defining the abovementioned central Confucian virtue of humanness (*ren*).

as an awareness of the good and ethical within the moral Self or original heart-mind (Xu 2005, 178). Most Modern Confucian epistemological discourses are also based on the presumption that this awareness is innate to all human beings.

All this led to a modern elaboration of the traditional Confucian moral spirit, which is both immanent and transcendent. The Modern Confucian elaborations of such a moral spirit are based on the internalization of traditional religious concepts, which were transformed and changed from abstract external ideas into symbols denoting different existential forms of the inner moral substance (ibid.).

As already noted, Modern Confucian epistemology is closely related to its ontology, for scholars belonging to this current usually see the world as a metaphysical reality that is immanent to all that exists in the universe, while also possessing moral *qualities* (Chan 2002, 306). In this respect, the central Confucian virtue of (co)humanness or mutuality (*ren* 仁) is already part of the cosmic entirety (see Chen 2014), while its recognition, or its simultaneous incorporation and internalization, manifests itself in the moral performance of individuals. Chen Lai, who is one of the most important current Chinese philosophers, also points out that the ideational foundations of this virtue form a basis for a unification between the Self and Other, since they are rooted in an awareness of the importance of community, and thus in an awareness of one's own social responsibility (Chen 2014a, 41).

Knowledge and Wisdom

This kind of ethically conditioned knowledge is also tightly connected to the notion of wisdom, or, in other words, to the differentiation between factual and axiological knowledge. In contrast to the former, the latter is not only grounded in perceiving, gathering, and applying factual information, but also includes its concrete evaluation, allowing us to apply it in reasonable and ethically irreproachable ways. This kind of knowledge is grounded in an ethically aware understanding and evaluating of different positions in various social contexts. It is rooted in the difference between facts and values, i.e. in a classical epistemological distinction, which appeared in almost all traditional philosophies, and which has gained a lot of attention in modern times in the form of the increasingly problematic relation between science and humanities.

Hence, throughout the twentieth century, various attempts at clarifying the relation between knowledge and wisdom emerged to the forefront of Modern Confucian philosophies. This task implied the need for a transformation of these traditional discourses, which could not be comprehended, applied, reproduced,

or developed beyond the specific frameworks of the Chinese tradition. Hence, this aspect has been connected to the need for the analytical reconstruction of traditional concepts in the context of social modernization. Most of the Modern Confucians were well aware of the importance of this task, for it preconditioned any possibility of adapting these frameworks to the modern era and, hence, of turning them into a possible foundation of new, contemporary social knowledge. In these endeavours they aimed to fill the emerging "vacuum of values", which manifested itself in social dispersion and a complete lack of generally binding axiological norms or criteria.

Many Modern Confucians elaborated on the concept of wisdom, as can already be found in Xiong Shili's theories on the difference between qualitative (*xingzhi* 性智) and quantitative (*liangzhi* 量智) understanding (Rošker 2009, 376). In his *Three Kinds of Philosophical Wisdom* (*Zhexue san hui,* 2007), Fang Dongmei also unites the notions "*li* 理" (reason) and "*qing* 情" (feeling, sensation) into an epistemological concept of "sensuous reason (*qingli* 情理)". In its unification of rationality and feelings, this notion provides a fundamental and original core, or basis of recognition. Fang thus denoted it as a "seed of wisdom" (*zhihui chongzi* 智慧种子). Tang Junyi's epistemology also implies both a theory of knowledge and a theory of wisdom. In Tang's philosophy, intuition and reason are thoroughly interconnected. Based on this interconnection and the mutual influence amongst the different mechanisms and segments of the heart-mind, and with the help of analytical philosophy, Tang formulated an innovative and very interesting hypothesis regarding the creativity of wisdom (*zhihuide chuangzaoxing* 智慧的創造性). For him, knowledge (*zhishi* 知識) includes ideas or concepts, logical cognitive laws, inferences, and empirical intuition. Wisdom, however, is understood as a kind of "miraculous creativity" (*shenmiaode chuangzaoxing* 神秒的創造性), i.e. a type of intuitive reasoning that is neither completely empirical, nor exclusively rational. It is a kind of thought that can apply previously obtained knowledge, but only based on prior independent decisions for such application. As such, knowledge is both integrated and surpassed. In both theories, morality plays a central role, because it represents the foundation of the Self and thus of the heart-mind. In this regard, Tang argues that his concept of rational intuition is able to directly "penetrate" the patterns that were established on the grounds of synthesizing premises, and so can rather easily obtain valid conclusions. This, of course, implies that rational intuition is above logical reason. At the same time, however, Tang believes that pure rational intuition can only lead to knowledge and not wisdom, because it is only capable of non-inferential reasoning. He has also never fully elaborated on or analysed in detail his notion of "miraculous creative wisdom." All that can be said of this idea is merely that it

is founded on the moral heart-mind, which is understood as a vital part of the human Self, and that it functions instantly and unconsciously.

In contrast, Mou Zongsan criticized the traditional concepts of intuition and wisdom, claiming that they have had a devastating impact on Chinese history:

> Historically, Confucian theoretical works had always treated intuition as a manifestation of the personality of a sage or a saint, i.e. in terms of the magical effects of wisdom… These effects were always posited within humanity (or mutuality, *ren*), and therefore could not be separated from it, even temporarily, in order to gain "pure recognition". This is why logic and mathematics were never developed in China[9] (Mou Zongsan in Han and Zhao 1994, 176).

However, on the basis of elaborating and synthesizing Kant's epistemology, Mou also developed a concept of specifically Chinese intellectual intuition (*zhide zhijue* 智的直覺) that enabled people to perceive and comprehend not only objects from the phenomenal world, but also the sphere of noumena[10]. When manifest in humans, this kind of "divine recognition" (Mou 1971, 51) is certainly a kind of wisdom.

The traditional Confucian notion of wisdom was also developed and modernized by several philosophers, who until recently have not been seen as Modern (or contemporary) Confucians, but rather as purely Marxist theoreticians. This holds particularly true for Jin Yuelin's student Feng Qi, and his innovative work in the development of Chinese epistemology.

While Jin Yuelin's theories of knowledge were based upon the traditional Western understanding of epistemology as a discipline limited to a pure theory of knowledge, Feng attempted to extend this approach and, based on traditional Chinese discourses, sought to create an epistemology in a broader sense, which he called "expanded epistemology" (*guangyi renshi lun* 廣義認識論).

He believed that epistemology should not be limited to the theory of knowledge, but should also include the problem of exploring wisdom. In this context, he strove to consider all the basic approaches to the main philosophical issues

9 在以前的儒家學術發展中, 始終是停在聖賢人格中的直覺形態上, 及智慧輝妙用的型態…它總是上屬而渾化於仁中, 而未暫時脫離呼仁而成為 »純粹的知性«. 因此, 邏輯數學都出不來.

10 Mou Zongsan tried to define the position of reason within traditional Chinese thought by comparing Western and Chinese cultures, arguing that they were based on different representational forms of human reason. He called the Chinese form "functional or intensive" (*lixingzhi yunyong biaoxian* 理性運用表現) and the Western "constructive or extensive" (*lixingzhi jiagou biaoxian* 理性架構表現) (Mou 1995, 544–53).

of both ancient and modern times. For him, these basic approaches were clearly expressed in both Western metaphysical inquiries and in the ancient Chinese methods of cultivating the ideal personality. Similar endeavours were also clearly visible in his general philosophical and/or methodological research, through which he tried to establish a new approach to solving the contradiction between the natural sciences and humanities. His attempt to transcend the boundaries between ignorance and knowledge, and his theory of distinguishing between knowledge and wisdom, not only referred to epistemological problems, but also implied ontological and metaphysical issues. By consistently integrating ontological and ethical suppositions into the framework of his "expanded epistemology," Feng provided a unique and original solution to the dichotomous relations of substance and phenomena. His epistemological system, which included systematic, rational distinctions, as well as a holistic reunification of comprehension, was a felicitous attempt at establishing a theoretical framework that could provide the basis for fresher, more complex methodologies in contemporary theoretical discourses (Feng 1983, 54).

For Chen Lai, wisdom belongs to the four central Confucian virtues, which are categorized into ethics (Chen 2014, 251). Confucianism, since the time of Confucius, emphasizes "practical wisdom" as the realization of philosophy:

> This approach accentuates the **practical** aspects of **wisdom** rather than the analytical rationale of the intellect.
>
> Emphasison **practical wisdom** persistently reinforces a moral foundation that is not differentiated from personal virtue. At the same time, **practical wisdom** in Confucianism stresses self-cultivation, or the complete transformation of the self, derived from the internal state of the heart/mind (*xin*). Finally, **Confucianism** insists that **practical wisdom** must be transformed into **practical** action. (Chen 2015, 69)

In his commentaries on Feng Youlan's philosophy, Chen Lai also exposes the difference between moral and intellectual (or, in Feng's own words, "non-moral") knowledge, pointing out that they belong to two different categories of rationality. These two types of rationality must be sharply distinguished, for the objects of moral rationality are moral principles, whereas those of intellectual rationality are existing laws (Chen and Xin 2007, 368). He also lays stress upon the fact that one of the main critiques of Confucianism by classical Western theories of modernization was centred on said theories' suppositions that Confucian ethics were incompatible with the rationalization inherent in the process of modernization. In this regard, the very Confucian concept of wisdom was seen as one

of the main culprits for this "incompatibleness," because Confucianism allegedly "stressed the wisdom of feelings rather than knowledge born of experience and assessment" (Chen 2009, 234). This was one of the central claims in the theories of Talcott Parsons, Weber's successor, who in the 1960s established the hypothesis that Confucianism was an obstacle to modernization. However, only a decade later the prevailing opinion on the relation between Confucianism and modernization had radically changed not only in the Asian academic world, but also in the Euro-American one.

Conclusion

As we have seen above, the Modern Confucian emphasis on the traditional Confucian link between comprehension and the ethical evaluation of being is an important part of the related epistemology. This epistemology, which cannot be separated from ontology, is of utmost importance for the gradual restoration of the "credibility" of ancient Chinese thought in the context of modern social knowledge. In the framework of such onto-epistemological discourses, the imparting of meaning does not refer solely to the subject, but also to his or her intimate connection with fellow human beings who are thus seen as being something more than just the "Others". In this sense, such discourses could be well on their way to establishing a new, specifically East Asian model of modernity. Such a model is by no means grounded in individualism, (which is, in the framework of classical Western modernization theories, an absolutely necessary precondition for any kind of modernization), but rather in the abovementioned notion of individualization.

A subject in the sense of a moral Self, who is—in addition to analytical and rational skills also endowed with intuition and wisdom, represents one of the possible Modern Confucian responses to the global questions of the present time. These questions are linked to the dilemmas of the modern subject who is trapped within the complex technologies of the profit-seeking natural world, and has thus forgotten the ethical dimensions which define his or her humanity. A new East Asian social epistemology, which could be based upon the Confucian notions of values and wisdom, might represent an instrumental factor in reviving traditional values and sensibly adapting them to the requirements of the new social knowledge, making them suitable for the lives of people in both modern and post-modern eras. The digital period in which we live is defined by an overflow of factual, auditory, and visual information, along with the accompanying overburdening of people's sensory organs. In such times, wisdom,

which is a characteristic feature of Confucian sages, can be more than useful, especially considering the fact that the original meaning[11] of the Chinese term sage (*sheng ren*) is "one who listens carefully".

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11 In the oldest Chinese etymological dictionary from the Han Dynasty *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字, the character *sheng* 聖 (sage, the wise person) is explained as 從耳呈聲, which means that the sound appears through the ears.

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Body and Mind

Confucius' Embodied Knowledge[1]

Margus OTT[*]

Abstract

The main purpose of the present article is to explicitly link the *Analects* to the embodiment theory (ET). As indicated in the introduction, embodiment has been an important topic in recent Sinological research, but until now rather few explicit connections have been made with the ET. In relation to the embodied knowledge, the article discusses the following topics: embodiment, embeddedness, enactment, extendedness, emotivity, implicitness, emergence, joy and apprenticeship or self-cultivation. The same themes are found to be important in the *Analects*, with a plethora of examples. Arguably ET could thus be a useful paradigm for discussing several important themes of the *Analects*. And the *Analects* being one of the founding texts of the Chinese philosophical tradition (though similar concerns are manifest also in other texts), it could also be beneficial to further developments in the ET itself, on the condition that its proponents familiarize themselves with the Chinese philosophical tradition where important issues of ET have been explicitly discussed for two and a half millennia.

Keywords: embodiment theory, Confucianism, *Analects*, comparative philosophy, enactivism

Konfucijeva utelešena vednost

Izvleček

Poglavitni namen obravnavanega članka je vzpostaviti eksplicitno povezavo med *Pogovori* in teorijo utelešenja (ang. embodiment theory – ET). Kot je nakazano v uvodu, utelešenje v zadnjem času postaja pomembna tema sinološkega raziskovanja, a je bilo do pred kratkim predstavljenih relativno malo neposrednih povezav z ET-jem. V kontekstu teorije utelešenja članek obravnava naslednje teme: utelešenost, vdelanje, izvajanje, podaljšanost, emotivnost, implicitnost, nujnost, radost ter vajeništvo oziroma samovzgoja. Enake teme se, s pestrim naborom primerov, kot pomembne kažejo tudi v *Pogovorih*. ET bi bil tako lahko koristna paradigma za obravnavo ključnih tem v *Pogovorih*, *sámo delo,* ki je eden od ustanovnih tekstov kitajske filozofske tradicije (čeprav se podobne teme pojavijo tudi v drugih besedilih), pa bi lahko prav tako prispevalo k nadaljnjemu razvoju ET-ja samega – seveda pod pogojem, da se njegovi zagovorniki seznanijo s kitajsko filozofsko tradicijo, ki pomembna vprašanja teorije utelešenja eksplicitno obravnava že dve tisočletji in pol.

Ključne besede: utelešenje, konfucijanstvo, *Pogovori*, primerjalna filozofija, enaktivizem

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Introduction

Several intuitions similar to the conception outlined in this article have been pronounced about the Chinese tradition from nineteenth century until today. Notably, Chinese thought has been described as "concrete" in contrast to "abstract", "practical" in contrast to "theoretical", "aesthetical" in contrast to "scientific" (cf Hall and Ames 1998; Nakamura 1964; Li 2010; Jung 2011), etc. In this article, I propose the Embodiment Theory (ET) as a useful framework for bringing out deeper distinctions which, among others, could give a more precise meaning to the claims of those authors.

The ET formed partly as a critique of the previously dominant understanding of knowledge as disembodied, abstract, general, contemplative, explicit, representational, free from emotions and particular contexts, etc.[2] This is a derived mode of knowledge that can never be completely separated from its embodied context. Interest in different aspects of ET has been widespread in recent decades (for an overview see Shapiro 2014; Wilson and Foglia 2015; Gallagher and Schmicking 2010, 181–252).

Also in Sinology, there has been a growing interest in embodiment viewed from different angles and concerning its different aspects like the history of Chinese thought (Emerson 1996; Sivin 1995; Lewis 2006; Jullien 2007; Sommer 2008), medicine (Kuriyama 2002; Hsu 2007), daoism (Schipper 1978; Despeux 2005; Kohn 2006), senses (Geaney 2002; Sterckx 2003), emotions (Zhang 2007), power (Zito and Barlow 1994), to bring just a few examples. Some fields, like medicine, inherently involve the body. Also, in principle, all overviews of early Confucianism should contain an explanation of the role of rituals and hence some presentation of embodiment.

Still, in Sinological works there are few explicit connections with contemporary ET, and at the same time the Western scholarship on embodiment has scarce references to other traditions (perhaps simply due to the isolation of curricula).[3] The aim of the present article is to explicitly connect ET with the Chinese tradition.

In what follows, I will shortly describe some aspects of embodied cognition and then pass to a more detailed presentation of the corresponding topics in the *Analects*.

2 See Nietzsche's (spuriously edited) *Will to Power* § 636 (1967, 339–40) and "On the Despisers of the Body" of the *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (2006, 22–24) and Merleau-Ponty's "Phenomenology of Perception" (1945).

3 Although there are, of course, places where they come together. For instance, National Taiwan University Press has a recent book series called "Body and Nature" (身體與自然) that has a volume edited by Shunde Yu (2015), directly concerning questions of embodiment in both traditions.

Embodied Knowledge

It has been shown that our knowledge is shaped by the kind of body we have (Shapiro 2014; Lakoff and Johnson 1980). Embodiment extends beyond the brain and nervous system and even beyond our skin to other persons and the environment. Without the body, it is difficult to conceive how anything could have a meaning or relevance, because meaning is something that stands out from a background: something is selected and paid special attention to, while everything else is left unheeded. Selecting everything equals selecting nothing. But who or what selects, if not our body, we as embodied agents? From the very beginning, the field of experience is differentiated and we make axiological distinctions because our body, we as embodied and social beings have positive needs for food, drink, warmth, human company, etc., and negative needs to avoid excessive tactile, chemical, auditory, visual stimuli, human aggression, etc.

Cognition and existence in general are embedded in a certain physical, social, cultural, historical context (Damasio 1994, 83–113; Heidegger 1996[4]; Dawson 2014; see also Uexküll 1926 and 1957 for a general theory of Umwelt). As we said, the world we are embedded in is not homogeneous and isotropic, but heterogeneous and anisotropic, i.e. it has distinctions and preferred directions according to our needs and desires. We do not live in an indifferent 3D space, but the space as we experience it opens up from a certain viewpoint; it indicates possible movements and interactions in it; we experience space and things as affording certain actions and inhibiting others. An experienced space is already a meaningful one.

Cognition is also enacted. We do not live in a predefined world that we should somehow just "observe" and take notice of (this would require a special effort), but, in the last analysis, we have to form all of our knowledge in an experiential, enacted way (Varela et al 1991; Noë and Thompson 2002; Noë 2004). It implies sensorimotor engagement with our environment. The two parts, perceiving and acting, cannot be separated as in the traditional "sandwich model", according to which we receive some input (perception), process it (cognition) and give some output (action) (see Ward and Stapleton 2012). Initially and for the most part, we do not perceive for some theoretical reasons, but perception is meant to inform our action. While acting, we create certain perceptions that are fed back into the system, so that the results of our actions can modulate the way we act and that we can become more adapted in our activities.

4 See, in particular his analysis of Being-in-the-world, Being-together, Attunement, Care, Facticity and Historicity. Heidegger shows how the "ontic" spatiotemporal and social determinations are based on a more primordial Being-in-the-world, Being-Together and Being-toward-death, and how these determinations are not extrinsic to the existence, but belong to its very core.

As already implied in embeddedness, the embodied cognition is also extended: we think to a large extent with the help of the things in our environment. The body itself has an extension and duration, and it can extend to other things, e.g. for a blind person, the stick becomes a sensing organ; when we drive a car, our perceived bodily dimensions extend to the car (so we can feel where we can pass and where not), etc. A very special way of extending embodied knowledge is to adopt another person's viewpoint. Other persons are very important "tools" for extending and correcting our knowledge and behaviour.

Embodiment always also entails a certain emotive background for our life and activities (Damasio 1994, 127–64; Maiese 2014). On a very basic level, the needs that structure our world and experience have an intrinsic affective aspect: by definition, a need is something we *feel* as a need. It concerns our bodily existence in a positive or negative way and we feel it as first-person subjects. On an even more basic level we could say in a Spinozist way that the very fact of being directed towards our surroundings and being interested in it is an affect, more specifically, a desire (see *Ethics* III, prop. 6–9, Spinoza 2002, 283–4, cf. also Maiese 2011). Embodied existence is a desiring existence. It is deeper than our conscious activities and self-understanding which presuppose it. Desire is the basis of our intentionality, directedness towards something.

In addition to the five "E's" mentioned above (embodied, enacted, embedded, extended, emotive) there are other important topics related to embodiment. First of all, implicitness. This is an important aspect of the "personal" or "tacit knowledge" discussed by Michael Polanyi (1962): a behaviour always contains more than can be expressed in words or rules. In order to master an art (swimming, sawing, playing the piano etc.), textbook information is not enough, instead, one has to acquire personal and experiential understanding of the art. This applies not only in sports and crafts, but also in science (how to handle a scientific apparatus, how to read the results etc).

Embodied knowledge is emergent, it is not previously given in a program, but emerges in interactions with the environment. For example, Esther Thelen and Linda Smith (1996) have shown that although the general developmental histories of children can be similar, they accomplish them by very different means. Andy Clark (1998) has discussed emergence in the case of robotics, with important implications to the general theory of embodiment.

There is one aspect that is present, but not particularly stressed in the current ET, namely the joy entailed in a skillful performance of an art or skill, when one is not constrained by the particulars of the art, but is able to perform them smoothly, gracefully, effortlessly (the "feeling of flow", see Csikszentmihalyi 2014).

Finally, embodied knowledge has to be learned through experience and with guidance:

> Connoisseurship, like skill, can be communicated only by example, not by precept. To become an expert wine-taster, to acquire a knowledge of innumerable different blends of tea or to be trained as a medical diagnostician, you must go through a long course of experience under the guidance of a master. (Polanyi 1962, 56; cf Deleuze 1994, 164 sqq)

It has also implications for moral self-development (Jackson 1983; Strejcek and Zhong 2014). In the following, we trace the aforementioned topics in the *Analects*.

Embodied Knowledge in the *Analects*

With the help of the embodiment theory, we can make sense of the parts of the *Analects* that would seem the least philosophical to a Western reader[5], for instance the descriptions of Confucius' behaviour in book 10.

> When called on by his lord to receive a guest, his countenance would become alert and serious, and he would hasten his steps. When he saluted those in attendance beside him—extending his clasped hands to the left or right, as their position required—his robes remained perfectly arrayed, both front and back. Hastening forward, he moved smoothly, as though gliding upon wings. Once the guest had left, he would always return to report, "The guest is no longer looking back." (10.3)[6]
>
> 君召使擯，色勃如也，足躩如也。揖所與立，左右手。衣前後，襜如也。趨進，翼如也。賓退，必復命曰：「賓不顧矣。」[7]
>
> When entering the gate of his Duke, he would draw himself in, as if the gate were not large enough to admit him. He would not come to a halt at the centre of the doorway and when walking would not tread upon the threshold. When passing by his appointed place, his countenance would become alert and serious, he would hasten his steps, his words falling to a whisper as if he could barely get them out. When he ascended to the Duke's dais with the hem of his gown gathered in his hands, he would draw himself in, slowing his breath to the point that it seemed as if he

5 "This chapter is often skipped over in embarrassment by Western scholars" (Jones 2008, 121).

6 All the English translations of the *Analects* are from Slingerland 2003.

7 The Chinese originals are from the *Chinese Text Project*.

> were not breathing at all. Upon leaving the Duke's dais, his expression would relax as he descended the top stair, and he would seem at ease. On reaching the bottom of the stairs, he would hasten forward smoothly, as though gliding upon wings. When returning to his own place, he would resume his attitude of cautious respect. (10.4)
>
> 入公門，鞠躬如也，如不容。立不中門，行不履閾。過位，色勃如也，足躩如也，其言似不足者。攝齊升堂，鞠躬如也，屏氣似不息者。出，降一等，逞顏色，怡怡如也。沒階趨進，翼如也。復其位，踧踖如也。

This shows Confucius' speech, behaviour and even physiological reactions to change adequately according to the situation.[8] His actions have attained a supreme grace, smoothness and ease (he seems to "glide upon wings" 翼如也). His steps, countenance, breathing and everything else changes according to the context: on official occasions he is serious, barely breaths, hastens his steps, at home he is relaxed.

> When grasping the official jade tablet, he would draw himself in, as if he could not bear its weight. Sometimes he held it high against his forehead as if saluting, while at other times he held it low at his waist as if offering a gift. Alert and serious, his expression would be like someone about to go into battle, and he would walk with shortened steps as though each movement were carefully scripted. During the ceremonial exchange of gifts, his countenance was accommodating; when having his private audience, he seemed at ease. (10.5)
>
> 執圭，鞠躬如也，如不勝。上如揖，下如授。勃如戰色，足蹜蹜，如有循。享禮，有容色。私覿，愉愉如也。

The same book of the *Analects* also describes Confucius' way of dressing, eating, sleeping, sitting, riding a carriage etc. This shows how all of his behaviour is ritualized, up to the very details of his everyday life and even unconscious behaviour (sleeping, dreaming, cf. 7.5). This implies that Confucius' teaching is well embodied and embedded in a context.

Embedded (Temporal)

This is summed up in the final piece of book 10, where Confucius says: "This pheasant upon the mountain bridge—how timely it is!" (山梁雌雉，時哉！時

8 It is indeed an *ars contextualis*, as Hall and Ames (1998) put it.

哉！). This timeliness has been traditionally understood as describing his own behaviour—Confucius is a "timely sage". In the embodiment theory, it is stressed how the agent is embedded in a context, and this context should not be understood only in spatial, but also in temporal terms: an action takes place at a certain time, with certain temporal modulations (the swiftness or relaxation of Confucius' steps, for example), and at a certain age of the agent:

> My master only spoke when the time was right, and so people never grew impatient listening to him. (14.13)
>
> 夫子時然後言，人不厭其言
>
> To speak when it is not yet time to speak—this is called being rash. To not speak when it is time to speak—this is called being secretive. To speak without taking into account the countenance of one's lord—this is called being blind. (16.6)
>
> 言未及之而言謂之躁，言及之而不言謂之隱，未見顏色而言謂之瞽。
>
> Confucius said, "The gentleman guards against three things: when he is young, and his blood and vital essence are still unstable, he guards against the temptation of female beauty; when he reaches his prime, and his blood and vital essence have become unyielding, he guards against being contentious; when he reaches old age, and his blood and vital essence have begun to decline, he guards against being acquisitive." (16.7)
>
> 孔子曰：「君子有三戒：少之時，血氣未定，戒之在色；及其壯也，血氣方剛，戒之在鬬；及其老也，血氣既衰，戒之在得。」

This means that there cannot be a context-independent set of principles that one could apply anytime anywhere. Or to put it differently, the most universal principles necessarily have to be enacted according to the time and context. The same action can be right or not right, depending on the conditions. Flexibility is thus an inevitable part of adaptive embodied behavior. A smooth and graceful action is an action that in real-time feedback from the environment is able to change and adapt itself[9]. This is obvious on the everyday level: for example, when I walk around, my feet and body spontaneously adapt to the conditions of the terrain (whether it is slippery or not, what obstacles there are, in ascent or descent etc.), or, when I write with a pencil, I automatically adapt to the specific pen and paper

9 This does not necessarily mean being "spineless", because certain social contexts (a tyranny, for instance) might themselves be unadaptive to a wider order of things, to the *dao*. The *Analects* contain plenty of denunciations of the social order of the time by Confucius.

I have at hand (its thickness, the degree of pressure needed, the qualities of the paper and the support it is on, etc.).[10]

Flexibility as sensitivity to context is highly valued by Confucians:

> The Master was entirely free of four faults: arbitrariness, inflexibility, rigidity, and selfishness. (9.4)
>
> 子絕四：毋意，毋必，毋固，毋我。
>
> The Master said, "The gentleman is true, but not rigidly trustworthy." (15.37)
>
> 子曰：「君子貞而不諒。」

On one occasion, two students ask Confucius the same question, but he gives two different answers to them. A third student overhears both exchanges and asks for the reason. Confucius replies:

> The Master said, "Ran Qiu is overly cautious, and so I wished to urge him on. Zilu, on the other hand, is too impetuous, and so I sought to hold him back." (11.22)
>
> 子曰：「求也退，故進之；由也兼人，故退之。」

A good teacher is able to adapt the message according to the receiver.

The Confucian self-cultivation extends flexibility to very complex situations of social behaviour. Experientially, such adaptivity is clear and easy, but computationally, due to the real-time feedback and the non-linearity that arises from it, it is extremely complex. This is why machines, while excelling in things we find difficult (computing), tend to be clumsy in things we find very easy (smooth movement).

Enacted

Confucius makes it clear that true knowledge is enacted and expresses itself in corresponding **actions**: knowledge is meant to enlighten action and action reveals the level of knowledge:

10 Merleau-Ponty (1945, 180–1) remarks the ease with which organists are able to adapt themselves to different organs that can be very different from each other in their physical makeup. A few hours of practice are sufficient for an organist to be able to play on a new organ. Keys, stops and pedals are placed at different places and distances, but the organist has the "feeling" how to play organs, and s/he is able to adapt to the actual instrument.

> The Master said, "I can talk all day long with Yan Hui without him once disagreeing with me. In this way, he seems a bit stupid. And yet when we retire and I observe his private behaviour, I see that it is in fact worthy to serve as an illustration of what I have taught. Hui is not stupid at all" (2.9).
>
> 子曰：「吾與回言終日，不違如愚。退而省其私，亦足以發。回也，不愚。」
>
> The Master said, "Look at the means a man employs, observe the basis from which he acts, and discover where it is that he feels at ease. Where can he hide? Where can he hide?" (2.10).
>
> 子曰：「視其所以，觀其所由，察其所安。人焉廋哉？人焉廋哉？」
>
> Someone who is accomplished is upright in his native substance and fond of rightness. He examines other people's words and observes their demeanour, and always takes the interests of his inferiors into account when considering something. (12.20)
>
> 夫達也者，質直而好義，察言而觀色，慮以下人。
>
> The Master replied, "I observed him sitting in the presence of adults, and also walking alongside his elders. He is not looking to improve himself, but is just after quick success." (14.44)
>
> 子曰：「吾見其居於位也，見其與先生並行也。非求益者也，欲速成者也。」

Words, speaking and language are one of the important aspects of expression, but they are also suspect, because it is much easier to lie with words than with bodily behaviour; it is easy to talk more than one understands, giving rein to boasting, deception, make-believe.

> The Master said, "People in ancient times were not eager to speak, because they would be ashamed if their actions did not measure up to their words." (4.22)
>
> 子曰：「古者言之不出，恥躬之不逮也。」

The kernel of Confucius' thought is the practice of rites, which is a set of choreographed movements, songs and utterances, i.e. it is intrinsically embodied and enacted. There is more to the rites than just rote repetition, and we shall come to it when we talk about self-cultivation (see section 11 below).

Extended

One aspect of the embeddedness and contextuality of knowledge is that it is extended (Aizawa 2014). First, the body itself is an extended vehicle of understanding, and second, it also extends to the items in the surroundings. For example, for a Confucian, musical instruments, ritual clothes and vessels, books, bows and arrows, etc. are all part and parcel of knowledge and meaning-making.

> Ru Bei [sent a messenger expressing his] wish to have an audience with Confucius, but Confucius declined, saying that he was ill. As soon as the messenger went out the door, however, Confucius picked up his zither and sang, making sure that the messenger could hear him. (17.20)
>
> 孺悲欲見孔子，孔子辭以疾。將命者出戶，取瑟而歌，使之聞之。

Those instruments extend the body, through them we are lead to the higher meanings of existence (filial piety, humaneness, appropriateness etc).[11]

The most important extensions of knowledge are other human beings and the most important extension is to displace one's viewpoint to another human beings' viewpoint. This is the golden rule:

> Do not impose upon others what you yourself do not desire. (12.2 and 15.24)
>
> 己所不欲，勿施於人。

This is the prerequisite for becoming humane, *ren* 仁. It is both descriptive and prescriptive: on the one hand, humans have (as Mencius later explained) a proclivity to empathize with others (as exemplified in Mencius' famous story of spontaneously wanting to help a child who is about to fall into a well); and, on the other hand, during our life-time we should expand and develop this capacity. It potentiates self-awareness: I am aware of others being aware of me. This leads to a generalized self-reflection (*fan* 反) in Mencius.

Emotive

In this framework, emotions are not inherently an impediment for knowledge; the aim of self-cultivation is not to rid oneself from emotions, but to refine

11 It should be noted that in the Western embodiment descriptions very often technical devices are used as examples of extendedness (e.g. already the analysis of the "things at hand" by Heidegger 1996, 94–97).

and deepen them. A ritual without emotions is dead and without any real meaning and value. Our being-in-the-world and being-with-others are laden with emotive valences. Some of our strongest emotions are related to fellow human beings: there is affection between parents and children, husband and wife, between friends etc. This is what happened after the death of Confucius' favourite student:

> When Yan Hui passed away, the Master cried for him excessively. The disciples reproved him, saying, "Master, surely you are showing excessive grief!" The Master replied, "Am I showing excessive grief? Well, for whom would I show excessive grief, if not for this man?" (11.10)
>
> 顏淵死，子哭之慟。從者曰：「子慟矣。」曰：「有慟乎？非夫人之為慟而誰為！」

Two things are important here: first, that Confucius behaves in this way not just in any situation, but in this special case, that is, he is not emotionally unstable. And second, that he does not seek to inhibit himself at the death of his favourite student, that is, he is a sensitive human being who is emotionally affected by the most intimate human relations. Feelings come first and ritual comes later (see 3.8).

Emotional engagement is one of the most important prerequisites of the rites:

> The Master said, "A man who is not humane—what has he to do with ritual? A man who is not humane—what has he to do with music?" (3.3, translation modified)
>
> 子曰：「人而不仁，如禮何？人而不仁，如樂何？」
>
> Lin Fang asked about the roots of ritual. The Master exclaimed, "What a noble question! When it comes to ritual, it is better to be spare than extravagant. When it comes to mourning, it is better to be excessively sorrowful than fastidious." (3.4)
>
> 林放問禮之本。子曰：「大哉問！禮，與其奢也，寧儉；喪，與其易也，寧戚。」

Emotions are the basis and with rituals one can refine them, thus improving the whole human personality.

> In general, an exemplary person is free from negative emotions:
>
> Sima Niu asked about the gentleman. The Master replied, "The gentleman is free of anxiety and fear." "'Free of anxiety and fear'—is that all

> there is to being a gentleman?" "If you can look inside yourself and find no faults, what cause is there for anxiety or fear?" (12.4)
>
> 司馬牛問君子。子曰：「君子不憂不懼。」曰：「不憂不懼，斯謂之君子已乎？」子曰：「內省不疚，夫何憂何懼？」

Those emotions are not so much discarded by a conscious effort, but rather disappear by themselves when the personality is refined.

Implicitness

The contextuality of knowledge leads also to specific linguistic practices. On the one hand, words and sentences, of course, enable us to take a distance from the immediate situation and to take into consideration further facts and details. But on the other hand, this very distancing capacity of language has the danger of not suiting in the context. Better than giving a general explanation is to give hints and suggestions, so that the person concerned can work out her own understanding in the particular context.

> The Master said, "I will not open the door for a mind that is not already striving to understand, nor will I provide words to a tongue that is not already struggling to speak. If I hold up one corner of a problem, and the student cannot come back to me with the other three, I will not attempt to instruct him again." (7.8)
>
> 子曰：「不憤不啟，不悱不發，舉一隅不以三隅反，則不復也。」

The main aim of studying is to learn to (re)construct, to attain the genetic principles that manifest themselves in a specific situation. The teacher gives one "corner", one aspect, and the student has to guess the other, related aspects or "corners". In another fragment, Confucius approvingly says:

> Zigong, you are precisely the kind of person with whom one can begin to discuss the Odes. Informed as to what has gone before, you know what is to come. (1.15)
>
> 賜也，始可與言詩已矣！告諸往而知來者。

Embodied knowledge is inherently overdetermined and the linguistic strategies that want to conform to this knowledge must also be greatly implicit, in an intentional attempt to imply in an utterance more than is explicitly said. An attempt to directly

phrase an idea would remain inherently partial, poor. This kind of teaching was later taken to the extreme in the encounter dialogues of the *chan* Buddhism tradition, where a certain way of speaking and behaving was deemed to express enlightenment. Confucius' acts and words were also taken to express the right *dao*, a certain broader way of existence that one had to unfold for oneself from the cues that he gave.

Emergence

A contextual and embodied knowledge is essentially emergent. It does not contain universal ideas that are given beforehand, but arises in a specific context between specific interacting agents. We considered a fragment where Confucius gave different advice to different students according to the situation—this means that he did not have a ready precept, but that the knowledge emerged in the specific situation, taking into account the character of the given student. Another example is the following:

> The Master said, "Do I possess wisdom? No, I do not. [For example, recently] a common fellow asked a question of me, and I came up completely empty. But I discussed the problem with him from beginning to end until we finally got to the bottom of it." (9.8)
>
> 子曰：「吾有知乎哉？無知也。有鄙夫問於我，空空如也，我叩其兩端而竭焉。」

This is also a model to follow. One should encounter a situation with as few presuppositions as possible, being as "empty" as possible, and so let the articulations of the situation emerge by themselves. The problem with pre-given knowledge is that it makes you "full", so that you are not able to see the situation objectively, impartially, but take some arbitrary familiar aspects of it and bend the whole situation according to some pre-existing matrix. Instead, if one is "empty", then one does not impose a ready-made framework on the situation, but is able to listen to the nuances of the particular situation, and then respond adequately.

Ease and Joy

The thorough ritualization of life should not be understood to mean that Confucius was constantly following some ritual rules and thus must have been rigidly formal all the time (although some of his critiques might have said so). On the contrary, we see that he switched between effort in official occasions and relaxation in other times (cf. "In his leisure moments, the Master was composed and yet

fully at ease", 子之燕居，申申如也，夭夭如也, 7.4), and that he achieved an ease also in those official occasions. In the words of Confucius' student You Ruo:

> When it comes to the practice of ritual, it is harmonious ease that is to be valued. It is precisely such harmony that makes the Way of the Former Kings so beautiful. If you merely stick rigidly to ritual in all matters, great and small, there will remain that which you cannot accomplish. Yet if you know enough to value harmonious ease but try to attain it without being regulated by the rites, this will not work either. (1.12)
>
> 禮之用，和為貴。先王之道斯為美，小大由之。有所不行，知和而和，不以禮節之，亦不可行也。

Or as Confucius puts it:

> One who knows it is not the equal of one who loves it, and one who loves it is not the equal of one who takes joy in it. (6.20)
>
> 知之者不如好之者，好之者不如樂之者。

Here, there is a deepening emotional involvement: first you know, then you like and finally you are able to enjoy it. The most famous quotation in this respect is 2.4:

> The Master said, "At fifteen, I set my mind upon learning; at thirty, I took my place in society; at forty, I became free of doubts; at fifty, I understood Heaven's Mandate; at sixty, my ear was attuned; and at seventy, I could follow my heart's desires without overstepping the bounds of propriety."
>
> 子曰：「吾十有五而志于學，三十而立，四十而不惑，五十而知天命，六十而耳順，七十而從心所欲，不踰矩。」

Here finally Confucius is in a sense able to forget about the ritual, so that even when he follows his heart's desires, he does not overstep propriety. The joy that a smooth action brings is consistent with the findings of contemporary psychology: Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi (2014) speaks about the "feeling of the flow" in certain activities that require concentration and exercise (playing the piano, tennis etc.). Sportsmen, dancers, musicians can attain this feeling during a good performance, and it is rewarding and enjoyable in itself.

Joy is directly related to the ability to live out one's years—both for internal reasons (it can be supposed that good mood generally produces better health) and most importantly for external reasons (when you are joyful, you get along better with others and thus it lessens the probability of punishments, mutilations and execution):

> Min Ziqian was attending the Master, standing at his side in a straight and correct manner; [also attending were] Zilu, looking bold and uncompromising, and Ran Qiu and Zigong, both of whom appeared happy and at ease. The Master was pleased, but remarked, "Someone like Zilu will not get to live out his years." (11.13)
>
> 閔子侍側，闇闇如也；子路，行行如也；冉有、子貢，侃侃如也。子樂。「若由也，不得其死然。」

Emotional self-cultivation does not imply suppressing emotions, but rather regulating them:

> Confucius said, "Beneficial types of joy number three, as do harmful types of joy. Taking joy in regulating yourself through the rites and music, in commending the excellence of others, or in possessing many worthy friends—these are the beneficial types of joy. Taking joy in arrogant behaviour, idle amusements, or decadent licentiousness—these are the harmful types of joys." (16.5)
>
> 孔子曰：「侍於君子有三愆：言未及之而言謂之躁，言及之而不言謂之隱，未見顏色而言謂之瞽。」

An exemplary person avoids, to use Spinoza's terms, partial joys (or "tickle" *titillatio*, as he calls them) that concern just one part of our body, not the whole of us. Note that all of the beneficial joys are social. Most of the time, the exemplary person is at ease and joyful.

This leads to a *wuwei* situation, to effortless action:

> The Master said, "One who rules through the power of Virtue is analogous to the Pole Star: it simply remains in its place and receives the homage of the myriad lesser stars." (2.1)
>
> 子曰：「為政以德，譬如北辰，居其所而眾星共之。」
>
> The Master said, "How majestic! Shun and Yu possessed the entire world and yet had no need to actively manage (*yu* 與) it." (8.18)
>
> 子曰：「巍巍乎！舜禹之有天下也，而不與焉。」
>
> The Master said, "Is Shun not an example of someone who ruled by means of *wu-wei*? What did he do? He made himself reverent and took his proper [ritual] position facing south, that is all." (15.5)
>
> 子曰：「無為而治者，其舜也與？夫何為哉，恭己正南面而已矣。」

Whereas Mihalyi Csikszentmihaly speaks about the feeling of flow in the case of master performers in sports and music, here the feeling arises from life as a whole, most of one's actions being adequate to the context.

Self-cultivation

Michael Polanyi (1962) has distinguished between explicit and tacit knowledge, and embodied knowledge is very much about the second. Explicit knowledge can be sufficiently specified in detail and transmitted by prescription over big spatiotemporal gaps (e.g. when I read a book written in another country in another era), and its understanding can be nearly instantaneous (e.g. if I learn the fact that 1+1=2 or that Zhu Xi 朱熹 was born on October 18, 1130). But embodied knowledge is to a large extent tacit, it cannot be adequately specified and its teaching involves personal example and a process of experience that cannot be shortened at will.

Much of Confucius' educational programme was precisely about how to convey tacit, implicit, embodied knowledge, and his personal example was extremely important (hence also the importance of his behaviour described in book 10 and discussed above). This kind of apprenticeship for students involves personal development and self-cultivation. It might seem strange that Chinese traditions lacking many aspects of religion (most notably, a description of gods or a God), like Confucianism or Mohism, have nevertheless inspired people for several centuries or even millennia with a fervour and dedication that otherwise seem to characterize religious movements. While surely there were also aspects of religion in the narrow sense, they were often downplayed and at least part of this assiduousness may come from the embodied and contextual practices themselves. Ritual, for Confucius, is by itself self-cultivation:

> The Master said, "If you are respectful but lack ritual you will become exasperating; if you are careful but lack ritual you will become timid; if you are courageous but lack ritual you will become unruly; and if you are upright but lack ritual you will become inflexible. (8.2)
>
> 子曰：「恭而無禮則勞，慎而無禮則葸，勇而無禮則亂，直而無禮則絞。君子篤於親，則民興於仁；故舊不遺，則民不偷。」

The ritual decides whether a characteristic trait (carefulness, courage, respect, uprightness) becomes a weakness or strength. The ritual has an integrating and modulating effect on different aspects of character. A weakness is something that

is separated from the rest of the personality, community and nature; ritual is the way to integrate them and thus to refine the character as a whole, developing its different aspects, preventing it from remaining one-sided.[12]

This self-cultivation entails both effort and non-effort:

> The Master said, "When native substance overwhelms cultural refinement, the result is a crude rustic. When cultural refinement overwhelms native substance, the result is a foppish pedant. Only when culture and native substance are perfectly mixed and balanced do you have a gentleman." (6.18)
>
> 子曰：「質勝文則野，文勝質則史。文質彬彬，然後君子。」

The whole of self-cultivation is not only a conscious striving, but the aim is to engage oneself as a whole, one's whole body, including unconscious strivings. The aim is not to artificially create a new man, but with the help of artificial or external means, like rites and music, to cultivate and refine one's natural character. As in Mencius' famous simile: one should not force one's nature like plucking the seedlings in order to "help them grow", but rather take care of one's nature and to gradually, in the course of time cultivate it, so that it grows by itself and becomes more nuanced.

Ritual is a kind of ascesis:

> Yan Hui asked about humaneness. The Master said, "Restraining yourself and returning to the rites constitutes humaneness. If for one day you managed to restrain yourself and return to the rites, in this way you could lead the entire world back to humaneness. The key to achieving humaneness lies within yourself—how could it come from others?" Yan Hui asked, "May I inquire as to the specifics?" The Master said, "Do not look unless it is in accordance with ritual; do not listen unless it is in accordance with ritual; do not speak unless it is in accordance with ritual; do not move unless it is in accordance with ritual." Yan Hui replied, "Although I am not quick to understand, I ask permission to devote myself to this teaching." (12.1, translation modified)

12 In C. G. Jung's (1971) theory the human psyche tends to develop, in the course of life, also aspects that are less pronounced in the beginning, so that under ideal conditions a person in a sense finally changes into his/her opposite. This is the phenomenon of "enantiodromia" or becoming-opposite. Of course, the previous dominant characteristics do not go away, so that the outcome is not a simple opposite of the initial situation, but a more nuanced, richer personality. It must be noted that Jung was also directly influenced by the Chinese *yin-yang* thinking.

> 顏淵問仁。子曰：「克己復禮為仁。一日克己復禮，天下歸仁焉。為仁由己，而由人乎哉？」顏淵曰：「請問其目。」子曰：「非禮勿視，非禮勿聽，非禮勿言，非禮勿動。」顏淵曰：「回雖不敏，請事斯語矣。」
>
> Zizhang asked about getting by in the world. The Master replied, "In your speech, be dutiful and trustworthy, and in your conduct be sincere and respectful. [...] When standing still, visualize these principles standing by your side; when riding in your carriage, see them resting before you on the crossbar. Only then will you get by in the world." Zizhang then wrote these words on the end of his sash. (15.6)
>
> 子張問行。子曰：「言忠信，行篤敬，[...] 立，則見其參於前也；在輿，則見其倚於衡也。夫然後行。」子張書諸紳。

Ritual becomes a constant means of self-monitoring, a vehicle for self-development and also a very high ideal. Supposedly it means, on the one hand, an ever more graceful and perfect performing of the rites in the strict sense of the word, but on the other hand, it also develops a feeling of flow that one should strive to attain in every life-situation. By perfecting the rites in the narrow sense, Confucius' follower refines his/her psycho-somatic capacities and learns to become "empty"; then s/he extends this attitude to all of the existence. As we said, the feeling of ease and joy that it brings is also immediately rewarding, not to mention its generally positive effects on one's social interactions.

Conclusion

In this article I argued that the Embodiment Theory could help us understand some critical aspects of the Chinese tradition in general and of the *Analects* in particular. I brought out several important topics of the ET in the *Analects*: embodiment, embeddedness, enactment, extendedness, emotivity, implicitness, emergence, joy and self-cultivation. Arguably the abundance of examples suggests that those topics were also important in the *Analects*, and that ET could be used as a useful framework for interpreting the *Analects*. This article focused on the *Analects*, but it must be said that similar examples can easily be found in most of the Chinese philosophical texts. Contemporary ET formed quite recently, and largely as a critique of the former dominant Western understanding of knowledge, but as we can see, its central topics were discussed early on in the Chinese tradition. Due to the more or less continuous development of this tradition over two and a half millennia, a large body of philosophical texts has accumulated that could be useful

for the development of ET itself, on the condition that its proponents become more aware of similar ideas in the Chinese tradition.

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Explicit and Implicit Aspects of Confucian Education

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Abstract

The following essay contains a more general philosophical reflection on the significance and some main elements of pre-modern Confucian learning. The topic is developed by presenting some essential elements in the whole range from explicit (linguistically expressible) knowledge to symbolic aspects as well as the (philosophical) problem of ineffable knowing. The essay starts with the general conception of man which underlies the mainstream of Confucian learning. On that basis, the more explicit contents and easily explicable subjects or branches of classical Confucian learning are mapped out. This becomes the starting point to move on to reflect on a more symbolic layer of Confucian learning. Finally, the core level of Confucian learning is addressed. This presents us with the problem of ineffability. The reference points of the present essay are restricted to some important classical passages as well as the thought of Wang Yangming 王陽明 (1472–1529).

Keywords: Confucian learning, *ren* 仁, explicit knowledge, implicit knowing, ineffability, Wang Yangming

Eksplicitni in implicitni vidiki konfucijanskega izobraževanja

Izvleček

Esej vsebuje splošno filozofsko razmišljanje o pomembnosti in nekaterih glavnih elementih predmodernega konfucijanskega učenja. Tema se razvija skozi predstavitev nekaterih bistvenih elementov vse od eksplicitnega (lingvistično izraznega) vedenja do simboličnih vidikov ter (filozofskih) problemov neizrekljivega vedenja. Esej se začne s splošnim pojmovanjem človeka, ki poudarja glavno usmeritev konfucijanskega učenja. Na tej podlagi se izrišejo eksplicitni in lahko izrekljivi subjekti ali veje klasičnega konfucijanskega učenja. To je točka, s katere je mogoč premik naprej, in ta osvetljuje bolj simbolično plast konfucijanskega učenja. Na koncu je obravnavano še jedro konfucijanskega učenja, ki nam predstavi problem neizrekljivosti. Referenčne točke eseja so omejene na nekatere pomembne klasične odlomke ter na misli Wang Yangminga 王陽明 (1472–1529).

Ključne besede: konfucijansko učenje, *ren* 仁, eksplicitno vedenje, implicitno vedenje, neizrekljivost, Wang Yangming

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As a Starting Point: A General Confucian Conception of Man

In the *Liji* 禮記, man is defined as *tian-di zhi xin* 天地之心 ("heart of Heaven-Earth").[1] In the case of Confucian learning, the centrality of man doesn't mean a fixed "acquis", let alone a formal designation of a central characteristic of something like an eternal substance (much less in a sense assimilable to that of traditions of Aristotelian descent or other comparable traditions of philosophical thought). From the original Confucian angle, speaking of a centrality of man first and foremost means a practical obligation. Amongst other things, this is also expressed in the context of Wang Yangming's 王陽明 (1472–1529) discussions on "*zhi-xing he yi* 知行合一" ("knowing-taking action, together (as) one").[2] To understand and internalize the Confucian endeavor properly, we must strive to be in compliance with that obligation in each and every possible situation of our life:

> Human—from time immemorial, this (word) means the excellence of *tian-di* 天地 ("Heaven-Earth"), the crossing of *yin-yang* 陰陽, the get-together of (earthly) spirits and (heavenly) gods, the refined *qi* 氣 of the *wu xing* 五行 ("five phases"). […] That is why man is the heart of Heaven and Earth, the foundation of the five phases.[3]

The "heartness" of *ren* 人 ("man"[4]), i.e. the conversion and center of *tian-di* 天地, "is" only as real in as much as it is permanently *realized* through one's own actions. Wang Yangming describes this as the basis of the learning of the *sheng ren* 聖人 ("sage-man"). By following the directionality of his innate and unceasing *liang zhi* 良知 ("good knowing") permanently and freely, man is able to realize that "Heaven-Earth

1 See below the first quotation in the running text (and the related footnote 3).

2 Cf., f. ex., Wang (1933a, 38–39): "必有欲行之心·然後知路·即是意·即是行之 始矣·" ["[To know, DB] one has to have a heart which is eager to take action. After that, one knows the road. (That eagerness) is *yi* 意 ('will') and that is already the beginning of taking action." (tr. DB)] Regarding further extensive analysis concerning *zhi-xing he yi*, cf. Bartosch 2015, 520–90. With regard to Wang Yangming, the famous German-French philosopher Albert Schweitzer (1875–1965) once remarked: "Concerning the implementation of the thought that trueness is an experience in which cognition and taking action are involved in each other in a mysterious way, Wang Yangming has truly been a consummator of the teachings of Kongzi and Mengzi." (Schweitzer 2002, 275, tr. DB)

3 *Liji* 禮記, "Liyun 禮運", 20: "故人者，其天地之德，陰陽之交，鬼神之會，五行之秀氣也。[…] 故人者，天地之心也，五行之端也，[…]。" (tr. DB)

4 This general translation is due to the more generalizing philosophical nature of this essay. And it is related to the above cited passage of the *Liji* and the use of the word, f. ex., in the context of the thought of Wang Yangming. The author is conscious of the fact that with regard to different classical authors as well as regarding each of these cases separately, "人" might also be translated more specifically and divergently. In this regard, the author must also thank Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Kubin for some enlightening talks at Beijing Foreign Studies University.

cannot appear as Heaven-Earth without man's *liang zhi*: Heaven-Earth (and) the ten thousand things form one *ti* 體 ("(self-)organizing whole"[5]) with man."[6]

> To exemplify (this), (we can talk about) the body of a human being: The eyes see, the ears hear, the hands grab, the feet walk. (They all) contribute to the (living) functioning of (this) body as a whole. The eyes are not embarrassed about themselves (for) not (being able to) hear. But (when) the ears notice something, the eyes will necessarily turn towards where (the sound is coming from). The hands are not embarrassed about themselves not (being able to) grab. But (when) the hand is reaching for something, the feet by necessity are moving there (with it too). Under the surface, his source-*qi* is operating everywhere (in this body) in the same way. And blood and veins show no impairment. Thereby (we can say that) if one is troubled by an itching or one is out of breath, a (reciprocal) reaction of our thoughts and emotions is taking place in a mysterious way. We don't have any words for it, and yet its miraculous mysteriousness can be noticed. That's why [in the wider sense, DB] the learning of the *sheng ren* is very simple and extremely uncomplicated; (it is) easy to know and simple to follow. The learning is easy, competences and skills are easy to obtain. (It's) just (about) matching the great goal sincerely, i.e. to remain in the primordial state of *xinti* 心體 (the "heart's (self-)organizing whole")—(which is) equality. Extensive knowledge [f. ex., in the sense of Zhu Xi, DB] and technical abilities have no place in this teaching.[7]

Seen from that angle, the foundational level of human consciousness might best be understood as an integrated state of intuitive spontaneity which is constantly in accord with the situational changes of what pre-modern Neo-Confucians have defined as *li* 理 ("organizing principle"). This kind of an integrated spontaneity is to be thought of as something which (as a form of naturally "knowing-in-action"[8]) always *lives through* one's own actions while being permanently directed from *ren* 仁

5 This has often been translated as "body", but I think that the special expression "(self-)organizing whole" is more fitting, because it presents us with a more conceptual meaning than "body" (which sounds more metaphorical).

6 Wang (1933b, 13): "天地無人的良知·亦不可為天地矣·蓋天地萬物·與人原是一體…" (tr. DB); cf. also my German translation in Bartosch 2015b, 157.

7 Cf., f. ex., Wang (1933a, 51): "譬之一人之身·目視耳聽·手持足行·以濟一 身之用·目不恥其無聰·而耳之所涉·目必營焉·足不恥其無執·而手之所 探·足必前焉·蓋其元氣充同·血脈暢·是以癢痾呼吸·感觸神應·有不 言而喻之妙·此聖人之學所以至易至簡·易知易從·學易能而才易成者·正 以大端惟在復心體之同然·而知識技能·非所與論也" (tr. DB); cf. my German translation in Bartosch 2015b, 530–1, as well.

8 This termed is used here in a transferred sense with regard to Wang Yangming's *zhi-xing he yi*. Regarding the origin of the expression "knowing-in-action", cf. Neuweg 2005, 582–3.

("humane (interrelationship)"[9]) and growing out of a fundamental interrelatedness of all humans and living beings. In this sense it is to be understood as the basic condition as well as the main agent of the fountainhead of every living existence.

Accordingly, Confucius already sowed some important seeds for the later discussions. In the *Lunyu* 論語, he states: "Man is born for uprightness."[10] Here, the idea of an *inborn or innate completeness of man* is already foreshadowed:[11] "I heard from Zengzi what [Zengzi, DB] had heard the Master say: That which Heaven produces (and grows) and that which Earth (gives birth to) and raises—none (of it is) as great as man. By completing, his parents give birth and raise *his childlikeness all complete*, and he returns it, which can be considered as *xiao* 孝 ("filial love-and-duty[12]")."[13] More explicitly, an *innate* goodness of man has been highlighted as the starting point or central theme of Confucian education by Mengzi 孟子 and by such great proponents of Confucian education like, f. ex., Zhu Xi 朱熹 or Wang Yangming as well as others later on. Mengzi already remarks: "To desire to be honored is the common mind of men. And all men have in themselves that which is truly honorable. Only they do not think of it."[14]

In that sense, every human consciousness is born into his or her unique personal and ever-evolving constellations and patterns of existing with a *common* obligation: From the womb of his/her mother, every man/woman is centered in between Heaven and Earth like a promising seed.[15] In this figurative sense, every personal appearance of

9 I am translating "*ren*" as "humane (interrelationship)", because the "Classical" translations by Legge and others, like, f. ex., "benevolence" or "humaneness" do not address the above-stated fact (see running text) that in this case the humaneness isn't to be thought of as the actuality of an individual character trait, but as naturally "growing out" of the human interrelationships which the natural human personality (as it might best be defined) is born into. This point of view holds true at least to the mainstream of Confucians who followed thinkers like Mengzi, Zhu Xi or Wang Yangming. Translating "*ren*" by using, f. ex., the expression "humaneness", tend to "veil" the interrelational very nature of this humaneness as such. Therefore, I have used "humane (interrelationship)" here—one could also say to also represent more explicitly the "二" in the translation of "仁".

10 Cf. *Lunyu* 論語, "Yongye 雍也", 19: "人之生也直" (trans. Legge)

11 Cf. also the discussion in Reich; Wei 1997, 39–40.

12 The original translation using "piety" has been critized much, so I am using the special expression "love-and-duty", instead.

13 Cf. *Liji* 禮記, "Jiyi 祭義", 29: "吾聞諸曾子，曾子聞諸夫子曰：『天之所生，地之所養，無人為大。』父母全而生之，子全而歸之，可謂孝矣。" (tr. DB)

14 Cf. *Mengzi* 孟子, "Gaozi shang 告子上", 17: "欲貴者，人之同心也。人人有貴於己者，弗思耳。" (tr. Legge)

15 This is an allusion to the following passage, cf. *Lunyu* 論語, "Zi han子罕", 22: "子曰：「苗而不秀者有矣夫！秀而不實者有矣夫！」" "[The Master said, 'There are cases in which the blade springs, but the plant does not go on to flower! There are cases where it flowers but no fruit is subsequently produced!'" (tr. Legge)]

human consciousness (to be understood as a unique relation of general humanity in time and space) exists in a way of being enabled to permanently grow in an indispensable network of human and extra-human relations. In the sense of naturally following what might best be pinpointed by using Wang Yangming's famous maxim *zhi-xing he yi* 知行合一 ("knowing-taking action, together (as) one")[16] here, such a permanent enfoldment or constant realization of human consciousness in itself should be understood as a natural process by means of which man can be characterized as the heart of Heaven and Earth (*tian-di*)—not as a mere theoretical aftermath of doing things, but *as* doing things in the state of an undivided (and yet itself differentiating) attentiveness which is in accordance with a dynamic harmony of all relations in the course of the whole process of Heaven, Earth and ten thousand things:

> The heart[17] of the *sheng ren* resembles a clear and bright mirror, (it is) simply clear and bright. Then to follow (what is being) sensed and to respond—there is no thing which wouldn't be mirrored. There are no former appearances which would still be contained by it. (And) there are no appearances which would be mirrored in advance.[18]

In this state, the student experiences the meaning of Wang Yangming's famous statements, like, f. ex.: "*Xin* 心—this is *li*. Could there be anything under Heaven outside of *xin*, (could there be) some *li* outside of *xin*?"[19]

On the other hand, man is not a string puppet of *dao*, so-to-speak. He has the "freedom" to reject the Way. Human existence inherits the possibility to choose evil or the wrong path. Man is able to decide to walk the way he shouldn't, i.e. the wrong path of his own "belittlement". Either unconsciously or even consciously, he or she may choose to be a *xiaoren* 小人 ("(self-)belittling human being").[20]

Wang Yangming defines this condition as a state of *zisizili* 自私自利 ("egomania" or "selfishness") and comprehends this as the exclusive root of all human evil.

16 See also footnote 2.

17 With regard to consistency, I am staying with the translation "heart" for "*xin*" in the present paper (as introduced with regard to the first citation above). I am not using the alternative expressions "heart-and-mind" or "heart-mind", which otherwise would have been possible to use, of course.

18 Wang (1933, 11): "聖人之心如明鏡·只是一箇明·則隨感而應·無物不照·未有已往之形尚在·未照之形先具者·" (tr. DB); cf. also my German translation in Bartosch 2015, 99.

19 Ibid., 2: "心即理也·天下又有心外之事·心外之理 乎·" (tr. DB); cf. also my German translation in Bartosch 2015b, 177, footnote 185.

20 Cf. my analysis in Bartosch 2015, 679–706 (the chapter "Äußerste, Mühen (gōngfū) um, Menschlichkeit (*ren*)" ["Utmost 'Efforts' (*gōngfū*) to [Implement] 'Humaneness' (*ren*)"], which also contains some transcultural (comparative) remarks regarding the Christian tradition (Master Eckhart, Nicolaus Cusanus).

And—evil doesn't dwell in solitude: The neglect of *ren* or *dao* (in the Confucian sense of a self-induced "belittlement" of man) naturally comes with consequences. And these always seem to expand their reach. Human consciousness is not separate from everything else. The denying road of egoism inevitably affects the self in its social and environmental embeddedness. As a consequence, it furthers a destructive and self-declining possibility of everything that the turbid *xin* of the *xiaoren* comes into contact with. This is especially the case if such a person's social function is that of a decision-maker (like that of a politician, a manager, a general, etc).

Therefore Confucian education and (constant) training have been established as a way *to prevent* humankind—or at least the decisive administrative elites—from this road of a self-induced decline and dehumanization.—For two and a half millennia, the proponents or members of the *Rujia* 儒家 ("the Confucian schools") have discussed, reflected and practiced ways of swimming against the stream of those gnawing forces of humanity's possible decline, so-to-speak. Although all of them do not share the same opinions in many respects, all of them share the same motivation: They all strive for the right way of how to become fully human, i.e. how to redeem man's great promise of being the heart of Heaven-Earth (*tian-di zhi xin*).

In this context, it is important to remember that in Confucianism *man is not seen as a creature*.[21] That means humans are not seen as separate creations in the context of a cosmic, to use a word from Medieval Christian philosophy tradition, *creatio continua*. Humans are not depending on some personal over-human force of creation in the sense of a creator (or "*Deus*", "*unum*" etc.) here. On the contrary, in schools like *Xinxue* 心學 ("Learning of the Heart"), man himself is comprehended as the central living aspect (i.e. the *xin*) of Heaven and Earth—without the need of a creator "above" of him. In an ideal sense, the central human aspect or "*tian-di zhi xin*"[22] should *generate itself* in uniform progression with the auto-poetic transformations of the universal whole. Consequently, Confucians did/do not believe in any kind of godlike savior or messiah who *hopefully* might be working in favor of humanity. *There is no savior of humanity but humanity himself*.[23]

For a Confucian, no religiously connoted consolation and neither paradise nor hell awaits man besides what he/she may creates during his/her life-time in the varying contexts of his respective social surroundings and by living through all the special situations of his/her unique life-experiences. Concerning death, the only possible "remuneration" which man can hope for might be a feeling of satisfaction

21 Cf. my comparison of the philosophies of Nicolaus Cusanus and Wang Yangming in this regard in Bartosch 2015b, 25–122 (the chapter "Kreativität" ["Creativity"]).

22 See above, the first citation in this paper and footnote 3.

23 Although it seems hard sometimes, we, at least in this regard, shouldn't give up hope.

that, at least, the continuation of the family is possible and that his/her right deeds may help to provide stability for his descendants as well as for other humans and for future generations, in general.

Therefore, it is of utmost importance to contribute to a floating and flexible equilibrium of the social relationships of one's family members as well as to the stability of the state which one lives in. In this regard, the only true and lasting salvation of humanity lies *in persistent learning and teaching* as well as moral training and reciprocal self-cultivation:

> However fine the viands be, if one do not eat, he does not know their taste; however perfect the course may be, if one do not learn it, he does not know its goodness. Therefore when he learns, one knows his own deficiencies; when he teaches, he knows the difficulties of learning. After he knows his deficiencies, one is able to turn round and examine himself; after he knows the difficulties, he is able to stimulate himself to effort. Hence it is said, "Teaching and learning help each other;" as it is said in [*Duiming* 兌命, DB], "Teaching is the half of learning."[24]

In the Confucian sphere of influence, it was not a religion or some other kind of dogmatic belief system which became the prime mover of civilization: In China and some of its neighboring lands, learning, education and the path of spontaneous insights into general wisdom themselves became the forces which have glued (and still glue) together many important aspects of society:

> The jade uncut will not form a vessel for use; and if men do not learn, they do not know the way (in which they should go). On this account the ancient kings, when establishing states and governing the people, made instruction and schools a primary object; as it is said in [*Duiming*, DB], "The thoughts from first to last should be fixed on learning."[25]

For man to fulfill his obligation as *xin* of Heaven and Earth, it is necessary to prevent human society from descending into chaos. Therefore the people have to be provided with special ways of learning which will enable them to keep the heart in a permanent state of realizing itself in permanent communion with everybody as well as with *tian-di wan wu*, in general. These methods of learning

24 Cf. *Liji* 禮記, "Xueji 學記", 3: "雖有嘉肴，弗食，不知其旨也；雖有至道，弗學，不知其善也。故學然後知不足，教然後知困。知不足，然後能自反也；知困，然後能自強也，故曰：教學相長也。《兌命》曰：「學學半。」其此之謂乎！" (tr. Legge)

25 Cf. ibid., "Xueji 學記", 2: "玉不琢，不成器；人不學，不知道。是故古之王者建國君民，教學為先。《兌命》曰「念終始典于學。」其此之謂乎！" (tr. Legge)

should be of help in the reflection and realization of the people's full dignity as *tian-di zhi xin*. From a Confucian perspective, every kind of learning which doesn't fit this goal of achieving one's innermost human(e) completeness would have to be labeled pointless.

Explicit Knowing in Confucian Learning: Subjects and Modalities

But how is man's innate goodness—or to use the term which has been made prominent by Wang Yangming: *liang zhi* 良知 ("good knowing")—to be nourished and cultivated? To start with, it can thus be stated that it is evident that man has to learn some basic skills and techniques which will provide him with the means necessary to create a civilized state of human existence. In the present paper, this kind of knowledge or know-how is also called *explicit knowledge* (of Confucian learning). In this context, we also have to bear in mind that although this kind of knowledge seems to be in the foreground, we will see that in the long run it turns out to be more like a kind of a "user surface" which contains—and in some respects more or less overlays—some deeper aspects of Confucian learning.[26]

Starting with the "outer layer" of Confucian learning, we can say that although Kongzi is generally known as a "moral teacher", he didn't forget to integrate the field of objective knowledge into his way of learning. In *Lunyu*, f. ex., he emphasizes the value of the *Shijing* 詩經, because one can learn much about animals and plants in that work.[27] Such forms of explicit knowledge (or know-how) can also be understood as explicit contents of Confucian education. And not completely without justification, Wang Yangming has been criticized for the attempt to cut back this aspect of original Confucian lore. With regard to a modern environment, but also with regard to maybe sorting out new ways to reunite the positions

26 In that wider sense, the explicit knowledge in Confucian learning must be understood as some "apparitional circumference" (as one might call it) of a wisdom which shines through all of these necessary fields of knowing and skills which are taught at school in a much more subtle or *implicit* sense. With regard to Confucianism, objective forms of knowing must be understood as a kind of impetus for a deeper kind of learning. The goal of this deeper kind of learning is how to become a decent human being. The explicit content and subject of the Confucian learning of antiquity can also be comprehended as an integral part of the whole "body" of (inter-personal) human existence and reflection, so-to-speak.

27 Cf. *Lunyu* 論語, "Yang Huo 陽貨", 9: "多識於鳥獸草木之名。" In my opinion, this also opens up the tradition of Confucian learning as a practice of personal self-cultivation for a modern science-based environment in the 21st century. It means no contradiction to follow the path of a modern Confucian learning and to be a natural scientist. Besides, one can find many examples of pre-modern Confucian scholars which have done marvelous scientific work. The famous prince Zhu Zaiyu 朱載堉 (1536–1610), f. ex., who, in a very scientific manner, has combined music, physics, mathematics and astronomy to create a new way of Confucian self-cultivation is one of them.

of Zhu Xi and Wang Yangming in the future, we have to respect this aspect of Confucian learning. With regard to present requirements, the science of nature which is mainly based on the inseparable unity of knowledge (theories) and practice (experiments in the context of certain experimental systems and scientific communities) could easily be analyzed in an extended and modernized framework of Yangming's *zhi-xing he yi*.[28]

In principal, we can say that such contents can easily be denominated and taught, *because they are expressible in a systematic way*. Therefore, *explicit knowledge* might be understood as, respectively compared to a functional equivalent to some teachable technical know-how which is also needed not the least because of keeping society alive, to balance human communities out internally, or to improve human living conditions in general. In this sense, explicit contents of Confucian learning were mediated in contexts of comparatively mature educational systems, very early on:

> According to the system of ancient teaching, for the families of (a hamlet) there was the village school; for a neighborhood there was the [*xiang* 庠, DB]; for the larger districts there was the [*xu* 序, DB]; and in the capitals there was the college [*xue* 學, DB]. Every year some entered the college, and every second year there was a comparative examination. In the first year it was seen whether they could read the texts intelligently, and what was the meaning of each; in the third year, whether they were reverently attentive to their work, and what companionship was most pleasant to them; in the fifth year, how they extended their studies and sought the company of their teachers; in the seventh year, how they could discuss the subjects of their studies and select their friends. They were now said to have made some small attainments. In the ninth year, when they knew the different classes of subjects and had gained a general intelligence, were firmly established and would not fall back, they were said to have made grand attainments. After this the training was sufficient to transform the people, and to change (anything bad in) manners and customs. Those who lived near at hand submitted with delight, and those who were far off thought (of the teaching) with longing desire. Such was the method of the Great Learning; as is said in the Record, "The little ant continually exercises the art (of amassing)."[29]

28 The author is not sure how far this has already been done. If not, this would be a viable philosophical task to write upon.

29 Cf. *Liji* 禮記, "Xueji 學記", 4: "古之教者，家有塾，黨有庠，術有序，國有學。比年入學，中年考校。一年視離經辨志，三年視敬業樂群，五年視博習親師，七年視論學取友，謂之小成；九年知類　通達，強立而不反，謂之大成。夫然後足以化民易俗，近者說服，而遠者懷之，此大學之道也。《記》曰：「蛾子時術之。」其此之謂乎！" (tr. Legge)

This leads us to the question, which kinds of subjects or fields of study Kongzi 孔子 was propagating. The Master discerns several fields of study. In my opinion, all of these subjects blend into each other as a sort of *holistic training*. In that context, Kongzi attaches great importance to activate his student's own abilities to reflect and to act and to grow independently.

The subjects of writing and mathematics were seen as basic skills or *Xiaoyi* 小藝 ("Learning of the Smaller Arts"). Based on that, Confucius propagates another four subjects: poetry, history, customs (or ritual knowledge) and music.

In this context, the followers of Kongzi have always stressed the importance of learning by rote—especially with regard to the content of the *Shijing*:[30]

> My children, why do you not study the Book of Poetry? The Odes serve to stimulate the mind. They may be used for purposes of self-contemplation. They teach the art of sociability. They show how to regulate feelings of resentment. From them you learn the more immediate duty of serving one's father, and the remoter one of serving one's prince.[31]

History was an important task, because it helps a great deal to get an orientation in political practice. One ought to learn from the past. Therefore, "[t]he Master said, 'A transmitter and not a maker, believing in and loving the ancients, I venture to compare myself with our old Peng.'"[32]

Music was to be practiced on a regular basis: "The Master said, 'It is by the Odes that the mind is aroused. It is by the Rules of Propriety that the character is established. It is from Music that the finish is received.'"[33] "For changing their manners and altering their customs, there is nothing better than music."[34]

Besides these skills and fields of knowledge[35], Confucius also bore in mind the importance of physical education. Hence Confucius introduced archery and the art of the charioteer as another two subjects which his students were obliged to practice diligently. The idea behind this was that the personalities of the students

30 Rote learning has been an important aspect of all high cultures. One striking example would also be the Vedic culture of India. But also some great scientists of the twentieth century were friends of rote learning, cf., f. ex., Lorenz; Kreuzer 1988, 49.

31 Cf. *Lunyu* 論語, "Yang Huo 陽貨", 9: "小子！何莫學夫詩？詩，可以興，可以觀，可以群，可以怨。邇之事父，遠之事君。" (tr. Legge)

32 Cf. ibid., "Shu Er 述而", 1: "子曰：「述而不作，信而好古，竊比於我老彭。」" (tr. Legge)

33 Cf. ibid., "Tai Bo 泰伯", 8: "子曰：「興於詩，立於禮。成於樂。」" (tr. Legge)

34 Cf. *Xiaojing* 孝經, "Guang Yaodao 廣要道", 1: "移風易俗，莫善於樂。" (tr. Legge)

35 According to the *Xiaoxue* 小學, all of the aforementioned subjects were later subdivided into a plurality of minor subjects.

should be shaped by these specific forms of taking action. The general background here was that "[f]rom the Son of Heaven down to the mass of the people, all must consider the cultivation of the person the root *of everything besides*."[36] Until today, East Asian cultures which have been influenced by Confucianism can still partly also be analyzed with regard to this aspect of *xiu shen* 修身 ("cultivating (the somatic) character")—which does not only include the ways of an individual human being, but especially also the social "community-characters" of groups of people in that context, of course.

Last but not least, we can also learn something about some *foundational modalities of a way of holistic learning* in the ancient Confucian teachings. In my opinion, these are still very inspiring with regard to possible modern understandings of education. A passage from the *Zhongyong* 中庸 sheds a light upon these foundational modalities of learning. They were named as follows: (1) *boxue* 博學 ("extensive study"), (2) *shenwen* 審問 ("accurate inquiry"), (3) *shensi* 慎思 ("careful reflection"), (4) *mingbian* 明辨 ("clear discrimination"), (5) *duxing* 篤行 ("earnest practice"):

> He who attains to sincerity is he who chooses what is good, and firmly holds it fast. To this attainment there are requisite the extensive study of what is good, accurate inquiry about it, careful reflection on it, the clear discrimination of it, and the earnest practice of it. The superior man, while there is anything he has not studied, or while in what he has studied there is anything he cannot understand, will not intermit his labor. While there is anything he has not inquired about, or anything in what he has inquired about which he does not know, he will not intermit his labor. While there is anything which he has not reflected on, or anything in what he has reflected on which he does not apprehend, he will not intermit his labor. While there is anything which he has not discriminated or his discrimination is not clear, he will not intermit his labor. If there be anything which he has not practiced, or his practice fails in earnestness, he will not intermit his labor. If another man succeeds by one effort, he will use a hundred efforts. If another man succeeds by ten efforts, he will use a thousand. Let a man proceed in this way, and, though dull, he will surely become intelligent; though weak, he will surely become strong.[37]

36 Cf. *Liji* 禮記, "Daxue 大學", 2: "自天子以至於庶人，壹是皆以修身為本。" (trans. Legge)

37 Cf. ibid., "Zhongyong 中庸", 22: "誠之者，擇善而固執之者也。博學之，審問之，慎思之，明辨之，篤行之。有弗學，學之弗能，弗措也；有弗問，問之弗知，弗措也；有弗思，思之弗得，弗措也；　有弗辨，辨之弗明，弗措也，有弗行，行之弗篤，弗措也。人一能之己百之，人十能之己千之。果能此道矣，雖愚必明，雖柔必強。" (tr. Legge)

The Crossing: *Ren* and Confucian "Bildung"

Keeping in mind that the above-mentioned skills and fields of knowledge as well as the modalities of Confucian learning might best be understood as an "outer layer" of the endeavor to become a *junzi* 君子[38], we also have to draw attention to some core aspects which are not so easy to mediate—at least not theoretically. The reason for this is clear: To assist the student to transform himself into a better human being, it would not be enough to provide him with some technical know-how or to teach him music or, generally speaking, some arts of bodily movement or skills in bodily performance (like archery or charioteering) without any deeper significance attached to it. Self-cultivation is not just a way of achieving any merits for the external recognition of others, but the (re)transformation of one's whole personality in the direction of one's afore-mentioned (universal) innate goodness.

The genuine way of this Confucian "*Bildung*"[39] starts from the valuable insight that man is permanently "woven in and out" of an ever-changing net of (transpersonal) human relations. Every human being is an internal relation of a living family system which, in turn, is integrated or embedded as an inherent relational appearance of the dynamic overall-relation of *tian-di* ("Heaven-Earth").

In this context, the lasting point of departure in all forms of human self-cultivation is reflected in the Confucian term "*ren*".

In a narrower sense, this word stands for the loving and caring relationship between a giving and caring father and a receiving and obedient son. For Confucians,

38 The word is at least partly translatable into German as "(*ein*) *Edler*" / "(*der*) *Edle*" while the English word "gentleman" is even worse. Unluckily, there is no English expression which transports the same possibilities of meaning as "(*der*) *Edle*" in German. It contains possible uses of the words "noble-minded", "exquisite", "gentle", "generous", "genteel", "virtuous", "lofty" (in a positive sense), "gallant". The word "(*der*) *Edle*" is akin to "*Adel*" ("nobility"), but can also be related to "*Geistesadel*" (close to "noble spirit" / "spirit of nobility", but with a wider "halo" of meanings). But be it as it may, the translation of "*junzi* 君子" into English and other Indo-European languages is still a rather unresolved issue.

39 During the nineteenth and twentieth century, the discourse of German philosophy connected the word "Bildung" with criteria for an education which in a certain sense shows several touching points with the intent of Confucian learning. "Bildung" is a word which has no counterpart in the English language. Until around the end of the last century, when the traditional German study system and the understanding of its philosophical background in the teachings of von Humboldt and others started to be replaced by other principles, the word "Bildung" meant a process which transforms and activates the whole person, its mores and manners and its skillfulness while nourishing the self-reflexivity of the learning person. In this sense, one might think of Germany's famous writer, poet, scientist and politician Johann Wolfgang von Goethe as an equivalent to some of the polymaths of Confucian learning and administration in China (the ones who were *truly* striving to live the life of a *junzi*). It might be in this regard that Goethe once wrote to a friend: "The Chinese people share many similarities with the Germans." (Eckermann 1982, 458)

this is the archetype for a humane interrelationship. From a Confucian perspective, this eminent human(e) relationship is to be understood as the "gravitational center" of all human civilization and cultivation. (With regard to Kongzi's own words, which have been cited above[40], the common neglect of the female aspect in this context is to be seen as a sort of "constriction", of course. There is still space for up-to-date Confucian gender studies.)

The son sees the father as a kind of role-model, while his father reflects himself as a son in relation to the grandfather of his son. From their respective fathers, the sons receive their basic human principles of conduct and common decency. On that basis, the fundamentals of human society should be kept alive and practiced on a daily basis. In addition, the loving and caring meaning of *ren* in the sense of a reciprocal relationship of giving and taking, of teaching and being taught is also valid regarding the relationship of older brother and younger brother, husband and spouse as well as the human relation of older friend and younger friend—a relation which also marks the connection of the family system with its surrounding sociological habitat.

Traditionally, *ren* is also comprehended as a prevalent definition of the relationship of ruler and minister. Last but not least, "*ren*" is an important part of the word "*ren'ai* 仁爱" ("humane loving")[41] which expresses the way how superiors should regulate their environment and the common circumstances of their subordinates. As all the families (in their basic human interrelatedness in the sense of *ren*) can be seen as the constituent organs of a community, so is the relationship of ruler and minister to be understood as the main constituent of the political meta structure—an institution which is meant to center all actions of the people in a kind of organic and dynamic equilibrium as a whole. In a certain symbolic sense, the relation of ruler and minister in the field of governance and administration resembles the relationship of father and son.

The difference, of course, lies in the fact that the relationship of ruler and minister isn't based on bodily descent and family ties but should be related exclusively to the worthiness of the subordinate administrator. And the superior should also be worth to take the leadership position, of course: At least in the ideal sense, the most worthy son of the dynasty should also ascend the throne. According to the meritocratic principles which became prevalent in Chinese "imperial management", only the most learned and skilled man were to be entrusted with the administration of the country. At least in an ideal sense, only the worthiest "sons" of the country were to be granted such responsible posts.

40 See footnote 13.

41 Regarding this term cf. Chen 1991, 268–76.

In accordance with that, the character of the ruler was supposed to have been molded by the practice of *xiao* 孝 as well: Even as emperors (with no other human being superior to them) the rulers of *Zhongguo* 中國 were then not only understood as children of their parents, but also as the one and only *tianzi* 天子 ("Son of Heaven"). They had to implement *tianming* 天命 ("the decree of Heaven"). At least in the sense of an ideal, they were seen as the channel or pathway, so-to-speak, to provide human society with the omnipresent cosmic order and celestial harmony and to connect humanity as much as possible with the ways of Heaven and the order of ever enfolding and permanently transforming *yi* 易 ("(universal) change(s)").

In this connection, one ought not to forget that the imperial family itself was supposed to serve as an educational example for all other families under Heaven. In *Daxue* 大學, we can find some important text passages considering that topic:

> What is meant by "In order rightly to govern the state, it is necessary first to regulate the family", is this: It is not possible for one to teach others, while he cannot teach his own family. Therefore, the ruler, without going beyond his family, completes the lessons for the state. There is filial [love-and-duty, DB]—therewith the sovereign should be served. There is fraternal submission—therewith elders and superiors should be served. There is kindness—therewith the multitude should be treated.[42]
>
> [(Coming from the example of) one (imperial) family (which realizes the trait of) humane (interrelationships internally), a whole state becomes (a developing) humane (interrelatedness), DB], and from its courtesies the whole state becomes courteous while, from the ambition and perverseness of the One man, the whole state may be led to rebellious disorder. Such is the nature of the influence. This verifies the saying, "Affairs may be ruined by a single sentence; a kingdom may be settled by its One man."[43]
>
> [W]hen the ruler, as a father, a son, and a brother, is a model, then the people imitate him. This is what is meant by saying, "The government of his kingdom depends on his regulation of the family."[44]

42 Cf. *Liji* 禮記, "Daxue 大學", 11: "所謂治國必先齊其家者，其家不可教而能教人者，無之。故君子不出家而成教於國：孝者，所以事君也；弟者，所以事長也；慈者，所以使眾也。" (tr. Legge)

43 Cf. ibid.: "一家仁，一國興仁；一家讓，一國興讓；一人貪戾，一國作亂。其機如此。此謂一言僨事，一人定國。" (tr. Legge, with changes by DB)

44 Cf. ibid.: "其為父子兄弟足法，而後民法之也。此謂治國在齊其家。" (tr. Legge)

We therefore see that the innate goodness of man has to be cultivated from at least two different angles which are inseparably interconnected. One environment of Confucian learning is the family. Secondly, we have to take into consideration the social environment of human coexistence. Furthermore, the aforementioned relation of older friend and younger friend might be seen as a third kind of specific area of cultivating one's innate human goodness. And one might just think of the reciprocal relationships of Confucius and his disciples to see that the relationship of teacher and pupil has *also* been understood as based on friendship, originally. A person who unites all of these three attributes in his personal self-cultivation and his striving to enfold his learning to the utmost extreme was/is to be characterized as a *junzi*.

If we analyze the core principles of Confucian ways of teaching humanity humane ways, we can see that a very substantial task thereby lies in the stimulation of (a naturally inborn) *xiao* as well as an all-encompassing and caring (or empathic) practice of *ren* which starts with the closest relatives and is supposed to be extended in a way that it may become one's exclusive regulating scheme for all possible human relations and situations. In this regard, it is Wang Yangming who states:

> Therefore [when I] "connect (lovingly and) as closely as possible with" (*qin* 親) my father as well as the fathers [of other] people as well as the fathers [of all] people under Heaven, then my humanity truly joins with my father, the fathers [of other] people as well as the fathers of all people under Heaven and it forms one (self-)organizing whole [with all of them]. This true togetherness of forming one (self-)organizing whole is followed by the brightening of the clear virtue of filial love-and-duty.
>
> When I connect (lovingly and) as closely as possible with my older brother and the older brothers [of other] people as well as the older brothers [of all] people under Heaven, then my humanity truly joins with my older brother, the older brothers [of other] people as well as the older brothers of all people under Heaven and it forms one (self-)organizing whole [with all of them]. This true togetherness of forming one (self-)organizing whole is followed by the brightening of the clear virtue of the younger brother. Ruler and minister, husband and wife, friends—up to mountains and rivers, gods and demons, birds and land animals, trees and plants—to attain the humane (interrelationship) of myself forming one (self-)organizing whole (with Heaven, Earth and ten thousand things), there is nothing which would not be connected (in love and) as closely as possible (to myself) in that sense. Only in this case, there is nothing which would not be brightened in (the light of) my clear virtue. And the

> one (and only) body of Heaven, Earth and ten thousand things can truly be realized in this way."[45]

We should also remember what Confucius himself points out: "[*Xiao* ("filial love-and-duty", DB] is the root of (all) virtue, and (the stem) out of which (all moral) teaching is growing."[46]

In that context, Kongzi also emphasizes the ruler's responsibility not only for the well-being of his subordinates but also for a public education which meets the end of an all-encompassing realization of *ren* in the whole of the human community. Therefore, in *Lunyu*, we can find the statement that

> [w]hen the Master went to Wei, [Ran You 冉有, DB] acted as driver of his carriage. The Master observed, "How numerous are the people!" You said, "Since they are thus numerous, what more shall be done for them?" "Enrich them," was the reply. "And when they have been enriched, what more shall be done?" The Master said, "Teach them."[47]

By means of educating the people and thereby raising as much worthy citizens as possible for the administration of the state and the common good, the ruler is also supposed to act as a role model himself. In this sense, he should be capable to serve as the perfect teacher. He ought to provide his people with examples to help them mastering the never-ending struggle of the realization of *ren.* Therefore, it is emphasized:

> These were the words of the Master—Difficult is it to attain to what is called the perfect humanity of the superior man! It is said in the Book of Poetry, "The happy and courteous prince is the father and mother of his people." Happy, he (yet) vigorously teaches them; courteous, he makes them pleased and restful. With all their happiness, there is no wild extravagance; with all their observance of ceremonial usages, there is the feeling of affection. Notwithstanding his awing gravity, they are restful; notwithstanding his son-like gentleness, they are respectful. Thus he

45 Cf. Wang (1933c, 36–37): "是故親吾之父·以及人之父·以及天下人之父·而後吾之仁實與吾之父人之父與天下人之父而為一體矣·實與之為一體·而後孝之明德始明矣·親吾之兄·以及人之兄·以及天下人之兄·而後吾之仁實與吾之兄人之兄與天下人之兄而為一體矣·實與之為一體·而後弟之明德始明矣·君臣也·夫婦也·朋友也·以至於山川鬼神鳥獸草木也·莫不實有以親之·以達吾一體之仁·然後吾之明德始無不明·而眞能以天地萬物為一體矣·" (tr. DB)

46 Cf. *Xiaojing* 孝經, "Kaizongmingyi 開宗明義", 1: "夫孝，德之本也，教之所由生也。" (tr. Legge)

47 Cf. *Lunyu* 論語, "Zi Lu 子路", 9: "子適衛，冉有僕。子曰：「庶矣哉！」冉有曰：「既庶矣。又何加焉？」曰：「富之。」曰：「既富矣，又何加焉？」曰：「教之。」" (tr. Legge)

> causes them to honor him as their father, and love him as their mother. There must be all this before he is the father and mother of his people. Could anyone who was not possessed of perfect virtue be able to accomplish this?[48]

In a similar manner, or in a wider sense, this also accounts for *every* Confucian teacher in his relations to his respective students. The personality of the teacher is utterly important. Besides the mere contents of his teaching, a Confucian teacher is also supposed to serve as a role model, so-to-speak. As mentioned earlier, this is especially the case when it comes to educate future leaders and political administrators. In *Lunyu*, Confucius therefore states with regard to the outcome of such an education: "If one is acting properly, things demanded will happen without commands."[49]

Kongzi felt responsible for the learning of more than 3000 students. In his actions, he was *exemplifying* the practice of empathy—thereby didactically mediating one of the root principles of his teaching without using language itself. In *Lunyu*, we find the following passage: "When the Master was eating by the side of a mourner, he never ate to the full."[50] And the Sage even taught empathy with respect to the animal kingdom.[51]

Originating from this practice of empathy, Confucius is also able to see through the personal characteristics of each of his students. In *Lunyu*, he states: "See what a man does. Mark his motives. Examine in what things he rests. How can a man conceal his character? How can a man conceal his character?"[52]

In his teaching, Confucius likes to draw on actual situations of every-day life which then can become valuable examples of certain *general* insights into the same special situation. On one occasion, when the Master sees a bird-catcher who intentionally is catching only young sparrows, he asks the man why he doesn't try to catch any old birds. The bird-catcher's answer is quite insightful: "The old sparrow is very smart, that's why he is hard to catch. The young ones are only desperate for food. For this reason, they are easy to catch." The Master then addresses his students and, amongst other considerations, draws the following comparison:

48 Cf. *Liji* 禮記, "Biaojì 表記", 26: "子言之：「君子之所謂仁者其難乎！《詩》云：『凱弟君子，民之父母。』凱以強教之；弟以說安之。樂而毋荒，有禮而親，威莊而安，孝慈而敬。使民有父之尊，有母之親。如此而後可以為民父母矣，非至德其孰能如此乎？" (tr. Legge)

49 Cf. *Lunyu* 論語, "Zi Lu 子路", 6: "「其身正，不令而行；[…]" (tr. DB)

50 Cf. *Lunyu* 論語, "Shu Er 述而", 9: "子食於有喪者之側，未嘗飽也。" (tr. Legge)

51 Cf. Bartosch 2015a.

52 *Lunyu* 論語, "Wei Zheng 為政", 10: "「視其所以，觀其所由，察其所安。人焉廋哉？人焉廋哉？」" (tr. Legge)

> Did you listen? […] Happiness and sorrow of the sparrow depend on which road the sparrow follows: […] If one follows the excellent thoughts of the ancients – whatever the danger might be—one is safe. If one follows the ideas of the inexperienced youth, one easily experiences great sorrow.[53]

Implicit Knowing in Confucian Education: The Ineffable Center

At this stage of our investigation, we might think back to what has been introduced as explicit knowledge in Confucian teaching and learning in second part. As already indicated, I would like to stress again that all the above-mentioned subjects and practices were not only to teach the students some practical skills or knowledge or some techniques in the sense of "l'art pour l'art". Even in the case of explicit contents of learning, the underlying intention is always implicitly two-fold, so-to-speak. Similar to Confucius' aforementioned method of drawing his pupils' attention to actual situations of every-day life, *all* of these practices and subjects of explicit learning in a *symbolical sense* refer to an ineffable aspect of Confucian teaching, i.e. insights and understanding which cannot be transmitted like the characteristics of a physical object, the steps of a technical process, or the mere technical aspects of an art (for example the know-how of how to hold the writing-brush properly or how to shoot an arrow with the bow). But nevertheless, the student *has to realize this symbolic extension of learning*. He has to realize it by himself and by means of his own efforts.

Symbolic meaning, as an underlying dimension of meaning, *is not precise*; it transcends the boundaries of fixed notions; it always remains open for further personal development and it *has to be carried out* practically and regularly until it becomes permanent and has put down roots into the all-encompassing fountainhead of *xin*. *By practicing* the art of charioteering, f. ex., the student also opened a way for himself to be enabled to maybe eventually grasp an underlying symbolic meaning of this activity (in the sense of a meaning which cannot be finalized and which is permanently enriching itself): In this sense of a *symbolical practice* of learning, *the practice* of charioteering also in an alluded sense was meant to help the learner to understand how to always attentively follow the right road or right path in life.

53 Cf. the whole passage in *Kongzi Jiayu* 孔子家語, "Liu Ben 六本", 7: "孔子見羅雀者，所得皆黃口小雀。夫子問之曰：「大雀獨不得，何也？」羅者曰：「大雀善驚而難得，黃口貪食而易得。黃口從大雀，則不得；大雀從黃口，亦不得。」孔子顧謂弟子曰：「善驚以遠害，利食而忘患，自其心矣，而獨以所從為禍福。故君子慎其所從。以長者之慮，則有全身之階；隨小者之戇，而有危亡之敗也。」" (tr. DB)

Here we touch upon the first aspects of a topic which concerns a more hidden but rather *central* issue. Kongzi tries to mediate this issue throughout his teachings. In my opinion, *all* of Kongzi's sayings contain a deeper symbolic meaning. In this regard, something is always left unspoken and therefore points to a level of wisdom, to an unspeakable dimension of understanding—a dimension which cannot be put into words, conclusively. Although this level of wisdom and achievement might be referred to from different angles allusively, it stays unspeakable in its entirety or totality. In brief: It confronts us with the philosophical problem of ineffability.

From a transcultural comparative perspective, this might be compared to aspects of education, f. ex., in late pagan Neo-Platonism. In this context, the student had to master several branches of philosophical learning (metaphysics, ethics, psychology etc.). The uniform processing of these branches of learning should then lead to an experience of a fundamental understanding or "enlightenment", i.e. a universal understanding which cannot be mediated by words sufficiently, as the author of the famous Platonic *Seventh Letter* (originally ascribed to Plato) explained.[54] At least in the sense of a partial analogy, the branches of explicit learning in Confucianism also lead back to a hidden center of wisdom. In one of his poems, Wang Yangming hints at this, when he states: "Every human heart has a Kongzi."[55]

To be able to reflect on this issue more clearly, we might imagine the branches of the *Liu Yi* 六藝 ("Six Arts") as a six-pointed star in the form of a snow-flake, with little twigs on the respective branches of the crystal which then are supposed to symbolize the respective subdivisions of each of the Six Arts). The ineffable aspect of Confucian learning then might be referred to as the center-point of this "snow-flake" or "six-pointed star", symbolically. The center is the seventh aspect. All other six branches are rooted in it and also coincide in it.

But Kongzi shifted the main attention to other areas than, f. ex., Neo-Platonist philosophers. The big difference is that, in the case of *early* Confucianism, the problem of ineffability is not connected to any metaphysical issues (in a possible Western meaning of "metaphysics"). Instead, Kongzi—and I am not talking about any later developments, especially not about those in Neo-Confucian philosophy of the twentieth or twenty-first century—keeps his attention mainly focused to the moral fountainhead. He strives for the betterment of humankind

54 Cf. also Edelstein 1966, 100: "But to be sure, such a vision is not a vision of ordinary experience or thought. Unlike such experiences or thoughts, it can, the letter holds, not be expressed in words. It also falls within the province of a specially gifted soul. 'Neither receptivity or memory can ever help him who is not kindred to the object [to see it], for it does not arise to start with in alien states [of the soul]' (344 A)."

55 Wang (1933d, 128): "個個人心有仲尼" (tr. DB)

without looking for any remedies outside of humanity itself (in the sense of his understanding of humanity). This is comparatively special and keeps his way of self-perfection focused on man himself. Therefore Confucians are in the favorable situation of not being susceptible to get lost in mental visions or religious mythology of any sort, let alone any distracting theological disputes.[56]

In this favorable and unique sense (which keeps up a more or less agnostic position), the unspeakable becoming of *dao* 道 cannot be put into terms as such. But it can be achieved indirectly (and only situational) by indicative allusions of the Master (who himself is already dwelling in—or as—limitless processuality and oneness of *dao*): Kongzi and other great Confucians like Wang Yangming did not explain what *dao* is. Unlike Socrates, Plato and others in ancient Greece, they didn't follow a *theoretical* road in search for any abstract or transcendent meanings of the main terms they were using. Any such ways in *modern* Confucian *philosophy* of the the twentieth and twenty-first century are influenced by the reading of Western philosophies like that of Kant, or the classics of Greek antiquity etc. The words "theoretical" and "theory" point to a very different origin than Confucian thought and its special enlightening or educational function.[57]—Kongzi himself was not trying to create any abstract meanings which then would have been tied to the idea to transcend them into "higher" intellectual spheres of self-reflection. Such kinds of practices would have been pointless under these *earlier* pre-modern Confucian circumstances.

Instead, these original Confucian teachers used their language in a varying and therefore always contextualizing manner (i.e. in accord with the individual situations and unique (inter)personal circumstances of their respective students). The reason for this is that *they always used their speech to regulate the conduct of*

56 For a transcultural comparison which deals with the philosophical problem of ineffability in Neo-Platonism and Neo-Confucianism, cf. Bartosch 2015b, 233–300.

57 There is not enough sufficient space left in the present paper to address this important issue more in detail. For supplementary reference please see my extensive and partly comparative analysis on the topic with regard to Plato's and Aristotle's as well as other notions and origins of the philosophical use of the word "θεωρία" in Bartosch 2015b, 489–506 (the chapter "Exkurs: Zu Kontexten der cusanischen Theorieauffassung" ["Excursus: On the Contexts of da Cusa's Views Regarding Theory."]). Let me just emphasize here that Kongzi didn't strive to live the theoretical life in the sense of Aristotle; his sayings are not an aspect of a sort of *vita contemplativa*; and he also doesn't have a Platonic "θεῖα θεωρία" ("vision of God") in mind; the philosophical sense of "I run and see" of the original meaning of Greek "θεωρῶ" (according to Nicolaus Cusanus (1401–1464)) also doesn't fit to describe the Confucian ways, cf. ibid., 500 and the citation on page 291 as well. Cf. also Rausch 1982, 21–47: The most important original meaning of the "theorist" (θεωρός) is that of an *envoy to a religious festival* who leaves his polis to "see the god" (f. ex. a statue in a temple) at another place of cult or another polis. To put it in other words and more bluntly: Confucian rituals are not about *visio Dei*. Confucian lore is not theoretical in the classical Western sense.

their students.[58] The Confucian situational use of terms might best be understood as the use of semantic "pointers" or "pointing-rods" ("*Zeigestäbe*", Max Scheler (1874–1928)). This method simply consists in *pointing out* (or *pointing at*) the right "direction" in the context of a situation, semantically. Wang Yangming even goes so far as to explain this with regard to *Chan* 禪:

> "Once there was a master of Chan. People came to ask for the method (of the Buddha). But he just lifted a feather duster. One day, his students hid his duster. They were curious to know how he'd demonstrate the method. The Chan master was looking for his duster which he didn't find and rose his empty hand into the air, instead. My (remarks on) 'good knowing' (*liang zhi* 良知) (can be compared to) the demonstration of the method by means of the duster. What else could I raise into the air besides this (expression)." A little later another friend asked with regard to the essentials of the task. Yangming looked besides himself and said: "Where is my duster?" Instantaneously, (that which he had alluded to) appeared to all of those who were sitting around him in a vital and lively way.[59]

On no account, the teacher would have told the student directly what to do (in the sense of direct prescriptions for his actions). He wouldn't have tried to define the terms he uses in the sense of a fixed or "immovable" meaning.[60] The overall/general meaning always stays ineffable, it can only be "catched" (or, figuratively speaking, be "fished" out of the "pond" of the deeper layers of the heart) situation-wise (while it stays ineffable, i.e. non-expressible by just trying to put it into words). To put it another way: Confucius and his followers knew that the moral content of their respective student's personalities could only be awakened from the inside. At the same time, they also kept in mind the fact that it was and will never be possible to drum the life of the *junzi* into the pupil's *xin* from the outside, so-to-speak.

In that sense, the wisdom which is the fountainhead of Confucian education is unspeakable and relates to the field of *implicit knowledge*. It is in itself without words. It can be understood as the harmony and overall progression which moves

58 Cf. Schmidt 2005, 134; Bartosch 2015b, 261.

59 Wang (1933b, 19): "一友問功夫不切·先生曰·學問功夫·我已曾一句 道盡·如何今日轉說轉遠·都 不著根·對曰·致良知蓋聞教矣·然亦須講明 ·先生曰·既知致良知·又何可講明·良知本是明白·實落用功便是·不肯 用功·只在語言上轉說轉糊塗·曰·正求講明致之之功·先生曰·此亦須你自家求·我亦無別法可道·昔有禪師·人來問法·只把塵尾提起·一日·其 徒將其塵尾藏過·試他如何設法·禪師尋塵尾不見·又只空手提起·我這箇 良知就是設法的塵尾·舍了這箇·有何可提得·少間·又一友請問功夫切要 ·先生旁顧 曰·我塵尾安在·一時在坐著皆躍然·" (tr. DB)

60 This is because there is no such fixed sense. Meanings are created by the use of words. This usage is always situational.

and brings forth and navigates everything through everything and which connects everything in a constant overall movement or transformation of the whole of "Heaven, Earth and ten thousand things" (*tian-di wan wu*).

From a Confucian angle, learning can be regarded as a gentle accession process towards that ineffable wisdom (another "feather duster" would be the word "*dao*") which Confucius also alludes to as "*one to permeate everything*". In that context, Confucius asks one of his pupils: "'Ci, you think, I suppose, that I am one who learns many things and keeps them in memory?' [The answer was, DB], 'Yes—but perhaps it is not so?' 'No', was the answer; ['I have one to permeate everything. DB]'"[61] In another passage, the Master says: "[M]y doctrine is that of an all-pervading unity."[62]

But we can still ask: What does this "one" mean? In principal, we can say that "it" cannot be defined conclusively. "It" is "something" which permanently (in the sense of a verb) "principles" and is always correcting through all the changing occurrences of our lives in accord with the constant self-development and self-modification of everything's situations themselves. One might hint at it by saying that it is the fully realized, permanent self-reflection *in and as concrete action*. In that sense, the obligation of man (as the heart of Heaven and Earth) lies in mirroring or self-reflecting the flow of situations in their ever-changing process of the promulgation of things—permanently and without aberration. Concerning the included aspect of ineffability, Confucius himself states that he would rather like to realize his teaching *without using any words*:

> The Master said, "I would prefer not speaking." Zi Gong said, "If you, Master, do not speak, what shall we, your disciples, have to record?" The Master said, "Does Heaven speak? The four seasons pursue their courses, and all things are continually being produced, but does Heaven say anything?"[63]

In a sense, this reminds us of the central importance of this topic for another great stream of earlier Chinese thinkers which stems from *Daodejing* 道德經 and the basics of earlier Daoists, like, f. ex., Zhuangzi 莊子, who stated that *dao* which is the root of all wording is itself without words.[64]

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61 Cf. *Lunyu* 論語, "Wei Ling Gong 衛靈公", 3: "「賜也，女以予為多學而識之者與？」對曰：「然，非與？」曰：「非也，予一以貫之。」" (tr. Legge, with changes by DB)

62 Cf. ibid., "Li Ren 里仁", 15: "「參乎！吾道一以貫之。」" (tr. Legge)

63 Cf. ibid., "Yang Huo 陽貨", 19: "子曰：「予欲無言。」子貢曰：「子如不言，則小子何述焉？」子曰：「天何言哉？四時行焉，百物生焉，天何言哉？」" (tr. Legge)

64 Cf. the famous beginning of the *Daodejing* 道德經, 1; alternatively cf. ibid., 41: "道隱無名。夫唯道，善貸且成。" ["*Dao*—hidden and without name, this *dao* alone is good at bestowing and completing." (tr. DB)]

But Wang Bi 王弼 already has stated that Kongzi's dealing with the ineffability of *dao* (respectively *wu* 無) is to be valued *as more elaborate* than that of Laozi 老子 and Zhuangzi who have stressed the ineffability of *dao* more emphatically. In contrast to them and instead of *speaking* about the ineffability of *dao,* it turns out that Confucius *embodies* the unspeakable fountainhead of all wisdom and worldly transformation.[65] While centering his efforts towards the human plane, he is thereby constantly giving signs from that all-pervading oneness. Later, Wang Yangming and also many others have combined Daoist and also *Chan*-Buddhist ways of communicating the incommunicability of *dao* with an understanding of the *embodiment* of *dao* in Confucian learning in various ways. On one occasion, Wang Yangming calls this *da dao* 大道 ("Great Way").[66]

In a symbolical or transferred sense, the latter thereby even compares or relates the activities of Confucian learning and teaching to acts of divination (*bushi* 卜筮). In that context and in Yangming's sense, the aforementioned five foundational modalities of holistic learning from the *Zhongyong* (see part 3)—i.e. (1) *boxue* ("extensive study"), (2) *shenwen* ("accurate inquiry"), (3) *shensi* ("careful reflection"), (4) *mingbian* ("clear discrimination"), (5) *duxing* ("earnest practice")—should be understood as fundamental ways of "divination" in a much deeper or symbolical (and therefore *extended*) sense. That is to say that these modalities should be understood as direct ways of reflecting the ineffable source of the ever-present transformation of *tian-di wan wu*. In this regard, Wang Yangming states:

> [Most people] do not know that questions and answers between friends, extensive studies, accurate inquiry, careful reflection, clear discrimination and earnest practice are all [ways of] divination [i. e. "reading"/reflecting *dao* in the context of a specific situation, DB].[67]

On the basis of these deeper levels of learning and teaching, Kongzi himself realizes to walk in on the road of wisdom in such a way that, according to every situation and change of his life, he can earnestly state: "I have no course for which I am predetermined, and no course against which I am predetermined."[68] At this stage of learning, human consciousness is led back to its utmost clarity and spontaneity—while at the same time still being confronted with the implied (philosophical) problem of (in)effability.

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65 Cf. Yuet 1999, 64; cf. also Wagner 1991, 463.

66 Cf. Wang (2006, 1180): "聖人與天地民物同體，儒、佛、老、莊皆吾之用，是之謂大道。二氏自私其身，是之謂小道。"

67 Cf. Wang (1933b, 12): "不知今之師友問答·博學·審問·慎思·明辨·篤行之類·皆是卜筮·" (tr. DB)

68 Cf. *Lunyu* 論語, "Wei Zi 微子", 8: "「我則異於是，無可無不可。」" (tr. Legge)

Outlook

Concerning further internationalization of Confucian-based practice of learning and self-cultivation, we have to ask ourselves how we might connect classical Confucian learning and the modes of learning and understanding presented in this paper with any fitting conceptions of modern Western education.[69] In my opinion, some aspects of pre-modern Confucian general understanding and learning would fit exceedingly well to assist in solving the problems of the modern world. The element of ineffability and the way how pre-modern Confucian teachers have dealt with it are still inspiring. Confucian scholars and practitioners have shown that their way of learning stays open to receive and absorb anything which might provide some means to solve current affairs or any problems of the day.[70] It seems very obvious that our modern and future world of the Information Age will have to be "recharged" by means of the interpersonal human(e) bonds which naturally "grow out" of *ren*, so-to-speak: We face the problem that our modern way of education is mostly fixated on the cultivation of forms of explicit knowledge. We should start to understand that our technological and informational rationality and her artificial extension are nothing more than a superficial exterior of total human(e) learning. In these contexts, it is important that humanity learns not be carried away by the technological reality, by its overstrained senses and by its current outcomes of technologically enhanced explicit knowledge. Without neglecting the achievements of modernity, man has the obligation to return to his original wisdom today, i.e. the symbolic and situational root of an intuitive and situational consciousness which always finds its way by striving for a continuous and humane self-integration in the constant flow of Heaven, Earth and the ten thousand things. Reviving Confucianism to a new form and adapting it to the needs of the twenty-first century or combining it with modern educational or philosophical concepts might help humanity to swim against the stream of entropy which was involuntarily amplified by the technological and scientific revolutions of the last 200 years. Achieving equilibrium and keeping an economic, ecological and social balance should be the furthermost concern of humanity as a whole. In this regard, pre-modern Confucian learning might provide us with a lot of helpful insight.

69 For a proposal in this regard cf. Bartosch 2015b, 427, 522–8.

70 Cf. *Lunyu* 論語, "Li Ren 里仁", 10: "「君子之於天下也，無適也，無莫也，義之與比。」" ["The Master said, 'The superior man, in the world, does not set his mind either for anything, or against anything; what is right he will follow.'" (tr. Legge)]

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Moral Education and Ideology: The Revival of Confucian Values and the Harmonious Shaping of the New Chinese Man

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Abstract

In this paper, we will investigate the re-emergence of Confucianism in contemporary China as a complex intersection of political, cultural, educational and popular perspectives. This resurgence is neither a kind of Chinese Neoclassicism nor a nostalgic backwardness, instead it is the emblem of the new China's identity. Confucius and Confucianism, violently despised as the remains of feudalism since the May Fourth Movement and during Maoism, are nowadays a fertile source for the fulfilment of "Socialism with Chinese characteristics" (*zhongguo tese shehui zhuyi* 中国特色社会主义) on both the educational and political levels. We carry out the investigation in three steps: 1. The political rehabilitation of Confucianism as part of the "Chinese dream" (*zhongguo meng* 中国梦); 2. The common social perception of Confucianism and tradition as a shared and unavoidable background; 3. The definition of two possible Confucianisms (namely New Confucianism and Political Confucianism) and their possible influences on Chinese society and moral education. Our conclusions will deal with Chinese cultural soft power, and the shaping of a new Confucian identity based on both modernity and tradition.

Keywords: political Confucianism, new Confucianism, Chinese dream, moral education

Moralna izobrazba in ideologija: preporod konfucianističnih vrednot in harmonično oblikovanje novega kitajskega človeka

Izvleček

V tem članku bomo raziskovali ponovno pojavljanje konfucianizma v sodobni Kitajski kot kompleksnem križišču političnih, kulturnih, izobraževalnih in popularnih perspektiv. Tovrstno oživljanje ni vrsta novega kitajskega neoklasicizma ne nostalgično pogledovanje nazaj, ampak predstavlja simbol nove kitajske identitete. Konfucij in konfucianizem, ki so ju na silo prezirali kot ostanek fevdalizma vse od Gibanja četrtega maja in tudi med maoizmom, sta danes plodna vira za izpopolnjevanje »socializma s kitajskimi značilnostmi« (*zhongguo tese shehui zhuyi* 中国特色社会主义), tako na izobraževalni kot na politični ravni. Raziskavo izvajamo v teh korakih: 1. Politična rehabilitacija konfucianizma kot del

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»kitajskih sanj« (*zhongguo meng* 中国梦); 2. Skupno družbeno dojemanje konfucianizma in tradicije kot skupno in neizogibno ozadje; 3. Definicije dveh mogočih konfucianizmov (t. i. novi konfucianizem in politični konfucianizem) in novih mogočih vplivov na kitajsko družbo in moralno izobrazbo. Zaključki se ukvarjajo s kitajsko »mehko močjo« in oblikovanjem nove kitajske identitete, ki temeljita na modernosti in tradiciji.

Ključne besede: politični konfucianizem, novi konfucianizem, kitajske sanje, moralna izobrazba

Politics and the Confucian Chinese Dream

On February 7, 2014, President Xi Jinping, commenting on the decisions of the Third Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee, explained that a new "Socialism with Chinese Characteristics" (*zhongguo tese shehui zhuyi* 中国特色社会主义) meant a complete revival or rejuvenation (*fuxing* 复兴) of Chinese society and policy through traditional culture. He stated that:

> since the introduction of the reform and opening-up policy some three decades ago, our Party has begun to ponder the issue of the national governance system from a new perspective, […]. Today, we are tasked with an important historic mission, that is to make our socialist system with Chinese characteristics more mature and better established, and provide a more complete, more stable and more effective system for the development of the Party and the nation, the well-being of the people, social harmony and stability, and the enduring prosperity and stability of the country. Our governance system will become more efficient as long as we focus on improving the Party's governance capacity while raising the moral and political standards, scientific and cultural levels, and the professional abilities of officials […]. The kind of governance system best suited for a country is determined by that country's historical heritage and cultural traditions and its level of social and economic development, and it is ultimately decided by that country's people. Our current national governance system has been developed and gradually improved over a long period of time on the basis of our storied heritage, cultural traditions, and social and economic development. […] A nation's culture is a unique feature that distinguishes that nation from others. We should delve deeper into and better elucidate China's excellent traditional culture, and make greater efforts to creatively transform and develop traditional Chinese virtues, promoting a cultural spirit that transcends time and national boundaries, and has eternal attraction and contemporary

> value. […] As long as the Chinese people pursue lofty virtues generation after generation our nation will be forever filled with hope. (Xi 2014a).

Xi Jinping always praises China's last thirty-five years of extraordinary development, which started when Deng Xiaoping proposed the opening of the Chinese economy and society to the world market. According to Xi and all the other Presidents since Deng, this was the only possible way of achieving policy reforms, economic growth and a better quality of life for all Chinese people. Xi openly stated that while in the 1980s and 1990s the priority was opening of free markets along with industrial and financial growth, in recent years the new focus has been on the shaping of a fair society, with this being achieved by: promoting culture and values, the only two weapons that can safeguard long-term growth and fight corruption. The term culture here refers to the traditional culture of Chinese history, the same tradition that was rejected by the leading thinkers of the May Forth Movement, as well as the founder of the Communist Party, Chen Duxiu. In 1916, Chen Duxiu contrasted the new ideology of independence (*duli zhuyi* 独立主义) with Confucian values, and the latter were described as completely outdated and repressive, while independence was the condition of a modern economy and growth. Confucianism was thus seen as preventing the improvement of Chinese society. Further, Chen Duxiu (1916) declared that Confucius lived in a "feudal epoch", and therefore he provided only a feudalistic moral way (*fengjian shidai zhi daode* 封建时代之道德). This opinion of the founder of the Chinese Communist Party was shared by Mao, who used the term "feudalism" (*fengjian* 封建) as a label to use against enemies of the socialist project. However, the use of the terms "feudal" and "feudalism" is obviously only ideological, since in Chinese history they apply only to the Western Zhou (1066–771 BC). The correct meaning of the term *fengjian* 封建 is the decentralised system of government that was used during the Zhou dynasty. In the early 20th century, this same term was applied to mean the "Chinese empire" in order to fit into the Marxist social stages of development. As such, how could it be that Xi Jinping, and before him Hu Jintao, were so clearly working to recover the Chinese tradition of Confucianism, which is nowadays often improperly labelled as "feudalistic"?

We can find a clear answer to this question in Hu Jintao's speech at the 90th Anniversary of the founding of CPC on July 1, 2011. Hu devoted part of his long speech to an outline of the last two centuries of Chinese history and, without plainly disavowing the fact that imperialistic China was "feudalistic", he attributed the reasons for these "feudalistic" conditions to the Opium Wars and the arrogance of foreign powers, reshaping the Marxist concept as it had been applied to China. This external corruption caused the ruin of Chinese civilisation, the

suffering of the Chinese poor, and the development of corruption. At that time, using Hu's words, "China gradually became a semi-colony and semi-feudalistic society (*zhongguo zhubu chengwei ban zhimindi ban fengjian shehui* 中国逐步成为半殖民地半封建社会)" (Hu 2011). To fight this imported corruption was thus the primary mission of the Communist Party, and it worked on this aim until the complete defeat of Japanese Imperialism and the "reactionaries" of the Guomindang in 1949. According to Hu, what followed was the creation of a socialist society under Mao, but the real success was the third phase, when China undertook the process of reform and economic opening with Deng Xiaoping, finally creating a socialistic society with Chinese characteristics. This is a Chinese Socialism that needs, in order to be truly Chinese, not only economic growth but, first of all, Chinese culture, literature, tradition and wisdom, which are no longer seen as "feudalistic relics".

This is the reason why Xi Jinping set out the idea of the "Chinese dream" (*zhongguo meng* 中国梦) as the goal of his mandate, a dream of prosperity and harmony that necessarily needs Chinese traditions, values and the close study of ancient texts. In a speech on October 21, 2013, the Chinese President gave example of some exemplary students: Confucius, Sun Jing, Su Qin, Kuang Heng, Chen Yi and Sun Kang, the six leading figures of classical Chinese Confucianism, and even quoted *Mozi*'s "exaltation of the virtuous is fundamental to governance" (Xi 2013a). Again, on June 6, 2014, while speaking to Overseas Chinese Associations, he highlighted the role of culture and tradition as the common link among all Chinese, and therefore as the real Chinese identity, which is shared, we can guess, even by those who left China before 1949. Here, Xi said:

> For Chinese people both at home and abroad, a united Chinese nation is our shared root, the profound Chinese culture is our shared soul, and the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation is our shared dream. […] Chinese civilization, with a history going back more than 5,000 years, provides strong intellectual support for the country's ceaseless self-improvement and growth. No matter where a Chinese is, he always bears the distinctive brand of the Chinese culture, which is the common heritage of all the sons and daughters of China. I hope all Chinese will continue to carry forward Chinese culture and draw strength from it, while promoting exchanges between Chinese civilizations and other civilizations. Let us tell the stories of China well, and make our voices heard […] (Xi 2014b)

In this excerpt from Xi's speech, Chinese tradition is presented not only as Chinese heritage, as the links among a dispersed and fragmented civilisation, but also

as a universal philosophy, able to attract people from different countries and civilisations. As such, all other civilisations have to respect and take into consideration this thousands-year old tradition, full of wisdom and moral probity. Therefore, both within and outside China, tradition was set up the central tenet of the new policy. Within the country it provides the backbone of society and the means for the process of moralisation at all levels, while outside it is the presentable and attractive face of the nation, which grants stable international relationships and equal cultural exchanges. Tradition is thus the emblem of China's soft power (Scarpari 2015), as Xi Jinping noted on December 30, 2013:

> The strengthening of our cultural soft power is decisive for China to reach the Two Centenary Goals and realize the Chinese dream of rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. […] To strengthen our cultural soft power, we should disseminate the values of modern China. During its 5,000-year history, the Chinese nation has created a brilliant and profound culture. We should disseminate the most fundamental Chinese culture in a popular way to attract more people to participate in it, matching modern culture and society. We should popularize our cultural spirit across countries as well as across time and space, with contemporary values and the eternal charm of Chinese culture, which feature both excellent tradition and modern spirit, both nationally and internationally. (Xi 2013b)

We thus see, at least in these Presidents' speeches, the growing interest in Chinese tradition within the political elite, and as a real asset of Chinese policy. Chinese Presidents clearly understood that in order to compete with the USA and Europe, the country needs not only a strong economy and stable market, but also competitive scientific culture and broad cultural appeal. The "Chinese dream" thus needs to look backward in order to look forwards.

Confucianism as a Contemporary Social Asset

Now we should try to understand whether this use of traditional culture was just a political campaign led by the last two Presidents, or instead the expression of a mass phenomenon already rooted in society. The answer is not simple, but we can simply say that in this regard the Communist Party is meeting a social demand for the rehabilitation of tradition, since traditional culture—despite almost a century of condemnation—never really disappeared among the common people. We can find support for this incontrovertible fact in several ways, and one of the best is to consult a few recent surveys on social perceptions of cultural values.

Between January 1, 2012 and December 31, 2014, the website *zhongguo zhengzhi zuobiaoxi* 中国政治坐标系 (The Chinese Political Compass) conducted a large survey with fifty questions, which included items on national and international politics, micro and macro-economy, security, culture and society. Over those two years there were more than 460,000 online responses, with the possible answers to the related statements being: strongly disagree, disagree, agree and strongly agree. Of the fifty questions, the following five are of great interest to our investigation: 42. "One should not openly comment on the shortcomings of our elders" (*bu ying kai tanlun ziji zhangbei de quedian* 不应公开谈论自己长辈的缺点); 43. "Modern Chinese society needs Confucianism" (*xiandai zhongguo shehui xuyao rujia sixiang* 现代中国社会需要儒家思想); 46. "The eight diagrams of *The Book of Changes* can explain many facts" (*zhouyi bagua nengguo youxiao de jieshi henduo shiqing* 周易八卦能够有效的解释很多事情); 47. "The perspective of traditional Chinese medicine on human health is superior to that of modern mainstream medical science" (*zhongguo chuantong yixue dui renti jiankang de guannian bi xiandai zhuliu yixue geng gaoming* 中国传统医学对人体健康的观念比现代主流医学更高明); 49. "Traditional Chinese classics should be the basic education material for children" (*yingdang zhongguo chanting wenhua de jingdian zuopin wei ertong jichu jiaoyu duwu* 应当将中国传统文化的经典作品为儿童基础教育读物).

Question n. 42 raises the central tenet of Chinese traditional society as based on social rites (*li* 礼), namely *xiao* 孝, that is usually translated in English as filial piety and states the unconditional love and respect of children for their parents. In the *Analects* 4.18 Confucius says: "In serving your father and mother, remonstrate with them gently. On seeing that they do not heed your suggestions, remain respectful and do not act contrary. Although concerned, voice no resentment" (Ames and Rosemont 1998), 子曰：「事父母幾諫。見志不從，又敬不違，勞而不怨。」. Confucius is thus suggesting that children should never act against their parents, even if they seem to be at fault. The Chinese respondents were almost equally divided, with 7.3% strongly disagreed, 38% disagreed, 34.8% agreed and 19.9% strongly agreed. In short, 45.3% of them disagreed while 54.7% agreed, suggesting the endurance of classical Chinese social values even among internet users aged mostly between 18 and 30.

On the relevance of Confucianism (n. 43), the vast majority disagreed (73.4%), however this negative answer is counterintuitive, since filial piety, rituals, and etiquette are the core of Confucian thought. Therefore, according to this survey, Confucianism in China still suffers from a negative image, but as an institution of power and not as a social norm or form education. We will return to this point later (see 4. Conclusions).

Question n. 46 is about one of the most famous books of Chinese wisdom, The *Book of Changes* (*Yijing* 易经 or *Zhou Yi* 周易). The eight diagrams are the base of the sixty-four hexagrams that are used to predict and explain events, and to understand the deep nature of each person. These diagrams were seen as ineffective by 47.7% of the respondents, while effective for 52.3% of them. Again, as for filial piety, for this item a slight majority of the respondents seemed to defend traditional culture.

However, the most surprising data are related to the last two questions. Question n. 47, on the validity of Chinese medicine, received 64.3% positive answers, indicating that most respondents felt that this approach to the human body and health was superior to modern, mainstream medicine. Similarly, 62.1% of the respondents agreed with the use of Chinese classics as core texts for children in school (n. 49), or to be more accurate only 3.9% strongly disagreed, 33.9% disagreed, 51.2% agreed and 10.9% strongly agreed. 经典 (Classics) is a general term meaning many different ancient works, but among them we could mention the Five Classics (*wujing* 五经), namely *The Book of Documents* (*Shujing* 书经), *The Book of Poetry* (*Shijing* 诗经), *The Classics of Rites* (*Liji* 礼记), *The Book of Changes* (*Yijing* 易经), *The Spring and Autumn Annals* (*Chunqiu* 春秋) and, the four Confucian Books (*sishu* 四书), including *The Analects* (*Lunyu* 论语) by Confucius and *Mencius* (*Mengzi* 孟子). In our opinion, comparing the answers to questions n. 43 and n. 49 we find a clear incongruity, since Confucianism was seen as unnecessary for a large majority of the respondents, but the Classics, which were largely shaped and influenced by Confucianism (*sishu wujing* 四书五经), are suitable as a basis for children's education. We thus suggest that Confucianism as a political institution is being rejected, while Confucianism as a moral practice and as a social regulator is still appreciated by a large number of Chinese people.

S. Billioud and J. Thoraval (2014), have recently shown that since the year 2000 a clear Confucian renewal has taken place in three areas: 1. In education, with the creation of the Confucian scholastic academies (*sishu* 私塾); 2. In the religious or spiritual area, with the growing relevance of traditional ritualism, with rites of passage and celebrations in honour of Confucius, particularly in his hometown Qufu; and 3. Confucianism as moral path or *rendao* 人道 for all Chinese people. The two authors, at the end of their comprehensive investigation, suggest that we are facing two kinds of Confucianism: a popular one, active in Chinese villages and among humble people living traditional rural lives; and an elitist one, in order to educate a new political class. We clearly see the double concern of modern Confucianism here: the growth of popular consent, and the active role of a new elite in the socio-political future of the country. In this context tradition is not to be seen as something confined to isolated rural backwardness, but rather the

future of one of the most powerful nations in the world. As we have seen in previous paragraphs, Chinese traditions and Confucianism are the core of the "Chinese dream" launched by Xi Jinping.

Connected with the issues of "popular Confucianism" and a "Confucian elite", Shi Tianjian (2015) suggests, through the use of several thorough surveys, that we can find two kinds of democratic orientations among modern Chinese people: 1. Idiocentric, namely a policy theory centred on individuals; and 2. Allocentric, where social relationships, communitarian life and relational values are the real core. The allocentric democratic orientation is very diffused in China, and traces its origins back to Confucius himself, as, in The Analects 2.3 he teaches: "Lead the people with administrative injunctions and keep them orderly with penal law, and they will avoid punishments but will be without a sense of shame (*chi* 恥). Lead them with moral excellence and keep them orderly through observing ritual propriety and they will develop a sense of shame, and moreover, will order themselves" (Ames and Rosemont 1998), 子曰：「道之以政，齊之以刑，民免而無恥；道之以德，齊之以禮，有恥且格。」. Confucius thus bases his system on the sense of shame (*chi* 恥/耻), and so the social burden of admonition and punishment is displaced from a central governmental authority to society itself, and particularly to the family. This leads to a collective society where the allocentric orientation is more natural, while the idiocentric is in complete contrast with tradition and culture, perceived as an imported Western ideology, mostly diffused in large cities and coastal provinces—as the study by J. Pan and Xu Yiqing (2015) has also shown about the diffusion of more liberal ideas.

Contemporary China is searching for its "Chinese socialist way" within a renovated "allocentric" orientation that has Confucianism as driver and champion. However, this rich vein of morality and wisdom is not univocal, since in the last century Confucianism underwent several important changes and alterations. Therefore, we have to try to investigate which Confucianism can be dreamt within the "Chinese dream" (*zhongguo meng* 中国梦), and which can be proposed as the basis of a new "Confucian education".

The Two Approaches to Confucianism: Political or Personal Education?

In 1911 the Chinese Empire collapsed together with all the institutions based on Confucian tradition: the Imperial Examinations (which had already ended in 1905), the Imperial Hanlin Academy, the rituals performed by the Imperial Court, the temples and so on. The May Fourth Movement and the Communist party fought against any traces of Confucianism and other traditional values. However,

within the recently founded Chinese universities, traditional values found strong supporters in the fields of philosophy and classical studies. When the Communist Republic was established 1949, the majority of intellectuals left China for Taiwan, Hong Kong and even western countries, such as the USA, the UK, or France.

New Confucianism

Among those intellectuals there was the philosophical school of New Confucianism, with Xiong Shili, Mou Zongsan and Tang Junyi as leading thinkers. New Confucianism *xinrujia* 新儒家 is not a recent phenomenon: rather it is rooted in the thought of the Song Dynasty (960–1279), when Confucian thinkers, influenced by the Buddhist universal metaphysics of the "Buddha nature" *foxing* 佛性 in all men, started to present good human nature *shanxing* 善性 as universal and common to all beings. Therefore, since this time Confucian philosophy has shown more abstract and metaphysical concerns as compared with the practical political interests of Confucius or Mencius. Obviously, "practical or political Confucianism" never disappeared from Chinese society, Confucianism being the institutional foundations of the Imperial system. However, when in 1911 the Empire collapsed, Institutional Confucianism lost not only Imperial support, but also its reason for being. That is why, even in Taiwan or Hong Kong, where the societies guarded its traditional aspects, Institutional Confucianism often lost its place to the metaphysical New Confucian philosophy that bloomed in the 1960s and 1970s, particularly within the international cross-cultural academic milieu.

But we now need to bear in mind that in the mid-19th century, when the military and economic power of the Empire showed all its weaknesses in the Opium Wars and the Taiping Revolution, a four-character expression circulated among learned Chinese men: *zhong ti xi yong* 中体西用, which we can translate as "Chinese [culture] is essence, while Western [knowledge or science] is function". The idea was that Western military capacity and scientific knowledge were indisputably superior to those of the Chinese, but these abilities were only devoted to practical ends, and the continuous evolution of techniques and knowledge within China would make this superiority unstable and temporary. On the opposite side, Chinese traditional wisdom of self-cultivation and moral norms were the unchangeable structure of society, and went straight to the core of an unalterable human nature. The author who diffused this sentence was the eminent Qing official Zhang Zhidong, who explained, in his *Exhortation to Study* (*Quanxue pian* 劝学篇), the necessity of both science and morality (Zhang 1998). The Confucian reformers of the last decades of the Qing Empire, such as Kang Youwei, tried to use this

concept of "Chinese culture as structure" (*zhong ti* 中体) as a basis for the reform of Chinese society, but their attempt failed, being repressed by court conservatism. After 1911 this programmatic proposition was gradually dismissed and lost its social appeal under the attack of both modernism and New Confucianism.

As we said above, Confucianism survived as a system of thought among those philosophers who mostly belonged to the school of Modern New Confucianism *xiandai xinrujia* 现代新儒家. Those thinkers were not backward traditionalists, but rather philosophers fully aware of Western philosophical thought who struggled to find and claim a place for Chinese thought within World Philosophy. They refused the *zhong ti xi yong* 中体西用 theory (Chinese culture as essence and Western as function), since they were trying to insert Chinese philosophy in a direct dialogue with other philosophies, and this was incompatible with the presumed superiority of Chinese wisdom. But at the same time, they were refusing the Western theory of Chinese intrinsic inferiority as advocated within the Hegelian, Positivist or Weberian schools. Their proposed systems of thought—we cannot investigate these in detail in this article—were refined adaptations of Chinese thought on human nature and human education to the language and concepts of Western humanities. For instance, Mou Zongsan proposed a critical analysis of Kantian moral thought which led to the creation of a "moral metaphysics", where we have not a metaphysics applied to morality—as in Kant—but instead a metaphysical investigation that in its doing provides a morality rooted in human nature itself. Turning Kant's system upside-down, while the latter limited man's understanding only to sensible intuition, Mou believed that man has a direct intuition of reality that derives from his human nature, and that this is shared with the whole of Nature (i.e. with all beings). According to Mou, each man is a unique "through-hole" *tongkong* 通孔, and "through-holes" are the only ways for truth to reveal itself to the world. We can say that men are necessary for truth. Therefore, each man, being this "through-hole", has direct access to the essence (noumenon) of reality or truth (*dao* 道). Humans have direct access to reality, and this is the perfect teaching of New Confucianism. Chinese philosophy is "concrete philosophy" *juti de zhexue* 具体的哲学 searching for a concrete universal *juti de pubian* 具体的普遍 truth, and not, as for Western philosophy, an abstract *chouxian de* 抽象的, a truth far from human life (Mou 2009, ch. 1–2).

According to Mou, despite the greatness of this idea, China has lost its creative energy since the Qing dynasty, when Song and Ming Neo-Confucianism first started to be despised as abstract and useless thought, and under the Communist government the complete destruction of traditional culture reached its apex (ibid., ch. 19). Against this attack on the Chinese soul, in 1958 Mou Zongsan, Tang Junyi and several other leading thinkers of New Confucianism—despite

this having never been a coherent school (Makeham 2003, part. I) – signed and diffused in the Hong Kong press their "Declaration on Behalf of Chinese Culture Respectfully Announced to the People of the World" (*wei zhongguo wenhua jinggao shijie renshi xuanyan* 为中国文化敬告世界人士宣言), a document that we now see as a conservative and a doomed attempt to restore Confucian thought against the ruse of Positivist Western thought and Communism. This declaration, although unfulfilled, was the first collective action of New Confucian thinkers, and in some ways shaped their identity. It was only with the opening of China, guided by Deng Xiaoping in the late 1970s, that Chinese New Confucian thinkers openly expressed their thoughts in mainland China and started to create a common identity with real affiliations among schools and subgroup branches, in order to find an orthodox thought and lineage. As noted by Makeham, we could identify at least seven characteristics shared by New Confucian thinking:

> [1.] Confucianism is accepted as the orthodoxy and main pillar of Chinese culture. As a branch or school within Confucianism, the New Confucians place a high value on xin xing zhi xue 心性之學. […2.] New Confucians regard China's historical culture as a spiritual reality (*jingshen shiti* 精神實體) and the flow of this historical culture is where this spiritual reality is manifest. [… 3.] New Confucians affirm the notion of *daotong* 道統 (interconnecting thread of the way) as the basis for nationhood and the source of cultural transformation. [… 4.] New Confucians emphasize the need to adopt a respectful and empathetic attitude to China's historical culture. [… 5.] New Confucians have a strong sense of "origin; roots (*genyuan* 根源)." […6.] New Confucians evidence a keen awareness of the crisis facing Chinese culture [… 7.] New Confucianism is rich in religious sentiment and has a strong sense of mission to rejuvenate Chinese culture. (Makeham 2003, 29–30)

Obviously those seven threads are disputable, but they enrich our discussion on the contemporary "Chinese dream" and on the relevance of Confucian education to today's China. As to the first point, for New Confucianists Confucianism is the core of Chinese culture, the origin or at least the most relevant actor in establishing the Classics and the bases of Chinese traditional culture. Clearly, other schools of thought, such as Daoism, Legalism, and even Buddhism. have been relevant, however none of them could compete with the active shaping of society carried out by Confucianism, this being the leading school of thought within the Imperial Court and the Imperial Hanlin Academy. The further characteristics shared by the New Confucians, from 3 to 6, above, have to do with the mission those thinkers undertook, namely the protection of Confucian or Neo-Confucian thought

as the well-spring of Chinese tradition and culture. But two points are much more relevant, numbers 2 and 7, which see New Confucianism, or simply Confucianism, as a religious teaching that could rejuvenate the nation. Confucianism is both a philosophical system and spiritual belief, which can enrich a soulless society. In order to understand this point, we need to look closer at what the establishment of a correct tradition meant in China. In pre-Imperial China, history was interpreted through a correlative scheme of five agents, 五行, and these are descriptive concepts that the possible configurations of *qi* 氣, the vital energy that underlies everything in the world. This correlative scheme of five elements—wood, fire, soil, metal and water—is used to understand and define everything in the world, biological life as diseases, the individual psychological dispositions as physical characteristics, the correct form of education in human life, the seasons as colours, but, most relevant for us, historical events—i.e. the collapse of dynasties and the breaking out of wars—as social relationships (Graham 1986; Graham 1989). Therefore, Confucianism as an interpreter of political and social life is the only effective way to forecast, prevent and understand events. We thus argue that this ability to penetrate the essence of *qi*, as acknowledged for Confucianism, is the reason for both the definition of Chinese culture as a "spiritual reality" (*jingshen shiti* 精神实体), and the central role Confucianism must have in the "revival" *fuxing* 复兴 of this culture. We know that the term "renaissance" is the heart of the "Chinese dream", and it is the core of a new education of Chinese society from its psychological and historical roots.

Political Confucianism

In 1983 the Confucius Foundation was set up in Beijing with the full support of Deng Xiaoping and the Communist Party, and we can see this as the starting point of Xi Jinping's "Chinese dream". In 1989, at the 2540th anniversary of Confucius's birthday, the President of the People's Republic Jiang Zemin blessed the event, praised all the participants' speeches, noted the historical relevance of Confucius as the father of Chinese culture, and highlighted Confucius's teachings as a model of correct moral education. At this event, Gu Mu, who was Deng's right-hand man in the economic modernisation program, delivered a long speech advocating the decisive role of Confucianism in China's past, present and future. He praised Confucian values such as harmony, wisdom, social relationships, respect for authority, and complete pedagogy, as valid tools against the spiritual pollution from the West that had caused the Tiananmen demonstrations. From this moment forward, Confucianism started to be a conservative and traditional force that could be used to maintain authority. We quote just a few lines of this speech, as follows:

> The Chinese nation has had a long history and brilliant ancient culture. For a long period of time in human history, the Chinese culture, with Confucian school of thought as the mainstream, glittered with colourful splendour […] Culture serves both as the emblem of the level of civilization of a nation or a country, and the guidance for its political and economic life. To promote prosperity and peace for a nation and for mankind in general, it is necessary to develop a compatible culture. In this regard, a proper attitude toward the traditional national culture is very important. (Gu 2000)

Reading these lines from Gu Mu's 1989 speech, it is natural to find analogies with those of Hu Jintao and Xi Jinping. Already in 1989 the new cultural course of Chinese socialism had begun. While it was not termed "socialism with Chinese characteristics", it was already allied with the conservative and nationalist forces of Chinese learned society. At this time, the Chinese Communist Party, which is considered a leftist force in the West, moved closer to the nationalist and conservative Confucian side, which in the West would be considered on the right side of the political spectrum. This is the reason for a contemporary society split in two, with the Communists and traditionalists on one side, and liberal, reformist and Westernised people on the other.

Now we understand the relevance of a correct definition of Confucianism, since it became an active force in Chinese society at both the political and social levels. Is this Confucianism the New Confucianism we just outlined, or not? Is there a different kind of Confucianism in contemporary China? The answer to both questions is positive, since we have at least one other huge theoretical Confucian school that is gradually imposing its interpretation on the old teachings. This school is usually termed "Political Confucianism" or "Institutional Confucianism", and it is headed by Jiang Qing, who in 1996 founded the Yangming Academy 阳明精舍 in Guiyang (Guizhou), a Confucian-based academic institution that is defined in several websites as being devoted to ancient Chinese culture, being "the modern school that most aims at restoring the ancient way" (阳明精舍—最复古的现代书院), and therefore the emblem of contemporary Confucian education.

Jiang Qing is an open enemy of Neo-Confucian and New Confucian philosophy, since he contends that the related philosophers were influenced by liberal democracy, and that their schools are not based on Confucian philosophy but on Western Kantianism and Idealism, to the point where we can find no traces of Confucian logic in their discourses. As everyone learned in Confucian philosophy since the time of Confucius should know, Confucianism is twofold, since it is devoted to the teaching of both external kingship (*waiwang* 外王), and internal

wisdom (*neisheng* 内圣). The external kingship is an effective system, with good ruling and political institutions that include all the Confucian rites. The internal wisdom refers to the interior development of the individual, who cultivates his moral nature, educates his heart-mind (心) and achieves the final, perfect state of a wise man. After Jiang, New Confucian philosophers completely neglected the first aim of Confucian teaching, since they devoted their attention only to internal cultivation, and this is the reason for calling this school of thought "Mind Confucianism", which is the translation of *xin xing ruxue* 心性儒学, namely Confucianism devoted the study of the nature of the heart-mind. Jiang Qing quotes as best example of this deviation Mou Zongsan and Tang Junyi, who paid attention only to the "good life" and not "good ruling", since they implicitly supported the liberal democratic society of the West. Therefore, Jiang Qing contends that the New Confucians proposed that Chinese people should live in a Western society, where their moral and internal wisdom could find a perfect fulfilment; we can say "(ancient) Chinese within, but Western outside".

As Jiang Qing argues:

> I think this contemporary neo-Confucian solution is mistaken because it treats Western democracy and science as the ultimate standard for the development of Chinese socio-political institutions, thus justifying the suspicion that it advocates a disguised version of China's Westernization rather than authentically developing Confucianism. Neo-Confucianism's solution attempts to derive Confucian socio-political institutions exclusively from the Mind Confucianism scholarship and ignores the existence of another strand of the Confucian tradition, namely, Political Confucianism, which has many resources for developing political systems. It is unfortunate that contemporary Neo-Confucians regard modern science as intrinsically valuable. Science is only instrumentally valuable. The Chinese can certainly learn from and adopt modern science in their society, but they must regulate science according to Confucian moral values. (Jiang 2011, 24).

We see in Jiang's words the concept underlying the already quoted four-character expression of the late Qing, namely "Chinese culture as essence and Western as function" *zhong ti xi yong* 中体西用. Science has to be studied and used, but the only standard in its use should be Confucian morality. The same goes for democracy, that it should be studied but never applied to Chinese society, since, as Jiang explains in several essays, this political system has Western roots and is linked to European religions, and furthermore, it is an imperfect system that promises but

never really aims at achieving equality. This political system is thus unsuitable for China, and would destroy Chinese tradition and Confucianism.

Jiang Qing thus prefers the Confucian lineage of Gong Yang's (公羊) scholarship that has Xunzi—an opponent of Mencius's "good nature theory" followed by New Confucians—among its most ancient supporters. The Gong Yang school of thought was developed during the Han dynasty period (Li 2014, 243–4), and it was very influential. Afterwards, during the Song and Ming eras, it was neglected because of the power of Neo-Confucians (i.e. Mind Confucianism), and it was finally rescued by late Qing Confucians such as Kang Youwei (1858–1927). The major works of this lineage are *The Book of Rites* (*Liji* 礼记) and The Spring and Autumn Annals (*Chunqiu* 春秋), together with the Han dynasty commentaries (Jiang 2011, 25). Jiang Qing even reassures New Confucians when he argues that both Confucian lineages have legitimacy, but that they must converge again, together providing a teaching of external kingship (*wai wang* 外王) and internal wisdom (*nei sheng* 内圣).

Jiang Qing goes even further, proposing a modern "external kingship" or political system based on Confucian wisdom. He shapes a tricameral system as follows: 1. "The House of Profound Confucians" (*tong ru yuan* 通儒院), where Confucian learned men maintain and protect the legitimacy of the sacred way (*dao* 道); 2. "The House of National Continuity" (*guoti yuan* 国体院) where deep connoisseurs of cultural heritage and tradition deliberate about ancient values; 3. "The House of Plebeians" (*shumin yuan* 庶民院), where common people's needs and desires are represented (Jiang 2013). The first chamber finds its legitimacy with respect for the sacred way, and thus in the spiritual or religious realm. The second chamber has legitimacy from Chinese tradition and ancient learning. The last chamber's legitimacy lies in the common people's will. Therefore, the sacred or holy, the perfect learning and the people are all represented, and each chamber has its duty and field of deliberation. This refined and complex tripartite structure reflects the ancient Chinese cosmology that combines the Sky (*tian* 天), Earth (*di* 地) and Humanity (*ren* 人) in one organic body. The Sky is the normative principle that regulates everything and legitimates any change; the Earth is the productive power, the feminine womb where life puts down its roots; the Humanity is the higher form of life, and has in itself a regulative role being the principal actor with regard to stability between Sky and Earth, but Humanity is also the most dangerous cause of instability.

Wang Ruichang (2011) claims that this system merges together pre-modern absolutism, because it imposes a State religion (i.e. Confucianism), and a kind of modern liberalism, because it speaks openly about people's desires and wills

(in the last chamber). Therefore, according to Jiang, China needs to establish Confucianism as the State religion, since legitimacy, stability, correct ethics and spiritual cultivation would arise from this system. To critics who fear an intolerant society where only the belief in Confucianism would be accepted, Jiang replies that Confucianism has always been tolerant, and that the State religion would not regulate private beliefs. Anybody can thus have private religious beliefs, just like in Western countries, but this private belief—such as the Christian religion, Buddhism, etc.—should never contend for the role of the State religion (Jiang 2013, 170–1). The same goes for any social questions, such as that of homosexuality, that, according to Jiang, should be tolerated, while everybody has to respect the Confucian social system. Nothing that diverges from stability and legitimacy would be allowed, but private life would be respected. He even speaks of a possible monarch with an ancient blood lineage from Confucius, who should have a symbolic role, like the Thai monarch, a kind of embodiment of legitimacy, a cultural and spiritual guarantor.

We see in Jiang Qing's project the clear intention to revitalise Confucianism not only at the popular level, namely as education, but also at the institutional one. While New Confucians' Confucianism is for people living in a modern political society, with modern—and likely desacralized and secular—institutions, Jiang Qing's Confucianism aims at becoming the foundation of society itself. These two ways of Confucianism could not be more different, they are the separate sides of the already quoted "inner wisdom" (*nei sheng* 内圣) and "outer kingship" (*wai wang* 外王) dichotomy. It seems impossible to bridge this gap, since they are Confucianism's two faces, but are they perhaps two faces of the same coin?

Conclusions

Now the time has come to inquire which one of these two faces shall be the Chinese Confucianism of its future political and educations systems. More correctly: which one is more compatible with Xi Jinping's "socialism with Chinese characteristics"?

We think there is not an unequivocal answer to these questions. What is indisputable for scholars is that New Confucianism is usually interpreted as bending to Western liberal democracy, something hardly compatible with the Chinese political system. However, since Stephen C. Angle (2012) suggests that a perfect democracy is almost impossible, and so what is possible in Chinese society is a kind of "moderate perfectionism", where the widely shared values of Confucianism are supported and protected by the State, but the majority of choices are set free. The

values the State protects are humaneness, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and faithfulness, and thus education. In this "moderately perfected democracy", New Confucianism should establish its political party without becoming a religious teaching, but instead a pedagogical and spiritual asset. What Angle does not discuss is the feasibility of this project in a one-party political system, i.e. the role of the Communist Party. In our opinion, it is more natural that a trend within the Communist Party would gradually endorse Confucian values as a political project, and that is actually what Xi Jinping is suggesting without naming this project in Confucian terms.

What about Jiang Qing's three chambers? Socialist Chinese politics are laic but guarantee religious freedom. In the 1982 Constitution it is stated that "The State protects legitimate religious activities. No one may use religion to carry out counter-revolutionary activities or activities that disrupt public order, harm the health of citizens or obstruct the educational systems of the state. No religious affairs may be dominated by any foreign country." (Yoshiko and Wank 2009, 11). Chinese Constitution does not consider a State religion or even religious education to be possible, i.e. Confucian schools cannot replace national education. It is more likely that Institutional Confucianism will gradually gain more relevance, but in the given spaces guaranteed by the Chinese State. As Chau clearly explains:

> There are broadly speaking two strategies which people "doing religion" in China adopt in negotiating with the party-state to attain a higher degree of legitimacy. The first is "getting into the official fold", which is to obtain the status of belonging to one of the five officially recognized religions and becoming an officially recognized "venue for religious activities". […] The second strategy is "creative dissimulation", which is to disguise one's religious activities as something else that is more palatable in official eyes. […] to get their deity worship or ritual practice recognized (and accredited) by the State as "intangible cultural heritage" […] (Chau 2011).

While the first strategy, to become a religious official, is suitable for Buddhism, Daoism, and Islam, and far from Jiang Qing's project, it is the second which seems more suitable for Institutional Confucianism, and in effect he has founded an academy for this in Guizhou. However, even if this is the more suitable way to become approved as "religious thought", this does not mean that it will become a "State religion", since this would seriously interfere with the Chinese political status quo. We note that since the year 2000 the question of whether Confucianism is a religion has provoked a harsh "religion debate" (Sun 2013, 82–93) that

remains unresolved, because, as we know thanks to our analysis, the concept of "religion" is not only a cultural label, but a relevant (conservative) political asset, while traditional education seems more neutral.

As we said for New Confucian, which could be partially absorbed by the Party, the same is true for Institutional Confucianism. More than a completely new institutional configuration, a gradual alignment of some of the Party with this system is more likely. This political trend would represent all the three Chambers in itself, including experts of Confucian wisdom, traditional knowledge and the common people. As we have seen on reading Hu Jintao and Xi Jinping's speeches, Confucianism is already labelled as a national force, the deep roots of Chinese culture and the grounds for a Chinese future. Therefore, within the Communist Party a large percentage of leading politicians already share the project of the "Confucianisation" of society, but this does not mean they will become "Confucians" instead of "socialists". There are even several socialist thinkers who present a natural convergence between Confucian and Marxist values, since both support people's moral transformation and an "allocentric" attitude, as Shi Tianjian (2015) termed it. Moreover, Confucianism has never really been eradicated from Chinese society, and people are fond of Confucius's texts, as seen in the unpredictable success of Yu Dan's self-help book on the Analects, which has sold over ten millions copies (including six millions pirated ones), with Daniel E. Bell even suggesting a new wave of Confucianism in Chinese public schools and within the Central Party School in Beijing Bell 2010, 26, 59). However, this "wave" still does not imply that the Party is leaving behind its socialist soul, but rather that the socialist and the Confucian souls are merging together into one "Chinese soul". Confucianism guarantees all the main Chinese political characteristics: a society based on social relationships, paternalism, moralism, strong government control, limited political dissent, social harmony and so on.

Therefore, we suggest that both forms of Confucianism are suitable in the construction of China's internal and global identity. Internally, Jiang Qing's political thought would provide a strong validation for an authoritarian and stable system, where the wealth of the society as a whole is always more relevant than the wealth of its individuals. Clearly, harmony (*he* 和) often means the flattening of creativity, as seen in the recent suppression of artistic freedom (Breacher 2014) and censorship (Sala 2016) demonstrate. Xi Jinping is worried by any alternative to his "socialism with Chinese characteristics", and critics are perceived as deviant actors with political motives. Suggesting a long-lasting tradition of Political Confucianism that allows limited freedom, Jiang Qing provides a cultural and identitary reason for this authoritarian system. This is why any Western claim for freedom or form of protest—within or outside China—would first be marked as

a cultural offence. We believe that China has the right to protect its culture and social system against foreign arrogance, but that does not mean that this culture should prevent any form of dissent, as dissent has always been a key part of Chinese cultural, literacy and political tradition, such as Confucius leaving his official position, as well as the actions of Qu Yuan, Su Shi and many other relevant thinkers in different epochs of Chinese history.

On the other hand, the New Confucian theories of inner cultivation and moral behaviour make a great contribution to the education of a rapidly modernising society in search of identity. The contradictory results of the first survey we quoted in chapter 2 may be interpreted as being in accord with this form of Confucianism. In our opinion, the strong rejection of the usefulness of Confucianism in modern society proves the respondents' suspicions concerning applying this tradition to contemporary political thought, since they see Confucian institutions as oppressive. However, this rejection does not concern Confucianism as a way of perfection or as wisdom, since the same respondents acknowledge the relevance of the Confucian classics, Confucian moral values, Chinese education, and Chinese medicine in the shaping of Chinese identity. This means that, according to this survey and the others we quoted, Chinese society is largely compatible with New Confucianism, but less so with Institutional Confucianism. We thus suggest that the Chinese political system is likely far more attracted by a strong authoritarian Confucian identity, while Chinese modern society—mostly in the big coastal cities—would at the most accept the New Confucian form, which belongs to individuals and does not determine the shape of society. We propose the following image: Political Confucianism demands Confucianism to be the body of Chinese society, while New Confucian teaching is mostly devoted to the establishing of a renovated Chinese soul. Apparently, the "Chinese dream" of recent years is closer to the New Confucian project, and does not envisage a Confucianisation of society, but the authoritarian appeal of Institutional Confucianism would probably gain consent within the Party.

China is looking at the economically developed states at its borders, such as Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, and so on. All these nations are examples of a combination of Western economic development, moderate freedom, traditional nationalism, traditional and modern education systems, and overall mixed societies that include both Confucian aspects (i.e. filial piety in family relations) and Westernised ways of life. China sees a Confucianisation of its internal and global identity as the chance to really become a peer with the most developed Asian countries, European countries, and the USA, rather than just the "world's low-quality factory". If "socialism with Chinese characteristics" is defined in Confucian forms, China would be able to place itself completely outside the remaining Cold War "two

power blocks" system, which necessarily places China on the side of Russia, North Korea, and so on. This "Confucian Socialism" would allow China to create a new globalised identity, and this plan is evident if we look at the "one road, one belt" (*yi lu yi dai* 一路一带) project, which places China at the source of a new globalised region that covers all of the Eurasian—or even Afro-Eurasian—continent. In the enduring Russia-USA competition, Confucianism is a neutral identity that allows China to maintain a certain impartiality. Moreover, this "cultural soft power" finds a telling instance in the creation of Confucius Institutes around the world, which are warmly welcomed in impoverished departments of humanities and actually provide an extraordinary contribution to Chinese language learning and cultural knowledge, but, at the same time, are often accused of limiting research freedom in these foreign universities (Sahlins 2015). What is really interesting is that these institutes rarely organise any conferences devoted to Communist or socialist theories, but instead focus on the Chinese language and traditional culture, since this is China's new international image, as part of the new "China's charm offensive", as Kurlantzick (2007) and Hartig (2015) termed it. What China wants, is to compete not only at the economic and political levels, but also to be as culturally attractive as Japan, since China is the source of several aspects of Japanese culture that are beloved worldwide, and are the main asset of Japan's soft power (Vyas 2011, 59–62). Japan was the first Asian country to use cultural NGOs (i.e. Japan Foundations that belong to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or Japan-China Friendship Associations) as instruments of cultural soft power (ibid., 152–9), and Confucius Institutes are evidence that China has learned from this approach. China's efforts here have been so effective that recently two American senators proposed the "Countering Information Warfare Act 2016 (S.2692)" against Chinese and Russian media (Portman and Murphy 2016), in order to control the circulation of information from these two countries thanks to worldwide channels as RT, Sputnik, PLA Daily, CCTV, and so (Chu 2016). Another instance of this "charm offensive" is the growing interest in buying European football teams and increasing investment in any kind of sport, since sport is a good way to create a new image of Chinese abroad. We should perhaps ask ourselves why Japanese or American soft power does not cause as much irritation to European countries as Chinese soft power does.

As a final instance of Xi Jinping's "Chinese dream" (*zhongguo meng* 中国梦) communication strategy, we want to mention the Chinese message to the world at Expo 2015 in Milan. China's Pavilion, the first one set up overseas, focused the visitors' attention on the ground floor on traditional culture (i.e. the threefold cosmology we discussed earlier), and on spectacular Yunnan rice fields created with multicoloured, tubular LED bulbs. On the first floor, there was a small theatre, where a fascinating traditional Yunnan dance was performed. Before the dance, president Xi Jinping

welcomed visitors by presenting the brilliance of ancient China's agricultural civilisation, and the richness of the country's cuisine, as well as contemporary scientific and technological developments in food production. He closed his short speech by saying "We look forward to exchanges of agricultural expertise with all other countries to jointly ensure food security in the world and advance human civilization" (Xi 2015). The advance of human civilisation needs China, and China needs its ancient past, and only within this circular process will future progress be possible. That is the *fuxing*, the retrospection or return to tradition in order to have a harmonious (*he*) future. After the President's welcome, the visitors could watch a nine-minute cartoon about the celebration of the New Year Lantern Festival in a traditional rural family, when the three—yes, we said three—grown up and successful children (a chemist, musician and cook) go back home and express their love for their grandparents and parents. Only the cook cannot go back home, but he greets the family thanks to a video call (see link to the video at the end of Bibliographic references). This idyllic and bucolic scene is the new image China wishes to diffuse abroad and within the country. Loving children who follow the Confucian principle of filial piety (*xiao* 孝), family affection as the basis for any social relationship (i.e. allocentrism), and ancient Chinese festivals, which represent a continued connection with tradition (*fuxing*). However, at the same time the three grown up children are modern and successful people. They represent science and technology, culture and arts, and finally the Chinese culture of the body (traditional medicine and food). According to this image, Confucian moral and cultural education is fully compatible with Westernized education and culture. It is no more the *zhong ti xi yong* 中体西用, since both structural (*ti* 体) and functional (*yong* 用) sides are a harmonious composition of China *zhong* 中 and West *xi* 西. This cartoon testifies that Confucianism is not a temporary wave, but rather the new Chinese course, the "socialism with Chinese characteristics" (*zhongguo tese shehui zhuyi* 中国特色社会主义), between tradition and modernity, a path still far from complete achievement.

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Broader Perspectives

Following the Way of the Ancient Kings: The Concept of "Learning" in the Teachings of Ogyū Sorai

*Marko OGRIZEK**

Abstract

Ogyū Sorai conceptualizes "learning" as the study of the way of the ancient kings. The way thus represents the rites, music, penal laws and administrative systems which the ancient kings established. Making faith in the sages the foundation of learning, Sorai designates the ancient kings as intermediaries between the ordering activity of heaven and human society. This article tries to examine some of the implications of such a conceptualization, both for the proposed system of social organization as well as for Sorai's own project of elucidating the way.

Keywords: Ogyū Sorai, Tokugawa Confucianism, learning, way of the ancient kings, sages

Sledenje poti kitajskih prakraljev: koncept »učenja« v poučevanju Ogyū Soraija

Izvleček

Ogyū Sorai »učenje« pojmuje kot preučevanje poti kitajskih prakraljev. Pot predstavljajo obredje, glasba, kazenski zakonik in administrativni sistemi, ki so jih zasnovali prakralji. S tem, ko zaupanje oziroma vero v prakralje postavi za temelj učenja, Sorai prakralje določi za posrednike med urejevalno dejavnostjo neba in človeško družbo. Članek poskuša pokazati nekatere posledice takšnega pojmovanja tako za predlagani sistem družbene organizacije kot za Soraijev lastni projekt razjasnitve poti.

Ključne besede: Ogyū Sorai, konfucijanstvo v obdobju Tokugawa, učenje, pot prakraljev, svetniki

Introduction

Ogyū Sorai (1666–1728) is considered one of the most influential Japanese thinkers of the Edo period (1603–1868) and a sharp critic of Zhu Xi's School of Structural Principle. His central works are the two philosophical dictionaries—the

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Bendō 弁道[1] and the *Benmei* 弁名[2]—in which he systematically discusses a wide variety of classical Confucian concepts: chief among which is the way of the ancient kings (*sennō no michi*, 先王之道). This article tries to examine Sorai's project based on his concept of "learning" (*xue/gaku* 学)—firstly from the perspective of the proposed subject, methodology and goals; and secondly by taking a closer look at some of its ideological and political implications.

Sorai promotes the study of the ancient kings' way. The way of the ancient kings is the sages' creation—it is not a natural way. It is the way of governing the people and bringing peace and stability to the kingdom under heaven. As such it has its concrete form—the rites, music, penal laws and the administrative systems (*li le xing zheng/reigakukeisei* 礼楽刑政), which the ancient kings founded. By following the way, the people are brought to their proper virtues (*de/toku* 徳). By gaining their proper virtues the people find their place within society. The societal whole is in turn ordered and made peaceful.

The way is the way of the early kings—but while the kings are many, the way is always one. Sorai struggles to provide a proper explanation as to how the one way functions through a myriad of different cultural expressions; and also how the way is adapted through time. There seems to be no better way for him to try to square a variety of traditions with the one true ordering activity of the way than to assert the extraordinary intelligence of the sage kings and its wide-ranging influence. The ancient sages are used as a societal/historical myth—to bridge the gap between the activities of heaven and human society, while at the same time providing an explanation for the value of particular cultural expressions over others.

Sorai's concept of the way of the ancient kings places the way firmly within a certain historical and cultural context—but the way also possesses universal aspects: namely, its ordering activity. By connecting the origin of the way with the concept of the patterns of heaven—which the sages alone could understand and convey—Sorai sets reverence (*jing/kei* 敬) for heaven (*tian/ten* 天) and faith (*shin* 信) in the ancient sages (*sheng/sei* 聖) as the foundations of learning.

This article tries to examine some of the reasoning for, as well as the implications of, such a conceptualization of "learning", for both the system of social organization that is proposed as well as Sorai's own project of elucidating the way.

1 *Distinguishing the Way*.

2 *Distinguishing Names*.

The Way of the Ancient Kings

Sorai's interpretation of classical Confucian concepts is characterized by a sharp move away from discussions of personal self-cultivation and in the direction of the social and political. Sorai's work itself can in a way be considered political in ambition, though it is first and foremost educational in nature.

To demonstrate the deeper ideological and political aspects of Sorai's concept of "learning", it is necessary to first explore its proposed subject, methods and goals. Sorai sets these out in a simple and precise manner, as follows:

> "Learning" refers to studying the way of the ancient kings. The ancient kings' way is contained within the *Book of Poetry*, the *Book of History*, the *Book of Rites*, and the *Book of Music*. The method of learning should consist of studying what is in the *Books of Poetry*, *History*, *Rites*, and *Music*, and that is all. These subjects are the "four teachings" or "four arts"[3]. The *Book of Poetry* and the *Book of History* are repositories of ritual principle, the *Book of Rites* and the *Book of Music* set out the models for virtue[4]. Virtue refers to that by which the self is established; ritual principle refers to what is followed in governing. Studying the *Book of Poems*, the *Book of History*, the *Book of Rites*, and the *Book of Music* is sufficient for educating scholar-knights.[5]

Possessing extraordinary virtue and intelligence, through which they were able to follow heaven's decree (*tian ming/tenmei* 天命), the ancient sages established the way, which the princes study and the people follow (Ogyū 1974, 219). The act of founding the way is in fact what defines sages as sages—no one can reproduce their work and no amount of learning can make the people of today into sages (ibid., 216). Rather, the goals of education encompass developing the talents and virtues needed to follow the way that the sages have already set out.

Studying the way of the ancient kings consists of following what the ancient kings established, but according to Sorai this itself has now become one of the central problems, because the sages' way, as a living transformational force, has been

3 Sorai here quotes from: Liji, Wangzhi.

4 Sorai here quotes from: Chunqiu Zuozhuan, Xi gong ershiqi nian.

5 学者。謂学先王之道也。先王之道。在詩書礼楽。故学之方。亦学詩書礼楽而已矣。是謂之四教。又謂之四術。詩書者義之府也。礼楽者徳之則也。徳者所以立己也。義者所以従政也。故詩書礼楽。足以造士。(Ogyū 1974, 249; Ogyū 2006, 312) In rendering various parts of the *Bendō* and the *Benmei* into English, I lean heavily on the English translations by John Allen Tucker in Ogyū, 2006. To not burden the text with marking how the translations differ, I provide page references to Tucker's original translation).

completely depleted since even the time of Confucius. Confucius—who according to Sorai was himself born in the wrong age to be a proper founder—nevertheless helped convey the proper teachings through editing the six classics (Ogyū 1974, 217). The six classics then came to represent the sole repositories of the way of the ancient kings. Unfortunately, in time even the proper understanding of ancient words and phrases became lost, and wrong interpretations of the texts thus came to prevail (ibid., 209–210).

Being a creation of the sages is a key aspect of the way: "The way of the ancient kings consists in what the ancient kings formulated. It is not the natural way of heaven and earth."[6]

With the way being a creation, the ultimate standard (*ji/kyoku* 極)—the fundamental standard of what is proper and good—is also wholly defined by the ancient kings (ibid., 248). Sorai explicitly discards the cosmo-ontological discussions of his predecessors, and sets the ancient sages as the sole originators of not only a common system of values and meaning represented in the way, but also as the originators of the only possibility of a common standard, and therefore of any common system of value and meaning as such. Sorai does not believe people can live outside such a system. Through his conceptualization of the heart-mind, he identifies the people's need for a life within a community—a fundamental natural tendency of the people. While they can differ from one another greatly and are basically prone to disordered lives, the people are fundamentally communal:

> While natural tendencies of people do differ from person to person, regardless of an individual's knowledge or ignorance, worthiness or unworthiness, all are the same in having heart-minds that mutually love, nourish, assist, and perfect one another. People are alike in their capacity to work together and undertake tasks cooperatively. Thus for government, we depend on the ruler; for nourishment, we depend on the people. Farmers, artisans, and merchants all make a living for themselves by relying upon each other. One cannot forsake society and live alone in a deserted land: these are simply people's natural tendencies.[7]

People's natural tendencies are turned towards communal life and cooperation—but they are at the same time disordered and without proper standards and therefore need to be directed along the way of the ancient kings—ordered, so that

6 先王之道。先王所造也。非天地自然之道也。(Ogyū 1974, 201; Ogyū 2006, 142).

7 人性雖殊乎。然無知愚賢不肖。皆有相愛相養相輔相成之心。運用営為之才者一矣。故資治於君。資養於民。農工商賈。皆相資為生。不能去其群独立於無人之郷者。唯人之性為然。(Ogyū 1974, 213; Ogyū 2006, 187)

society can be ordered in turn. The way of the ancient kings brings the people to their proper virtues and in this manner orders and defines society as a whole. The way encompasses the proper practices and institutions established by the early kings; while virtues represent what people each gain by following the way according to their natural tendencies (*xing/sei* 性), talents and abilities (Ogyū 1974, 212).

The way of the ancient kings possesses an explicit purpose. Sorai writes: "The way of the ancient kings is the way that provides for the peace of the kingdom under heaven."[8]

Because the way has been lost as a concrete system of common practices, which once held the living transformational and ordering powers of the sages' own virtues, and because even the ancient words and phrases are now misunderstood and wilfully reinterpreted, the project of distinguishing names must be undertaken—one with a special emphasis on the proper philological study of ancient words and phrases (*kobunjigaku* 古文辞学) (ibid., 251). This becomes Sorai's central project.

Everyone can follow the way, but understanding it is extremely rare (ibid., 215)—people may thus only follow it according to their capabilities. Knowledge of the way comes from the proper practice of the rites, which happens through a process of internalization. This is also what "investigating things" (*gewu/kakubutsu* 格物) means to Sorai (ibid., 250). By understanding the names of 'the concrete', the people can practice the way and develop virtues—which then further strengthen the way. Sorai claims the way to be a "universal way" (ibid., 212)—and thus there are not different ways for rulers and the ruled—but it is also quite clear that the concept of education for Sorai is a multi-tiered process: one which is not the same for those who rule and those who are ruled.

Possessing concrete form, the way is further placed within a definite historical and cultural context:

> The way is a comprehensive name. It refers to everything that the ancient kings established, especially the rites, music, penal laws and administrative institutions. The way embraces and designates them all. There is not something called the "the way" apart from their rites, music, penal laws, and administrative systems of government.[9]

The way of the ancient kings is a comprehensive term which combines different aspects of a well-ordered society: the legal, political and cultural. The penal laws and

8 先王之道。安天下之道也。 (Ogyū 1974, 200; Ogyū 2006, 139)

9 道者統名也。挙礼楽刑政凡先王所建者。合而命之也。非離礼楽刑政別有所謂道者也。(Ogyū 1974, 201; Ogyū 2006, 140)

the administrative system are both part of the way, but in the *Bendō* and the *Benmei* Sorai does not put much emphasis on them. More than once he emphasizes that even though they represent the legal and the political aspects of the way, they are not enough to bring about a well-ordered society of peace and stability—and neither is learning through language alone (Ogyū 1974, 219). The way can only be actualized through rites and music, which represent its concrete cultural substance.

Unfortunately, Sorai never properly problematizes his own concepts, and in the *Bendō* and *Benmei* remains rather vague about the related rites and music as such. He states that the way is one of bringing peace and stability to the kingdom under heaven—but he never questions what such a peace would actually entail. A generous reading of his views therefore offers a system in which people each find their place within the common way according to their abilities and natural tendencies. A less generous reading offers a well-argued excuse for a system of strict social hierarchy in a deeply unequal society not unlike the Tokugawa shogunate of the time[10].

Culture as the Concrete Form of the Way

The way of the ancient kings was created by the sages and encompasses the rites, music, penal laws and administrative systems that they founded. The sages established these by properly naming "the concrete", and thus enabling the people to follow and finally comprehend the correct practices:

> Since humanity was born into the world[11], where there has been the concrete, there have been names[12]. Of names, from the start it was the case that ordinary people coined some of them. Yet these were only names given to the concrete having form. When it came to the concrete having no form, because ordinary people could not discern it, the sages established names for it. Thereafter even ordinary people could perceive and comprehend it.[13]

Having set the ultimate standard (*ji/kyoku*), the sages created the way for people to be brought together from a separate standardless existence and guided to surpass their natural tendencies through being ordered according to the way. The names are

10 Anachronistic as such criticisms might seem.

11 Sorai quotes from: Mengzi, Liang Huiwang xia.

12 Sorai quotes from: Shijing, Sheng Min.

13 自生民以来 、有物有名 。名故有常人名焉者。是名於物之有形焉者已。至於物之亡形焉者。則常人之所不能睹者。而聖人立焉名焉。然常人後雖常人可見而識之也。(Ogyū 1974, 209; Ogyū 2006, 171).

therefore to be understood for what the sages put into them—for Sorai they must not be wilfully interpreted (Ogyū 1974, 209–10) or the way cannot be recovered.

To further emphasize that the ancient kings' way follows no natural law, but establishes the only proper laws for itself, Sorai maintains that the sages did not pattern their way on any structural principles, and thus the way cannot be known through any study of these.

> Structural principles are what all affairs and things naturally have. In using our minds to figure matters, in some [courses of action] we see how to do what we must and should do, and how to do what we necessarily should not do. Such calculations involve structural principles. Whoever wants to do good indeed will see the structural principles for what they should do and will do it. Whoever wants to do evil also will see the structural principles for what they should do and will do it. In either case, out heart-minds see what should be done and we do it. Thus structural principles offer no fixed standards.[14]

To Sorai, the structural principles—in offering a way for both the good and the bad, whichever a person sets their intention to—can offer no fixed standards for the proper practice of the people, and thus no true foundations for the way. Sorai even claims that though the sages understood the structural principles perfectly, they still did not base their way on them (ibid., 245). The structural principles are therefore not something which needs to be studied, nor something which can even be understood in a manner that would benefit either those learning or the way itself.

In the same sense Sorai denies that rightness (*yi/gi* 義) is among the virtues (ibid., 221), the people can attain. For him rightness, as part of the way of the ancient kings, is strictly the rightness of the rituals, as prescribed by the sages—rather, a set of 'ritual principles'. Value and meaning of any kind cannot be found in what things possess naturally, nor do virtues themselves originate from people's natural tendencies or their heart-minds (*xin/shin* 心). The only common systems of value and meaning, which can actually thrive in peace and stability, derive from the way of the ancient kings, and only in relation to such systems can we further speak of virtues.

> People usually understand that the rites are those founded by the ancient kings, but do not realize that the principles of rightness are the ritual principles of these rites. Because of this, none of their interpretations of

14 理者。事物皆自然有之。以我信心推度之。而有見其心当若是心不可若是。是謂之理。凡人欲為善。亦見其理之可為而為之。欲為悪。亦見其理之可為而為之。皆我心見其可為而為也。故理者無定準者也。(Ogyū 1974, 244; Ogyū 2006, 295).

> rightness make sense. Now, rightness is best understood as part of the way. The myriad differences and the myriad distinctions within the rites each have their rightful place. Therefore, it is said, "Rightness is what is right"[15] [16].

Sorai considers ancient debates about people's natural tendencies (*xing/sei*)—whether they are inherently good or not—to be unproductive (Ogyū 1974, 204). Rightness, which gives the basis for standardized value and meaning, is not something which is internal to people—it belongs to the rites of the way. Therefore what is proper and right is measured against the way of the ancient kings. When people follow the way, they gain their respective virtues—virtues are thus what is gained by the proper directing of people's natural tendencies along the way, and what determines each person's contributions to it. People differ in their natural tendencies, and so they also differ in the virtues they are able to complete (ibid.).

Sorai in some ways recognizes that any cultural expression is built on the foundations of history, and also that the way of the ancient kings cannot be reduced to either the wholly universal or the wholly particular. On the one hand the way is seen as something concrete and particular, and on the other as possessing universal ordering powers.

Bitō Masahide remarks on this in a concise fashion:

> In the section on the Way in Bemmei, we are told the Way is universal, but that certain of its aspects change from age to age, and why this is something only the sages know. [Sorai] is suggesting here that when the Way is altered to meet the conditions of each age, only its phenomenological aspect changes, not its essential substance. In his description, the Way actually exists as real social institutions—as ritual, music, punishments, and governing—so it is natural for the Way to change as the world moves from one age, and from the institutions a sage created to meet its needs, to another. The sages, however, are plural, while the Way, as Sorai describes it, is presumably singular. Nowhere is there even the slightest hint that there are a variety of Ways. Rather, he notes repeatedly, as he does in the section on learning in the Bemmei, that the Way is always the same, past and present (Bitō 1978, 154–5).

The way draws its essential substance from its ordering power and purpose, since it is the way which provides for peace and stability for the kingdom under heaven.

15 Sorai quotes from: *Liji*, Zhongyong.

16 人多知礼為先王之礼。而不知義亦為先王之義。故其解皆不通矣。蓋義者道之分也。千差万別。各有所宜。故曰義者宜也。(Ogyū 1974, 220; Ogyū 2006, 210–1).

Such a purpose then also becomes the central measure of the proper way—the proper way is such that it brings peace and stability. How the different cultural expressions of the way would exist and have this universal effect, and how even then there can be no such way except that of the ancient kings, Sorai remains vague[17]. In the same manner, he does not provide any clear means of adapting the way to the present time. As the system was set out by the sages—who were people of the most extraordinary intelligence—it cannot be adapted in any meaningful way without the hand of another sage, whose coming remains a mystery.

This then leaves Sorai with the task of trying to explain why the ancient Chinese kings' way is the one way to bring peace to all under heaven—a task which many Edo period scholars tried their hand at through many different approaches[18]. Sorai's own approach is not to try and overwrite the Chinese cultural specifics of the way, like some other scholars of the period, but rather to claim that while the way does indeed come from the ancient kings of China, their influence was far reaching and left its mark on ancient Japan as well. Some of the traces of the way, which may have already been lost in contemporary China, might therefore have been better preserved in Japan[19].

This of course does not solve the stated problem in any meaningful way, and only seems to produce further ideological burdens. In the end Sorai turns to a different solution—one that is very well described by Kate Wildman Nakai:

> Might not one conclude that the Tokugawa thinkers considered here, faced with a set of contradictions that offered no ready prospect of dialectical resolution, chose both consciously and unconsciously to deal with them as such, to regard the world as a series of fractured truths, each absolute only within its own sphere? To live it was necessary to make a commitment, take a stance; as Sorai says, to make up one's mind on the basis of faith. But it was also necessary simultaneously to recognize, on another level, that there are no true absolutes, only a contradictory multiplicity of apparent ones (Wildman Nakai 1980, 198–9).

Sorai sets faith in the sages as the foundation of learning, and while this offers a certain powerful insight into the nature of any common system of value and meaning—that in some ways it is always based on an implicit faith in the value

17 Sorai goes only as far as to say neither the east nor the west ever produced sages—only the Middle Kingdom. (Ogyū 1974, 256)

18 For a study of this, see Wildman Nakai 1980.

19 Ibid. It is also notable that the reason given is that Japan does not possess such original thinkers as China, and thus the way would have been left in its primitive (and proper) state in the former.

of participation—it also brings with it certain ideological and political considerations, which should be further explored.

Faith in the Sages and the Reverence of Heaven

"Learning" means studying the ancient kings'way, and adhering to their standards. There is no natural law on which the way is based—yet to affirm that the way of the sages and it alone possesses not only its unique common-value-and-meaning giving space, but also its proper ordering powers, Sorai does assert that the authority of the sages comes from the special relationship they had with heaven.

> Culture (*bun*) is the reason that the way acquired a form and name. Now, what is in the heavens, the sages called patterns (*bun*). What is in the earth was called structural principle. The great origin of the way emerged from heaven. Indeed, the ancient sage kings of antiquity founded the way by modelling it on heaven. For this reason, they provided the way with form as brilliant rites and music. Thus these are referred to as culture.[20]

Sorai conceptualizes heaven as the origin of all ordering activity, and connects it closely with the concept of the Lord on High (*di/tei* 帝)—the concept of both the absolute ancestral presence and the absolute ruler. Sorai describes the relationship between the sages and heaven both in its epistemological and religious dimensions—the sages possessed both special insight into heaven's decree as well as perfect reverence of heaven itself. In this sense, their work was unique: they named the formless, overcame the standardless and brought to the people the cultural essence of the way, through which they may complete their proper virtues. And in this light, Sorai's insistence that the work of the sages cannot be reproduced can also perhaps be understood better.

Furthermore, Sorai's concept of heaven possesses yet another key characteristic—being fundamentally unfathomable.

> Heaven cannot be fathomed. For this reason the ancient classics state, "Heaven's decree is not constant" and "The decree is not constant". The ancient sages perfectly worshiped, revered, and stood in awe of it without

20 文者。所以状道而命之也。蓋在天曰文。在地曰理。道之大原出於天。古先聖王法以立道。故其為状也礼楽粲然。是之謂文。(Ogyū 1974, 151; Ogyū 2006, 322)

> cease. In doing so, they expressed the utmost reverence in relation to it. They did this precisely because they were not able to fathom heaven.[21]

Heaven being unfathomable, even the sages themselves could not understand it in an exhaustive way—they could only appreciate and revere it. Possessing perfect virtue, they were able to model themselves on heaven's activity—to model their ordering activity on the ordering activity of heaven. Heaven's activity is itself not based on law, but is instead the activity of an absolute ruler. Rather than being understood, heaven is to be revered: the first ritual principle of the way itself becomes the reverence of the unknowable, whose activity is only ever properly appreciated in following the way. As the sages have brought forth value and meaning through revering the unfathomable, such value and meaning can, with the sages gone, now only be reproduced through proper reverence. The sages represent a looming historical/societal myth, but one that in Sorai's formulation actually loses most of its living dimensions, although very much present in classical Confucianism.

Here Sorai, who supposedly values rites and music above legal and administrative systems, in fact comes across as possibly manipulative in a way that classical Confucianism was not. Bitō Masahide offers a pointed critique on this point:

> There is no question that the idea of instructing the people by means of "ritual" or "ritual and music" occurs in classical Confucianism. Instruction by ritual though usually refers to ritual's encouraging a moral awareness in men. It does not mean that ritual is to be used to induce men, through manipulation of their collective mentality, to act in a specific manner. (Bitō 1978, 158)

The sages stand as the brilliant forefathers, who could name the formless and make comprehensible what the people could otherwise not comprehend, but the sages-as-intermediaries, being gone from the world, now also turn into a barrier between contemporary people and heaven's activity itself. The sages' way is the proper way for rulers to model themselves after, and the only way for the people to be brought to their proper virtues. The ultimate standards belong to the special relationship sages had with heaven—one, which can now no longer be replicated in its epistemological dimensions, but only in its religious ones.

This of course also carries with it certain political implications. The sages are not only people of a special higher intelligence, they are as a rule also the leaders of antiquity—and as such are the models for the rulers of today. Their way is the way,

21 蓋天者也。不可得而測焉者也。故曰天命靡常。惟命不于常。古之聖人。欽崇敬畏之弗遑。若是其至焉者。以其不可而測故也。(Ogyū 1974, 235; Ogyū 2006, 264)

which defines the ultimate standard. When the ruler and the ruled both work in service of the way, there can be no real questioning of a ruler's authority without also questioning the way and the sages. Because the origin of a ruler's authority is unfathomable and unassailable—the ruler being the one who is carrying out the rites of the way—a person would have to be a sage to actually question the ruler. The practical implications of this are that the ruler rules (with reverence) and the people follow (with reverence). Learning is no longer a noble path of rising above one's station in life—it is a way to properly conform.

It is thus no coincidence that Sorai's own project in some ways falls victim to his concepts. The strict adherence to the scriptural integrity of the ancient classics as the sole repositories of the way of the ancient kings brings with it an unpleasant undercurrent in Sorai's work, which John Allen Tucker describes as authoritarian:

> Sorai's reconceptualization […] was based upon his presumed insights into the nature of meaning, and was meant to achieve nothing less than the recovery of the way and, thereby, realization of the grounds for possibility of a peaceful and stable, well-ordered realm in which all could achieve their innate capacities. While the latter was an undeniably humanitarian ambition, Sorai's system of meaning announced in the *Bendō* and *Benmei* was also intensely authoritarian, adamantly turning against the semantically liberal and innovative tendencies that had earlier developed in association with the genre [of philosophical lexicography]. (Ogyū 2006, 15)

Conclusion

Sorai sets faith in the sages as the foundation of learning. While this seems to solve certain of his ideological problems, it at the same time produces implications which reverberate throughout his whole system, coming at the end to dominate even his own project of semantic research. While Sorai's project is most definitely a work of seminal importance—one, which offers a powerful insight into the ways societies are constructed on ideological foundations—it cannot escape the impression that in important ways it ultimately reveals just as much by what it manages to say as by what it fails to say.

And while at first glance Sorai's teachings bring forth a humanitarian project of reclaiming the way of the ancient kings and bringing peace and stability to the realm under heaven, a study of some of his concepts—with knowledge and learning chief among them—can also paint a different picture: of a somewhat

dishonest epistemological doctrine, which yet again reinforces the parts of the Confucian legacy which most aim to uphold the deep inequalities of its patriarchal hierarchies.

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Confucian Learning and Literacy in Japan's Schools of the Edo Period

*Kristina HMELJAK SANGAWA**

Abstract

With the political stability, economic growth and cultural revitalisation of Japan after its unification by Tokugawa Ieyasu, the educational infrastructure also grew to meet new literacy demands. Governmental schools endowed by the shogunate (*Shōheikō*) and by the domains (*hankō*), which catered to the upper military class of the samurai, focused on classical Chinese studies, particularly the Neo-Confucian canon taught in *kanbun*, a style of classical Chinese. Given the prestige of Neo-Confucian Chinese learning and of the *kanbun* writing style, these were taught also in temple schools (*terakoya*) and private academies (*juku*) that were open to the lower classes, thus contributing to the spread of this particular type of literacy. However, Chinese learning in these schools often involved memorising rather than reading, both because of educational traditions and socio-ideological factors, and also because of the sheer difficulty of reading *kanbun*, a de facto foreign language. The present article investigates the contrasting implications of Neo-Confucian learning and of the *kanbun* writing style for the development of education and literacy in Japanese society: while the prestige of Chinese learning contributed to the demand for and development of educational facilities, its complexity also acted as an obstacle to the development of widespread functional literacy.

Keywords: literacy, Confucianism, Tokugawa period, history of education in Japan

Konfucijansko učenje in pismenost v japonskih šolah obdobja Edo

Izvleček

Potem ko je Tokugawa Ieyasu združil Japonsko, se je s politično stabilnostjo, gospodarsko rastjo in kulturnim preporodom ter zaradi rastoče potrebe po pismenosti razvila tudi izobraževalna infrastruktura. V šolah pod okriljem šogunata (*Shōheikō*) in provinc (*hankō*), kjer so se izobraževali samuraji, so poudarjali študij kitajskih klasikov, zlasti neokonfucijanskega kanona zapisanega v slogu *kanbun*, tj. vrsti klasične kitajščine. Zaradi velikega ugleda tako neokonfucijanskih kitajskih študij kot tudi pisnega sloga *kanbun* so se te vsebine učile tudi v šolah pod okriljem templjev (*terakoya*) in zasebnih šolah (*juku*), ki so bile dostopne nižjim družbenim slojem. To je prispevalo k širjenju te vrste pismenosti, toda učenje kitajskih vsebin v teh šolah je pogosto potekalo v obliki pomnjenja na pamet

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bolj kot branja in razumevanja, tako zaradi družbeno-ideoloških dejavnikov in japonske vzgojne tradicije, kot tudi zaradi težavnosti branja sloga *kanbun*, ki je bil dejansko tuj jezik. Članek obravnava nasprotujoča si vpliva neokonfucijanskega učenja in uporabe pisnega sloga *kanbun* na razvoj izobraževanja in pismenosti v Japonski družbi: po eni strani je ugled kitajske učenosti prispeval k povpraševanju po izobraževalnih ustanovah in k njihovemu razvoju, po drugi pa je kompleksnost tega sloga in sistema pisanja delovala kot ovira k razvoju splošne funkcijske pismenosti.

Ključne besede: pismenost, konfucijanstvo, obdobje Tokugawa, zgodovina izobraževanja na Japonskem

Introduction

After the demilitarisation and relocation of "country samurai" (*jizamurai* 地侍) to castle towns ordered by Toyotomi Hideyoshi 豊臣秀吉 in 1588 stimulated the growth of urban areas, and when the political and military unification of Japan by Tokugawa Ieyasu 徳川家康 at the start of the 17th century brought relative stability, economic prosperity and cultural revitalisation to Japan, conditions were met for the growth of educational facilities to meet the new needs for literacy of the warrior class with diminished military duties, of the growing merchant class and of village headmen in new administrative roles.

Headmen of farming villages were invested with new administrative duties following Hideyoshi's decree in 1591 that divided society into four hierarchical classes: the samurai (*shi* 士 or *bushi* 武士), the highest class, followed by farmers (*nō* 農 or *hyakushō* 百姓, high on the social scale because they produced food), artisans (*kō* 工) and merchants (*shō* 商), officially the lowest class because handling money was ideologically despicable, but in fact a wealthy class. Warriors and peasants became two legally distinct classes and rural samurai were confronted with the choice of staying in the country and be classified as farmers, or moving to the daimyo's castle town and become bureaucrats, and most chose the latter. These administrators who lived in the castles were thus physically separated from their villages, and supervised farming villages by means of written documents, rules and regulations. As a consequence, village headmen throughout the country were entrusted with local administration and had to acquire reading and writing skills on the level of their samurai supervisors (Rubinger 2007, 14–15).

Having obtained political unification, the Tokugawa, advised by the philosopher Hayashi Razan 林羅山, adopted and promoted Neo-Confucianism as a national doctrine that would help them preserve political stability. The doctrine embraced by the Tokugawa shogunate was a syncretic ideology comprising elements of Buddhism and local Shintoism, but mostly based on the Neo-Confucian thought

of Zhu Xi 朱熹 (Walker 2015, 126), and envisaging a static and hierarchically divided society whose order reflects the order of nature (Rošker 2016). In order to strengthen his control over feudal lords (*daimyō* 大名), Ieyasu introduced the system of *sankinkōtai* 参勤交代, under which feudal lords were forced to serve the shogun in Edo in alternate years, thus contributing to the development of a road infrastructure and the flourishing of commerce.

In such a period of political stability, the military class could devote more time to education, which mainly consisted of classical Chinese studies, revived also by the Neo-Confucian doctrine adopted by the shogunate. The military class, however, was not the only one to invest into education: growing commerce in urban centres called for more widespread literacy and numeracy among merchants, and higher standards of living brought about by economic growth favoured cultural endeavours, the spread of book publishing and lending and the rise of readership. At the same time, as the separation of the warrior class and the peasant class had shifted administrative work and tax-assessment in rural areas to village headmen of the agricultural class, literacy also spread among the farmers (Rubinger 2007, 14–15).

Educational Institutions and Literacy in the Edo Period

Up to the 19th century, classes below the samurai (peasants, merchants and artisans) had little access to formal education (Anderson Sawada 1993, 9–10). Nonetheless, they were not altogether precluded from attending school, as there were three different types of educational institutions in Japan during the Tokugawa period (1603–1867), two of which catered also to the lower classes. The first type were official governmental schools for elementary and advanced education of youth from the samurai class, including the Confucian academy of the shogunate (*Shōheizaka gakumonjo* 昌平坂学問所 or *Shōheikō* 昌平黌), some other institutions founded by the shogunate, and domain schools established by feudal lords (*hankō* 藩校). The second type were private elementary schools for commoners run by temples (*terakoya* 寺子屋) and attended by farmers, artisans and merchants. Thirdly, there were private academies (*juku* 塾 or *shijuku* 私塾), often run by a single scholar, that were open both to samurai and commoners (Dore 1965; Passin 1965; Rubinger 1982; Ishikawa 1929; Sasaki 1943).

While official shogunal and domain schools were focused on classical Chinese and Neo-Confucian studies, schools for commoners (*terakoya*) provided also more practical skills for vocational training besides reading, writing and abacus (Ishikawa 1960), whereas private academies had very varied educational contents, depending on their headmaster. Private academies (*shijuku*), which were open to all

classes and generally had no geographical barriers, were typically privately run, often at the home of the scholar who lead the academy. The curriculum was decided by the headmaster and there was no official control over its contents. These academies otherwise varied considerably in terms of size, level of education and organisation (Rubinger 1982, 196–7). To take an example, two of the most renown private academies offering Confucian studies in the Tokugawa period had distinctly different approaches to education: the academy *Shōka sonjuku* 松下村塾, lead by Yoshida Shōin 吉田松陰 and attended by many who later became leaders of the Meiji reformation such as Itō Hirobumi 伊藤博文 and Takasugi Shinsaku 高杉晋作, stressed character development through studying Confucian classics, but also through discussions on current affairs aimed at political action, while the very strict Chinese-studies academy *Kangien* 咸宜園 founded by the Confucian scholar Hirose Tansō 広瀬淡窓 at Hita (Ōita) had a wide ranging curriculum centred on Chinese studies, but comprising also Japanese and Western subjects of study (Mehl 2003, 14–16; Kassel 1996).

At the beginning of the 17th century, when a large part of the samurai class was relocated to cities, and villages became more self-administered, village headmen and other officials in rural areas needed to develop higher levels of literacy to carry out administrative duties. Headmen were the first farmers to develop administrative literacy, and use kanbun style, the Sino-Japanese hybrid language used by the samurai class, to write administrative and tax reports. Following the appointment of village headmen to the administration of taxes, other villagers were motivated to invest time and resources in improving their own reading skills, as can be inferred from several documented lawsuits filed by villagers regarding the tax records compiled by the village headman (Rubinger 2007, 30–32).

This development, however, mainly influenced the literacy rate among the male population, while women in rural areas had very limited access to schooling and literacy. Gradually, literacy spread to household heads and eventually to the lowest ranking individuals, women and servants, but regional disparities persisted up to the 19th century, and literacy rates varied considerably according to region (ibid., 41–42, 134–6). Although the number of female scholars increased in the late Tokugawa period, they were an exception rather than the rule, often the daughters of scholars of Chinese learning (*kangaku* 漢学) (Mehl 2001, 580).

Gender disparities also varied conspicuously among regions. While in rural areas the male/female school attendance ratio was 20:1 (Rubinger 2007, 134), in urban areas the disparity was not as conspicuous. This regional variation in gender disparity may stem from the different motivations for learning to read in urban and rural areas. While in urban areas literacy was largely motivated by commerce,

where it was not uncommon for women to participate in commercial activities, in rural areas, on the other hand, literacy was needed mainly for administrative duties that were exclusively a male domain, thus implying no need for female education (Rubinger 2007, 140–2).

Exact figures and statistics are still debated, but it seems that by the late Tokugawa period, in a country with a population of 30 million, there were as many as 14,000 temple schools, 300 domain schools, and approximately 1,500 private academies (Dore 1965; Passin 1965). Factors influencing the literacy rates in different regions were political and economical: centres of politics and commerce (cities and wider commercialised regions) had higher literacy rates, confirming the strong relation of literacy to power in all its forms.

Up to the first half of the nineteenth century, despite spreading literacy levels, qualitative differences in the attainment of literacy remained, and most ordinary farmers only attained the most basic skills, if any (Rubinger 2007, 160–1). Regional differences finally declined only in the early 1900s, with the establishment of a thoroughly organised national education system (Spaulding 1983), while widespread functional literacy was hindered for centuries by an extremely complex writing system and by the continued use of multiple writing styles and linguistic variants that included *kanbun*, a de facto foreign language but considered as a *variant* of educated Japanese.

Kanbun and the Influence of Chinese Studies on the Concept of Reading and Literacy

The reading of Confucian classics, which was the focus of learning at official shogunal and domain schools, as well as being taught in temple schools for commoners and in private academies, implied reading *kanbun* using the method of *kanbun-kundoku* 漢文訓読, literally "Chinese text read by explanation / in the Japanese manner" (Wakabayashi 2005a, 121), a technique of "reading through glossing" (Denecke 2014, 47), that had developed from the ninth century and consisted in using diacritic marks to annotate classical Chinese text to be "read" in (or rather interpreted and translated into) Japanese.

The development of *kanbun-kundoku*, a practice that has been attested in other civilitazions within the Sinitic cultural sphere, including Japan, the Korean peninsula and Vietnam, is likely to have been favoured by the primarily logographic nature of Chinese writing (Frellesvig 2010, 258–9), since individual Chinese characters could be individually "read" or interpreted in an oral rendition that used

vernacular equivalents instead of the Chinese words these characters originally represented. However, a word-for-word translation or interpretation of single characters in the order they occurred in Chinese texts would not produce understandable Japanese sentences because of the marked syntactical and morphological differences between Chinese and Japanese. Chinese is an isolating language with no inflectional morphology, it expresses grammatical relations by means of word order, and categories such as mood and negation by means of grammaticalised preposed verbs and adverbs; Japanese, on the other hand, is an agglutinative language with relatively rich morphology (verbal and adjectival inflections), it specifies syntactic roles by means of grammatical particles (postpositions) rather than word order, and expresses modal categories by means of verbal affixes and clause-final auxiliary verbs (Frellesvig 2010, 259). The primary word order is subject-verb-object in Chinese, while Japanese has a basically free word order (except for verbs that always occur in final position) and is usually classified as a subject-object-verb language. Chinese texts could thus not be "read" and translated character by character, but rather needed to be parsed and reassembled into Japanese, adding grammatical information to produce understandable Japanese.

Reading classical Chinese texts using the *kanbun-kundoku* technique required three layers of processing: 1) translation, 2) transposition and 3) interpolation (Frellesvig 2010, 259; Denecke 2014, 47). Readers firstly had to associate Chinese logographs with Japanese words, i.e. find suitable Japanese translation equivalents for both content and function words of the Chinese text, a process that required knowing both the character forms and the Japanese renditions normally associated with them. Secondly, they had to transpose and reorder the words to fit Japanese syntax. And thirdly, they had to infer and add grammatical particles and inflectional morphemes that were absent in the Chinese text.

A complex system of annotation developed through the centuries to aid readers using this demanding technique. The invention of this system has been ascribed to Kibi no Makibi 吉備真備, an eighth century scholar, politician and envoy to China (Wakabayashi 2005a, 121), but it was refined and developed in the following centuries. The reading marks are collectively known as *kunten* 訓点 and include different categories of marks and glosses that function as aids in each of the processing steps explained above (Frellesvig 2010, 259–60).

The oldest type of marks, dating back to the eighth century, are punctuation marks or *kutōten* 句読点 that show the division of a text into sentences and phrases, and "reversal marks" or *kaeriten* 返り点, smaller marks on the left side of the full-size characters of the main text that indicate the order in which words are to be read in Japanese, thus aiding the process of transposition. For example, the mark レ,

originally used in Chinese texts to indicate the correct order of characters that had been mistakenly written in a wrong sequence, came to be used as a mark to indicate that two characters should be read in inverted order. The numbers 一, 二, the characters for up 上 and down 下 and other marks came to be used to indicate more complex inversions of multiple character sequences.

Another type of marks that developed mainly in the Heian period are *kana* 仮名 glosses, abbreviated characters in smaller size that indicate the pronunciation of a character, which could be either a Sino-Japanese word, i.e. a borrowed Chinese word phonologically adapted to the Japanese sound system, or a Japanese word used to translate the Chinese word represented by the character. This type of glossing is generally viewed as the origin of the *katakana* phonetic script.

A third type of marks, *okoto-ten* ヲコト点 or *tenioha* てにをは marks, indicate grammatical morphemes, particles, auxiliary verbs and inflectional endings. These marks are dots, lines, hooks and other shapes placed next to or on *kanji* characters according to one of several systems of positioning. For example, in the system given in Figure 1 (quoted from Frellesvig 2010, 260), a dot next to the top right corner of a *kanji* character would indicate that the word represented by that character should be followed by the particle *o*, indicating a direct object. Many different systems developed in the 9th and 10th century, as different temples and scholars created and standardised their own conventions; Tsukishima (1986) describes 26 different systems of *okoto-ten*.

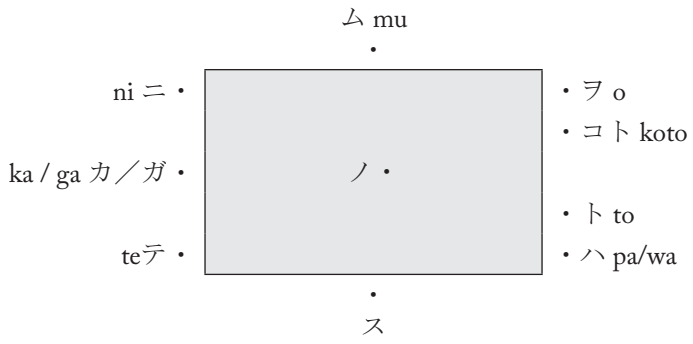

Figure 1. An example of an okototen system

Classical Chinese texts were thus annotated with marks and symbols to show the order in which the words should be rearranged, the "correct reading" of single characters, and the grammatical particles and inflectional endings that needed to be added to render the Chinese text orally. The rendition was in Japanese,

althought in a variety of Japanese that was very much influenced by Chinese vocabulary and syntax, but nonetheless considered a style of Japanese and at the same time a faithful rendition of the Chinese original.

In the following example (quoted from Denecke 2014, 47), the opening of the Confucian *Analects* given in line b) below would be annotated as in Figure 2. Marks on the left-hand side of the vertically written text indicate the reading order: the mark レ between 習 and the 之 indicate that the direct object 之 should be read before the verb 習, according to Japanese syntax, while the mark 二 (two) below the negation 不 and the number 一 (one) below 說 (pleasant) together indicate that the negative form 不 should be added after the adjective 說, again according to Japanese grammar. Smaller katakana characters on the right-hand side of the text indicate case particles to be added when reading or the pronunciation of the Chinese characters. The text in Figure 2 could be orally rendered as in line e) (or a similar variation). This oral rendering according to Japanese grammar is known as *yomi-kudashi* 読み下し (literally "reading down"). The romanized glosses in line f) show in boldface those parts of the Japanese sentence which are added during *yomi-kudashi* and not present in the Chinese text.

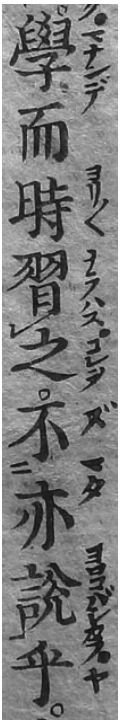

Figure 2. Text with kunten marks

a) original word order	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
b) Chinese text	學	而	時	習	之	不	亦	說	乎
c) modern Mandarin pronunciation	xue	er	shi	xi	zhi	bu	yi	yue	hu
	1	2	3	5	4	7	8	6	9
d) *kanbun-kundoku* word order	學	而	時	之	習	亦	說	不	乎

e)	學	而	時	之	習	亦	說		不	乎
f)	manabi	te	toki **ni**	kore **o**	nara**fu**	mata	yorokobashi**kara**		zu	ya
g)	learn	and	at times	this	review,	also	pleasant		NEG.	EXCL.

"to learn and sometimes review what one has learnt, is that not pleasure?" (Denecke 2014, 47)

The widespread use of *kanbun-kundoku* as a reading technique lead to the use of the same conventions in reverse, also to write down (according to classical Chinese syntax and word order) texts that were meant to be read in the *kanbun-yomikudashi* style of Japanese in the first place. This method of writing and the literary works written in this style have been alternatively termed Sino-Japanese (Rabinovitch 1996; Wixted 1998; see especially Kornicki 2010 for a thorough discussion of this terminology and its implications) or Chinese style (Seeley 1991, 25), since it is not always possible to ascertain whether a text was meant to be read in Chinese or in Japanese.

With time, the *kanbun-yomikudashi* rendering of Chinese texts came to be written down also in full, in Japanese word order and spelling out all grammatical information that would be less explicit in *kanbun* style, but the ability to read and write *kanbun* remained an essential skill of educated Japanese speakers up to the 20th century, and even today the technique of *kanbun-kundoku* is taught as a compulsory subject in Japanese schools, thus attesting to its importance in the Japanese literary tradition.

Alongside the technique of *kanbun-kundoku*, Chinese texts could also be read as Chinese, as a foreign language, retaining the original word order and approximating Chinese pronunciation, a reading technique known as *ondoku* 音読, used for the recitation of poetry, chanting of Buddhist texts and memorisation (Denecke 2014, 47). This way of reading Chinese introduced a very large amount of Chinese loanwords into Japanese.

Given the presence of the original text that could be read either in Chinese (maintaining Chinese word order and a more or less Chinese pronunciation of the single words), or in Japanese (substituting one part of the Chinese vocabulary

with equivalent native Japanese words and rearranging word order), such texts were not perceived as foreign texts to be translated, but rather as texts in one of the two main "styles" (*buntai* 文体) that had to be mastered by literate Japanese of the time: Chinese style (*kanbun* 漢文) and Japanese style (*wabun* 和文). While the Japanese style was indeed a style of Japanese, albeit following archaic conventions of spelling and style, the Chinese style could be seen as a foreign language, but it was often not recognised as such. The question whether *kanbun-kundoku* is a special type of translation, a "highly source-oriented approach to translation", or a style of Japanese, or a reading technique, is still debated, and neither Japanese nor foreign theoreticians have yet reached a consensus on this point (Wakabayashi 2005b, 24; Semizu 2006). Indeed, words such as *hon'yaku* adopted to describe translation from European and other languages from the 16th century onwards (Wakabayashi 2009) have never been associated with the rendering of written classical Chinese texts into *kanbun-kundoku*.

This reading technique enabled highly literate readers to read the Chinese texts while mentally translating them directly into Japanese (Seeley 1991, 25; Wakabayashi 2009). In this style of writing and reading, most of the vocabulary was borrowed from Chinese, and readers were thus expected to master both Japanese domestic vocabulary and an almost equal amount of loanwords. Reading kanbun thus required an exceedingly high level of literacy, including the knowledge of thousands of characters for an essentially foreign vocabulary and their native Japanese equivalents, and the mastering of syntactical and transposing rules used to mentally translate the text into Japanese.

The reading of classic texts was particularly difficult for pupils learning to read, and involved considerable amounts of memorisation. One of the most popular copybooks used in schools of the Tokugawa period was *Teikin Ōrai* 庭訓往来, a collection of letters written by aristocrats centuries earlier, widely used for the moral teachings they included and that were meant to serve as both examples of writing style and as models of personal conduct. However, in line with culturally grounded teaching practices that emphasised rote learning, and also given the difficulty of these archaic texts in *kanbun* style, pupils learned to "read" the texts by memorising them rather than by understanding the actual words (Ingulsrud and Allen 2009, 76).

At the same time, the difficulty inherent in such a writing and reading practice encouraged the spread of a subsidiary writing system, i.e. pronunciation glosses (furigana) alongside the Chinese characters to enable readers with limited knowledge of Chinese characters to read more complex texts. This practice helped the spread of more difficult Confucian and other classical readings even among the less literate.

Conclusion: *kanbun* and Forms of Literacy

By the middle of the 19th century, literacy rates as estimated from rates of school attendance were relatively high. Different estimates and calculations can be found in the literature: Dore (1965) estimates that 40 to 50 percent of Japanese boys and 10 to 15 percent of girls were attending school in 1870, while Tone (1981), who studied temple schools (*terakoya*) in the Kanto region, found different attendance rates in the three groups of schools he distinguished on the basis of their different socioeconomic settings. He found that in traditional farming villages school attendance was 20%, in post-towns 38%, and 50 to 70% in commercially active villages (Tone 1981, 83, 186; as cited by Rubinger 2007, 131–2), which compares favourably with major contemporary centres in Europe. The high levels of literacy stemming from the value ascribed to education and the considerable amount of time and resources invested voluntarily into education at all levels of society in the Tokugawa period have been cited as one of the bases for the social transformations and fast economic and military growth of the Meiji period (Dore 1965). When compared with contemporary countries of the Western world, Japan had indeed relatively high rates of literacy in the Tokugawa period. However, literacy should be defined not only in quantitative, but also in qualitative terms: the literacy levels attained were qualitatively uneven, given the extremely complex system of writing and the widespread use of *kanbun*, i.e. annotated but not translated Chinese texts in official administration and even in basic schooling, where such texts were often chosen for their moral value rather than for their accessibility to pupils. The complexity of *kanbun*, both as a script and as a language variety, was such a formidable challenge that "widespread literacy" did not necessarily entail "the ability to read any written document" (Twine 1983).

As Unger (1991, 549) points out, while it can be said that Japan was a relatively literate nation even during the Tokugawa period, this only holds true for literacy as usually defined in technical studies, i.e. a minimal ability to read and write, while "literacy as a vehicle for full and free participation in society" was not as widespread. In the Japanese context, a minimal ability to read and write could simply mean reading and writing the phonetic script hiragana, but not knowing Chinese characters and not being able to read documents in the *kanbun* style used in official transactions.

Nonetheless, the prestige of the Chinese learning tradition and the inherent interest of the upper literate classes to keep standards of acceptable writing high enough so as to limit access to such elite status, contributed to the maintenance of an exceedingly complex writing system through the Tokugawa and Meiji period and up to the present day (Culiberg 2011 and 2015).

Indeed, after the end of the Tokugawa regime and the advent of the Meiji restoration in 1868, when rising the literacy and educational level of the whole nation, seen as a prerequisite for building a strong centralised nation that could withstand the pressures of Western colonial powers, became one of the priorities of the Meiji government (Visočnik 2015 and 2016; Ichimiya 2011), the problem of rising literacy was approached from both sides: on one hand by imposing compulsory education of four years upon the entire school-age population of Japan, and on the other hand by embarking in several reforms aimed at standardising the spoken and written language, discouraging the use of cumbersome stylistic conventions entailed in the Sino-Japanese *kanbun* style of writing, and simplifying the elements of the writing system itself, limiting the number of Chinese characters for public use and simplifying the forms of the more complicated characters (Gottlieb 1995).

The complex writing system and the unwieldy practice of kanbun sight translation that endured for centuries because of the prestige enjoyed by the classical Chinese tradition, were thus at the same time a motivating force for the investment of resources into education, but also an obstacle to the spread of literacy both in terms of width, among all classes of society, and in terms of depth, allowing each literate individual to fully participate in society.

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A Vietnamese Reading of the Master's Classic: Phạm Nguyễn Du's *Humble Comments on the Analects* as an Example of Transformative Learning[1]

*Nam NGUYEN**

Abstract

Phạm Nguyễn Du's influential text *Humble Comments on the Analects* (*Luận Ngữ Ngu Án* 論語愚按) is an outstanding example of a Vietnamese adaptation and reworking of an East Asian intellectual tradition. In organizing his work, Phạm departed from convention by rearranging the extant chapters of the *Analects* into four "books": "Sage" (*Thánh* 聖), "Learning" (*Học* 學), "Official" (*Sĩ* 仕), and "Politics" (*Chính* 政). Moreover, Phạm placed particular emphasis on the "Learning" book, and thus underscored his contention that the classic text was especially relevant and meaningful to eighteenth-century Vietnam. This paper attempts to read Phạm's work in the contexts of both Confucian tradition and contemporary education. First, it examines Phạm's composition of the *Humble Comments* based on Jack Mezirow's theory of transformative learning. Phạm's writing process in this work presents a fascinating case of transformative learning, in which the author questions received assumptions about the world and himself, puts forward new propositions, and elaborates these via an original reading of a classic. Through the analysis of Phạm Nguyễn Du's life and his preface to the *Humble Comments*, one can also gain a better view of the Vietnamese reception of Zhu Xi's Neo-Confucianism, and more particularly, of Zhu's dictum of "learning for the sake of one's self" (*weiji zhi xue* 為己之學). Lastly, this dictum will be reappraised to show its validity in contemporary educational contexts.

Keywords: Sage, learning for the sake of one's self, transformative learning, civil service examination, *kunzhi* (acquiring true knowledge from predicaments)

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Vietnamsko branje klasike mojstra: Phạm Nguyễn Dujevi *Skromni komentarji k Pogovorom* kot primer transformativnega učenja

Izvleček

Skromni komentarji k Pogovorovom (*Luận Ngữ Ngu Án* 論語愚按) je odličen primer vietnamskega prilagajanja oz. predelave vzhodnoazijske idejne tradicije. Pham je v svojem delu izhajal iz odloka, ki poglavja *Pogovorov* preureja v štiri »knjige«: *Svetnik* (*Thánh* 聖), *Učenje* (*Học* 學), *Državnik* (*Sĩ* 仕) in *Politika* (*Chính* 政). Pham je posebno pozornost posvetil knjigi *Učenje* in tako poudaril svojo tezo, da je bilo to klasično besedilo za Vietnam še posebej pomembno v osemnajstem stoletju. Obravnavani članek poskuša razumeti Phamovo delo tako v kontekstu konfucijanske tradicije kot tudi sodobnega izobraževanja. Najprej preuči Phamovo sestavo *Skromnih komentarjev*, ki temelji na teoriji transformativnega učenja Jacka Mezirowa. Phamov proces pisanja predstavlja v tem delu zanimiv primer transformativnega učenja, v katerem se avtor ukvarja s sprejetimi predpostavkami o svetu in sebi in navede nove predloge, ki jih izdela ob izvornem branju klasičnega dela. Skozi analizo Phạm Nguyễn Dujevega življenja in njegovega predgovora k *Skromnim komentarjem* lahko dobimo boljši vpogled v vietnamsko sprejemanje Zhu Xijevega neokonfucianizma, še posebej Zhujevega izreka »učenje zavoljo sebe« (*weiji zhi xue* 為己之學). V zadnjem poglavju članka je ta izrek ponovno ovrednoten, s čimer se pokaže njegova veljavnost v kontekstu sodobnega izobraževanja.

Ključne besede: svetnik, učenje zavoljo sebe, transformativno učenje, preiskava javne službe, *kunzhi* (pridobivanje pravega znanja iz težavnega položaja)

Introduction

Although much ink has been spilled on the subject of Confucianism in early modern Vietnam, there are many aspects of this important topic that remain poorly understood. How did Vietnamese literati receive and adapt Neo-Confucianism? How were the Confucian classics read to meet the particular needs of Vietnamese intellectuals living in a society structured by civil service exams? What do the lives and careers of individual Vietnamese Confucians reveal about the broader picture of Confucian practices in Vietnam?

In this paper, I consider these questions by examining the career of Phạm Nguyễn Du 范阮攸 (1739–1786) and his *Humble Comments on the Analects* (*Luận Ngữ Ngu Án* 論語愚按, hereafter *Humble Comments*), a commentary on Zhu Xi's Neo-Confucian thought. I contend that Phạm's life and his composition of the *Humble Comments* can be analysed as a form of transformative learning. As first defined by Jack Mezirow (1923–2014) in the middle of the 1970s and then developed by other scholars, the theory of transformative learning has become popular in North America, and is "gaining the interest of scholars in Europe, Asia, and

Africa" (Jarvis 2012, 201). The application of transformative learning theory to the case of Phạm's life and his *Humble Comments* allows a better understanding of his intellectual evolution and distinctive understanding of the Confucian dictum of "learning for the sake of one's self". This paper begins with an overview of transformative learning theory, followed by a brief biography of Phạm Nguyễn Du. As we examine the *Humble Comments*, traces of Zhu Xi's *Collected Comments on the Analects* (*Lunyu jizhu* 論語集注, hereafter *Collected Comments*) become observable, providing us with an example of the Vietnamese reception of Neo-Confucianism. This paper will make the case for the *Humble Comments* as an instance of transformative learning, as reflected in Phạm's struggles to escape his intellectual and social predicaments and gain true knowledge. Finally, the Confucian dictum of "learning for the sake of one's self", as advocated in the *Humble Comments*, will be reappraised to indicate the its validity in the contexts of contemporary education.

"Transformative Learning"—An Overview

The theory of "perspective transformation" was first put forward in 1975 by Jack Mezirow, an American sociologist and professor of adult and continuing education (Jarvis 2012, xiii). Mezirow was inspired in part by the experiences of his wife, Edee, who returned to school as an adult (Lawrence 2015, 1). Mezirow's framework would later be developed into what is now known as transformative learning, a theory of why and how human beings persistently struggle to better comprehend their world and cultivate a more critical outlook.

"Frame of reference" is a foundational concept in the theory of transformative learning. This term has been defined as "the meaning structures of assumptions and expectations that frame an individual's tacit points of view and influence their thinking, beliefs, and actions." Each frame of reference has two dimensions, known as "habits of mind" and "points of view". Understood as habitual means of thinking, feeling, and acting effected by cultural, political, social, educational, and economic assumptions about the world of the subject, habits of mind can turn into a person's viewpoints, or in other words, they "get expressed in a specific point of view" (Jarvis 2012, 196). Transformative learning has been defined by Mezirow and others as a process "leading to a deep shift in perspective during which habits of mind become more open, more permeable, more discriminating, and better justified" (Cranton 2006 in Kroth 2014, 3). The deep shift in question is also known as a perspective transformation, or paradigmatic shift, and this often proceeds

> …[T]hrough a series of cumulative transformed meaning schemes or as a result of an acute personal or social crisis, for example, a natural disaster, the death of a significant other, divorce, a debilitating accident, war, job loss, or retirement (Taylor 2008, 6).

Going beyond the initial experiences that Mezirow observed through the specific case of women's re-entry programs in community college, the perspective transformation is clearly "not limited to women and appears even in traditional cultures characterized by *Gemeinschaft* social relationships" (Mezirow 1978, 55). Scholars in the field have also pointed out that transformative learning can take place in any situation in which adults are learning, including "formal settings, informal settings, and in independent, autodidactic settings" (Kroth 2014, xv). Moreover, transformative learning is not exclusively a form of individual learning, as it can also include group learning processes and certain forms of social change (Jarvis 2012, 201).

Mezirow's well known "ten phases of transformative learning" are summarized in the chart below.

Phase 1	A disorienting dilemma
Phase 2	A self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame
Phase 3	A critical assessment of epistemic, sociocultural, or psychic assumptions
Phase 4	Recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared and that others have negotiated a similar change
Phase 5	Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions
Phase 6	Planning of a course of action
Phase 7	Acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans
Phase 8	Provisional trying of new roles
Phase 9	Building of competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships
Phase 10	A reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's perspective

Table 1: Mezirow's Ten Phases of Transformative Learning (Adapted from Kitchenham 2008, 105)

As these ten phases are well suited to Phạm Nguyễn Du's life and his composition of the *Humble Comments*, they are employed as an *interpretive* tool to present the development of Phạm's thoughts. In its turn, Phạm's case can serve as an exemplary narrative to be added to the repertoire of stories of transformative learning.

Using the ten phases listed in this chart, a careful analysis of Phạm's life and his preface to the *Humble Comments* illuminates the process of reception and adaptation of Zhu Xi's Neo-Confucianism in eighteenth-century Vietnam in general, and Phạm's transformative learning process in particular.

Phạm Nguyễn Du: A Widower Confucian in Eighteenth-Century Civil-war Torn Đại Việt

Phạm Nguyễn Du 范阮攸 lived in a time of chaos and civil strife. He was born and grew up in the divided kingdom of Đại Việt, which had split into rival northern and southern realms during the seventeenth century. Over the course of his life, Đại Việt would be torn by rebellions and civil war, culminating eventually in the conflagration known as the Tây Sơn war (1771–1802). As an intellectual living amid war and political and social upheaval, Phạm Nguyễn Du 范阮攸 was a Confucian who longed for an imagined earlier golden age of peace and order.

Originally from Nghệ An (a province in todays' central Vietnam, known for its intellectual traditions as well as the rebellious spirit of its residents), Phạm Nguyễn Du was first known as Phạm Huy Khiêm 范撝謙; he later used the names Hiếu Đức 好德 and Dưỡng Hiên 養軒, while often writing under the literary name of Thạch Động 石洞. Renowned for his cleverness as a youth, Phạm was recruited to serve in the Imperial Diary Office of the Lê-Trịnh 黎鄭 Court, which ruled the northern realm of Đàng Ngoài (literally "outer region"). Phạm passed the Metropolitan Examination in the 40th year of the reign of Cảnh Hưng 景興 (1779), when he was 40 years old, and was promoted to the Hanlin Academy and Historiography Institute.[2] A loyalist to the Restored Lê dynasty, Phạm considered all anti-Lê-dynasty powers (including the leaders of the Tây Sơn uprising) to be usurpers, and maintained this conviction despite considerable evidence that the Lê dynasty was corrupt and in decline. According to the *Records on Nghệ An* (*Nghệ An ký* 乂安記) and *Comprehensive Study of the Metropolitan Graduates through the Dynasties* (*Lịch triều đăng khoa bị khảo* 歷朝登科備考), Phạm was serving as the official in charge of Nghệ An province in 1786 when he learned that the Tây Sơn had seized Phú Xuân, the capital of Đàng Ngoài's southern rival. Faced with this alarming news, he left for Thanh Chương-Nam Đàn, intending to recruit soldiers to fight against the Tây Sơn. But he fell ill and died before he could put his defence plans into

2 In his preface to the *Humble Comments on the Analects*, Phạm also indicated that he was reinstated into the Hanlin Academy as commissioner in 1778.

action (this brief biography of Phạm Nguyễn Du is based on "Phạm Nguyễn Du and His *Records of a Broken Heart*" in Phạm 2001, 5–6).

Beyond socio-political events, Phạm's worldview was deeply affected by personal tragedy. In 1772, while serving in the Ministry of Personnel, Phạm received the sad news that his wife of 13 years, Nguyễn Thị Đoan Hương 阮氏端香, had passed away at the age of twenty-nine. Just sixteen years old at the time of her wedding, Đoan Hương joined Phạm in a marriage that was happy but often interrupted by his civil service duties. The death of Phạm's wife was a devastating loss, and grief-stricken he mourned her with 14 eulogies, 49 parallel couplets, and 34 sorrowful poems. These writings were later arranged chronologically in a collection titled *Records of a Broken Heart* (*Đoạn trường lục* 斷腸錄) (ibid. 2001, 38–39). This collection reveals much about Phạm's emotional inner life; yet it also reflects his thoughts about learning and the purposes of knowledge. On the heels of this personal tragedy, Phạm also underwent an intellectual crisis that would change him forever. Rereading the *Analects* and writing commentary on it apparently helped Phạm to reorganise his life around the goal of Confucian enlightenment, and to overcome the above-mentioned difficulties standing in his way.

The *Humble Comments on the Analects* and Zhu Xi's *Collected Comments*

Phạm Nguyễn Du wrote the *Humble Comments on the Analects*[3] between 1778 and 1780, while serving as a court official. The connection between his work and Zhu Xi's *Collected Comments* (*Lunyu jizhu* 論語集註) is shown in the title of Phạm's text. Phạm was obviously familiar with Zhu's *Collected Comments*, as he mentioned it in his description of the composition of his *Humble Comments*. "At first I read the main text until becoming intimately familiar with it," he wrote, "then [I] elaborately examined the *Collected Commentaries*, and later carefully went through other Confucians' explanations" (Phạm Nguyễn Du's "Preface" to the *Humble Comments*). Phạm's attitude toward Zhu Xi's work is consistent with the Confucian notion of "Study of Principle" (*Lixue* 理學), as practiced by Lê dynasty literati in eighteenth-century Vietnam (Zhang 2008, 22–26). In his *Collected Comments*, Zhu employed the phrase "humble comment" (*yu'an* 愚按) about twenty times in total throughout the work when introducing his commentaries

3 For its analyses, the paper relies on the handwritten copy preserved in the Institute of Han-Nom Studies (Hanoi), call number VHV 349/1–2, reproduced as Phạm 2011; and as part of Phạm 2013, 817–1001.

on specific chapters of the *Analects* (*Chinese Text Project*). By borrowing this phrase, Phạm was indicating his admiration and intellectual debt to Zhu Xi's Neo-Confucian philosophy. At the same time, however, the *Humble Comments*' distinctive attempt to re-interpret Zhu Xi's ideas can be glimpsed in Phạm's annotations to the original text, and especially in the unusual organizational structure he adopted.

After carefully studying every chapter of the *Analects* in its extant form, Phạm decided to take another step in his autodidactic process: writing comments on the classic. But instead of following the original work's structure, Phạm radically changed the way the chapters were originally arranged. He explained this as follows:

> At the risk of being too bold, I have classified its chapters into categories for convenient review. [Based on my classification] the work generally has four books, twenty-three categories, and 493 chapters. In each chapter, my "humble comments" are added below the original main text. Thus, I have named this work *Humble Comments on the Analects*.

By reorganizing the *Analects* into four books called "Sage" (*Sheng* 聖), "Learning" (*Xue* 學), "Official" (*Shi* 仕), and "Politics" (*Zheng* 政), the *Humble Comments* signalled its author's intent to seek new interpretive insights from the classical text. The relationship between these four books has been construed by modern Vietnamese scholars as an attempt to emphasize the dictum of "Sageliness within, kingliness without" (*neisheng waiwang* 內聖外王) (Đinh 2012, 459–60). The dictum stands as an expression of the Confucian principle of self-cultivation (Zhang 2008; Chu 2009, 47), and Confucian literati can only take office and assume their social responsibilities based on this foundation. Phạm proceeded to break down each of the four topics into sub-topics to further explore a wide array of issues presented through the chapters that record both the Master's and his disciples' words. The chart below summarizes the resulting organizational structure of the *Humble Comments*.

Book	Category	Number of Chapters
Sage / *Thánh* 聖 (105 chapters total)	Knowledge (Học vấn 學問)	7
	Dignified Manner (Uy nghi 威儀)	7
	Residing, Dressing and Eating (Cư xử, phục thực 居處服食)	9
	Coping with human affairs and being exemplary to people (Ứng sự phạm vật 應事範物)	30
	Dealing with Changes/Disasters (Xử biến 處變)	7
	Judging people (Thủ nhân 取人)	26
	Talking about Sages (Thuyết thánh 說聖)	8
	Commenting on Sages (Nghị thánh 議聖)	10
	Appendix: Disciples' Records of the Transmission of the Way through Sages (Môn nhân ký quần thánh đạo thống 門人記群聖道統)	1
Learning / *Học* 學 (202 chapters total)	Extension of Knowledge 1 (Trí tri 致知)	28
	Extension of Knowledge 2	27
	Appendix: Disciples' sayings (Môn nhân ngôn 門人言)	3
	Practicing with vigour 1 (Lực hành 力行)	39
	Practicing with vigour 2	39
	Practicing with vigour 3	19
	Appendixes: Disciples' sayings Disciples' records (Môn nhân ký 門人記)	 19 1
	Filial and fraternal (Hiếu đễ 孝弟)	10
	Appendix: Disciples' sayings	5
	Social intercourse (Giao tế 交際)	6
	Appendixes: Disciples' sayings Disciples' writings for their students	 5 1
Ethically Responsible Scholar or Official / *Sĩ* 仕 (45 chapters total)	Upper ethically responsible scholar/Official (Thượng sĩ 上仕)	11
	Middle ethically responsible scholar/Official (Trung sĩ 中仕)	18
	Appendix: Disciples' sayings	6
	Lower ethically responsible scholar/Official (Hạ sĩ 下仕)	8
	Appendix: Disciples' records	2

Politics / Chính 政 (141 chapters total)	Self-rectifying (Chính kỷ 正己)	25
	Observing people 1 (Quan nhân 觀人)	28
	Observing people 2	28
	Ritual and music (Lễ nhạc 禮樂)	28
	Appendixes: Disciples' sayings Disciples' records	 1 1
	Governing people (Lâm dân 臨民)	27
	Appendixes: Disciples' sayings Disciples' records	 1 2

Table 2: The Structure of the Humble Comments on the Analects by Phạm Nguyễn Du.

At the end of each "book", Phạm Nguyễn Du summarized his thoughts on the focal topic in a section called "General Statements" (*Tổng thuyết* 總說).[4] Because of the central importance of these statements to the overall goals of the *Humble Comments*, some discussion of each of them is in order.

In his "General Statements on the Sage," Phạm recapitulated the line of argumentation in the Book of Sage in three main points. First, he emphasized that the image of the Sage reassembled and reconstructed from various chapters of the *Analects* was a model worthy of emulation. Second, although the Sage had lived thousands of years earlier, Phạm believed that he remained accessible to contemporary readers thanks to his recorded words. Last but not least, Phạm maintained that learning the Way of the Sage was indispensable, because it was both cosmologically immense and humanly pragmatic. For Phạm, this dual quality of the Way—its simultaneous relevance to the entire universe and to the everyday reality of human beings—was precisely what made it so appealing as a model:

> This Book solemnly selects factual records of the auspiciously virtuous Sage from the *Analects*. There are one hundred and five chapters, classified into four volumes, by which [the commentator] wants his readers to submissively respect and admire the Sage as if he majestically comes out before [them]. Admiring [the Sage] from a distance, one will have an object worthy of honour; getting closer to him, one will have an object to model after. One's heart-and-mind relies on and turns towards [the Sage] as if a traveller has his home, an archer has his target; as if artisans look around and respectfully listen to their grand master, or as if the myriad

4 For the original texts of the four "General Statements," see Appendix B at the end of the paper.

> beings all together gaze at and simultaneously are supported by the sun and moon, heaven and earth. Neither distracting thoughts nor wishful thinking dare to germinate; nor does one dare to rush to wrong paths or heresies. Alas! Being born a few thousand years later, as for those who pursue the Sage's remaining words, the superior direct their thought to the mysterious, seeking the help of Confucianism [as a medium] to enter Chan (Zen) Buddhism[5]; the inferior feel content with their official salary, flowing into the degradation without knowing it. Who knows the refined of the Way of the Sage can match with the movements of the limitless and the supreme ultimate, and its unrefined does not go beyond the tangibility of the daily common sense, ritual and music, criminal law and government decrees. The far expansion of the Way spreads over the endless space of the past and present universe, but its near range dwells within the scope of [human activities, such as] coming-in or going-out, actions, eating and drinking.

By positioning the Book of Learning after his discussion of the Sage, Phạm continued his discourse on the model of the Sage, drawing readers' attention to what he saw as its defining feature. By modelling oneself on the Sage, Phạm argued, one was acting not simply to improve and complete one's own learning, but also to improve and complete the learning undertaken by others. Phạm's "General Statements on Learning" reads in part,

> (…) [One should remember] three points on which Zengzi examined himself,[6] and four things that Yan Yuan avoided when subduing his self;[7] [these points are:] preserve what you have attained, and pursue what you have not yet been able to achieve; polish and cleanse your heart-and-mind; [and], socialize with humanity to approach what is called "Uprightness." Alas! At present in responding to humans and other beings, there is nothing other than the constancy of daily moral human relations. What we have on the pages is the heritage of the Master, and all are the instructions to practice the knowledge one has earned. From admiring

5 This reminds us of the relationship between Chan (Zen) Buddhism and Song Neo-Confucianism.

6 Zengzi 曾子 said, "Every day I examine myself on three points: whether if I may have been unfaithful when transacting business for others; whether if I may have been insincere when interacting with friends; and whether if I may have not practiced what I have learned" (*Analects*, "Xue er").

7 When Yan Yuan 顏淵 asked about benevolence, the Master said, "To subdue one's self and return to propriety" (*keji fuli* 克己復禮). Yan ventured to ask about the steps of the process. The Master responded, "Do not look at what is inappropriate to propriety; do not listen to what is inappropriate to propriety; do not speak what is inappropriate to propriety; and do not take any action that is inappropriate to propriety" (*Analects*, "Yan Yuan").

> the Worthy to admiring the Sage, *from completing one's self to completing other human beings*—Confucians' learning is completely comprehensive. (Emphasis mine.)

For Phạm, the concept of learning flowed naturally into the idea of ethical and responsible service to society, since serving as an official allowed one to move from self-improvement to facilitating other people's efforts at self-improvement. In The Book of the Official, Phạm analysed the ideographic content of the Chinese character for "official", noting that its two integral components, "scholar" and "human," constitute the two poles that serve to define the essential meaning of official service. In Phạm's words, "without being 'scholar' and 'human', it is truly impossible to be an 'official.'"[8] To be a good official, moreover, one must constantly strive for self-cultivation. Below is an excerpt from the "General Statements on the Official":

> If directing one's aspiration to the upper rank, one may end up in the middle one; if directing one's aspiration to the middle rank, one unavoidably attains the lower; moreover, if setting one's aspiration to the lower, how can one practice the obligations of the subject, acting according to the humane way, and moving within heaven and earth?

Having linked self-cultivation to the ideal of ethical service, Phạm turned in his fourth and final book to the discussion of "politics", or the actual practices of governance. For Phạm, the ideal of the self-cultivated official was linked to two other Confucian concepts: the notion of rectification, and the idea of governing according to "the Mean". Here he offered his own gloss on the well-known claim put forward in the *Analects* that "to govern is to rectify" ("Yan Yuan" 顏淵, 12: 17).[9] For Phạm, the goal of "rectifying" the practices of a state or royal court to bring them into line with Confucian principles could only be realized if the officials involved were truly committed to their own rectification through self-improvement. As Phạm put it in his "General Statement on Politics":

> The Book of Politics collects the great teachings of the Sage as well as his disciples' sayings and records regarding politics, one hundred and forty-one (141) chapters in total. Based on the meaning of each chapter, this book classifies them into four categories, "Self-rectifying", "Observing people", "Ritual and Music", and "Governing people". On the basis of the idea "to govern is to rectify", the immensity of politics is contained

8 The original reads, 夫「仕」字從「士」從「人」，蓋非士非人，誠不足以言仕也。

9 The original reads, 政者，正也。

> within these four categories, and is rooted in the rectification of the self. Hence, all sagely kings of the ancient past who were "discriminating, uniform in the pursuit of the rightness, and sincerely holding fast the Mean" took self-rectification as the foundation of justification.

Regarding the present structure of the *Analects* simply as the result of randomly collected and diverse written records by and on the Sage into seemingly casually named books that, in general, did not mean much to readers, Phạm Nguyễn Du took it upon himself to rearrange and classify the chapters into specific topics that would have maximum benefit for the learning purposes of the readers. In this way, Phạm aimed to make his reorganization of the *Analects* serve and underscore his emphasis on the primacy of self-cultivation and "learning for the sake of one's self":

> Do contemporary readers of the *Analects* essentially want to search for the Sage's instructions, being absorbed in contemplation [of them], experiencing them for themselves, applying them in the universe in order to pursue the [ideal of] "learning for one's self"? Or do they necessarily want to base themselves on the [current] order of books and chapters, trying to figure out some meanings from this meaningless order, while getting bogged down in its tiny details? If people wish to explore the sage's instructions by contemplating and quietly appreciating them, by experiencing them within their own bodies, and by applying them in practice in order to pursue the "Learning for the sake of one's self", then they should understand this work as an effort at self-teaching, undertaken by me, Thạch Động.

Phạm's rearrangement of the *Analects*' chapters into specific topics proved influential. By the early twentieth century, the use of the Romanized alphabetic script as a method of writing Vietnamese had largely displaced the Chinese writing system in Vietnam. To preserve "traditional" values against Western influence, Confucian classics were progressively translated into Vietnamese by the means of the Romanized script. In 1922, the *Analects* was translated for the first time into Vietnamese and printed in Romanized script by the translator Dương Bá Trạc (1884–1944). An anti-colonialist Confucian educator and one of the co-founders of the Free School of Tonkin (Đông Kinh Nghĩa Thục 東京義塾), Dương Bá Trạc followed in the footsteps of Phạm Nguyễn Du when classifying the chapters into categories. (Dương 1922). Five years later (1927), Lương Văn Can (1854–1927), also a co-founder of the Free School of Tonkin, produced his own translation of the classic, and classified its chapters into sixteen categories (Ôn 1927). Thus, the creative and critical rearrangement/classification model set by Phạm Nguyễn Du for the *Analects* in the eighteenth century lived on through the practice of a later generation of scholars in

early twentieth-century Vietnam. To understand the enduring appeal of this model, a closer investigation of Phạm's text is in order—especially those parts of it which suggest the author's transformative learning approach.

The *Humble Comments* as an Example of Transformative Learning

In lieu of a thorough analysis of the entire *Humble Comments*, this paper will focus on Phạm's preface. As we will see, this part of the text can be viewed as Phạm's attempt to mix autobiography with Vietnamese Confucian discourses. Understood in this light, the preface can tell us a great deal about Phạm's transformative learning process.

Phạm opened his preface by recalling the negative impacts of the pressure of preparing for the civil service examination as a teenager. The examination system was often considered a means for people to climb the ladder of success, bringing honour and wealth not only to the successful candidate, but also to his relatives. For Phạm, this state of affairs placed enormous strain on exam candidates. In a later poem, he recalled encountering an entourage of seven boats carrying the relatives of a high-ranking official, and noted that "When a man is appointed as Minister Duke, a hundred of his people are honoured—All are begotten under our Confucian ink brush" (Phạm 2001, 132–4). The pressure to succeed through the examination was thus put on men's shoulders very early in their childhood, and Phạm was no exception.

Although he read the *Analects* during his early adolescence, Phạm confessed that his initial reading of the classic was very superficial, as he concentrated mainly on "the sounds and meanings of its words" and thus failed to "apprehend its significance". Merging in with the secular trends of his time, Phạm directed his learning to the "syntactic and semantic analysis [of the ancient writings]" for about twenty-five years. During this long period, he occasionally referred to the *Analects*, but only as a way to show off his erudition. As he explained, "Although I used the book from time to time, it was only to glean and collect bit by bit for the sake of memorization, so in the event that anyone asked, I would have the resources to expound as needed". However, Phạm's learning style would change dramatically after he passed the Metropolitan examination and took up responsibilities in the Hanlin Academy and Historiography Institute. Finding himself in the new and unfamiliar role of state official, Phạm became anxious about his "ignorance" of the substance and meaning of good governance. In this time of difficulty, which might be labelled as the first and second of Mezirow's ten phases of transformative learning, Phạm returned to the Master's work as a source of intellectual consolation. As he wrote, "One night, thinking of the *Analects*, I took it out and read it".

Like the Sixth Patriarch Hui Neng 慧能, who became enlightened upon hearing a line from the *Diamond Sutra* (Yampolsky 1967, 133, note 41),[10] Phạm found himself awakened when reaching the sentence "Being at the age of forty or fifty, but not yet making oneself heard of" from the *Analects*. Originally written in the book "Zi Han" 子罕 (9:23),[11] the sentence is part of the Master's saying which Zhu Xi, in his *Collected Comments*, takes as a way "to alert people, to urge them to exert themselves in learning in a timely fashion."[12] Taken out of its original context, the cited sentence seems to be concerned solely with a man's career and reputation. However, when reread in context and in association with Zhu Xi's comments, it conveys an encouragement for learning. For Phạm, this sentence offered a way to make new connections among one's career, reputation, and learning.

To illustrate these connections in his preface, Phạm mentioned the case of the Song Confucian Xu Heng 許衡 (also known as Xu Luzhai 許魯齋, 1209–1281) as an example of self-reflection and determination to change after recognizing mistakes. He may well have read Xu's biography ("Luzhai xue'an 魯齋學案") in the *Records of Song-Yuan Scholars* (*Song Yuan xue'an* 宋元學案), since he cited forty-year-old Xu's regretful words for having "taught and learned impetuously" (*shoushou menglang* 授受孟浪).[13] In the first part of Xu's biography, the boy Xu asked his teacher, "For what purpose do we learn?" (*Dushu hewei* 讀書何為) The answer he got was simply: "To take the imperial civil examination" (*Qu kedi er* 取科第耳). Of course, what the teacher said did not satisfy his pupil. Later in life, Xu also became a teacher with a number of students. His intellectual outlook changed radically after his visit to the Neo-Confucian Yao Shu 姚樞 (1201–1278), from whom he learned the Cheng brothers' and Zhu Xi's thoughts. Returning to his school, Xu told his students that what he had previously taught them was not right and should be abandoned, and that they should have a new beginning, starting with Zhu Xi's *Elementary Learning* (*Xiaoxue* 小學), which, in the eyes and words of modern scholars, shows the need "to take responsibility for, to define, and to shape one's self in the context of foregoing environmental factors and relationships" (de Bary 2008, 404). Xu Heng's story, as narrated in Phạm's preface is also a case of transformative learning which encouraged the author to thoroughly review his approach to, and understanding, of learning.

10 The original reads, 應無所住而省其心。

11 The entire chapter reads, "The young generation is awesome. How can we know that the coming generation will not be equal to the present one? But if a person at the age of forty or fifty has still not been heard of, he should not be in awe of either." (後生可畏，焉知來者之不如今也？四十、五十而無聞焉，斯亦不足畏也已.)

12 The original reads, 以警人，使及時勉學也。

13 In "Luzhai xue'an", the phrase originally reads as 昔者授受,殊孟浪也.

The story of Xu in the preface neatly frames the third and fourth phases of Phạm's own transformative learning process. His rereading of the *Analects* could be seen as the process of the third phase—defined as the "critical assessment of epistemic, sociocultural, or psychic assumptions" undertaken by an individual who has achieved a long-cherished goal (in Phạm's case, passing the imperial examination and taking office), only to discover that the achievement does not bring fulfilment. Having examined Xu Heng's radical change in his orientation towards learning, Phạm considers his own circumstances:

> Comparing my case with that of Luzhai pursuing the Way, I am still one year younger than him. From now until my old age there remains quite a significant amount of time. Shouldn't I endeavour to move forward, and follow in the footsteps of those who acquire knowledge from predicaments in which they find themselves?

With the comparison of his case to Xu Heng's, Phạm clearly arrived at the fourth phase, in which he recognized that "[his] discontent and the process of transformation [were] shared" with others who "[had] negotiated a similar change" with him. Noteworthy here is Phạm's use of the concept of *khốn tri/kunzhi* 困知 (acquiring true knowledge from predicaments) in describing his circumstances.

Out of Predicaments with True Knowledge

To better understand how *khốn tri/kunzhi* is comprehended in the *Humble Comments*, we turn to Phạm's comments on a particular chapter of the *Analects*. In Chapter 9 of the Book "Jishi 季氏", the Master reviewed four types of people endowed with different learning capabilities. The chapter in question has inspired various interpretations (and thus various translations) for this specific sentence, *kun er xue zhi you qi ci ye* 困而學之又其次也. Below are some examples of how this has been rendered:

> J. Legge: "Those who are *dull and stupid*, and yet compass the learning, are another class next to these."[14]
>
> D. C. Lau: "Next again come those turn to study after having been *vexed by difficulties*" (Confucius 1979, 140).

14 The original reads, 孔子曰：「生而知之者，上也；學而知之者，次也；困而學之，又其次也；困而不學，民斯為下矣。」. James Legge translates this as follows, "Those who are born with the possession of knowledge are the highest class of men. Those who learn, and so, readily, get possession of knowledge, are the next. Those who are dull and stupid, and yet compass the learning, are another class next to these. As to those who are dull and stupid and yet do not learn—they are the lowest of the people" (*Chinese Text Project* 2017),

> S. Leys: "Next again come those who learn through the *trials of life*" (Confucius 1997, 83).
>
> Ames and Rosemont: "Something learned *in response to difficulties encountered* is again the next highest" (Confucius 1998, 199).
>
> D. K. Gardner: "Those who learn it but *with difficulty* are next" (Gardner 2003, 41).
>
> E. Slingerland: "Those who *find it difficult to understand* and yet persist in their studies come next" (Confucius 2003, 196).
>
> R. Eno: "Next are those who study it only *in circumstances of duress*" (Eno 2015, 92).[15]

Although different from one another, the above-cited translations can be sorted into three groups, depending how each of them interpret the keyword *kun* 困. The first group takes it as an innate characteristic of the learner, such as "dull and stupid" (Legge). Close to the first group, the second understands *kun* as the learner's cognitive ability (Slingerland). But the most common rendering treats *kun* as difficult environments and/or conditions in which the learner acquires new knowledge. It is also worth mentioning that the same translator may have different interpretations of *kun* depending on the context. Below is Legge's translation of a passage from the *Doctrine of the Mean* (*Zhongyong* 中庸), in which he interpreted *kun* differently,

> Knowledge, magnanimity, and energy, these three, are the virtues universally binding. And the means by which they carry the duties into practice is singleness. Some are born with the knowledge of those duties; some know them by study; and some acquire the knowledge *after a painful feeling of their ignorance*. But the knowledge being possessed, it comes to the same thing.[16]

Similarly, *khốn/kun* as a key concept in the *Humble Comments* might convey various meanings depending on the context. Unlike what we have seen in the preface, in which *khốn/kun* should represent difficult circumstances, Phạm's comments on Chapter 9 of "Jishi" provide us with a different interpretation:

> Human beings possess four ranks of material nature, but they are all people (*dân*/*min* 民) who hold fast to the law and love virtue. Thus, those

15 All emphases mine.

16 The original reads, 知仁勇三者，天下之達德也，所以行之者一也。或生而知之，或學而知之，或困而知之，及其知之，一也。Emphasis mine. (*Chinese Text Project* 2017)

> who have difficulties but still learn can reach the status of those whose knowledge is inborn. Without learning, the transformation of material nature appears impossible. Falling into difficulties but not learning, one will forever be trapped in difficulties. Thus, although named "the people", they are not part of "the people" in reality.[17]

Readers familiar with Neo-Confucianism can easily recognize the terminology employed in Phạm's comments, such as his reference to the concept of "material nature" (*qizhi* 氣質). Imperfect and incomplete (and thus needing refinement), "material nature" is also known as "human psyches and temperaments," (Bell 2008, 80), and placed in opposition to the "original nature" (*benxing* 本性), the perfect and good nature preserved in human sub-consciousness (Lee 2010, 129–53). As for the "original nature", through Phạm's comments, it can be identified as the nature of Heavenly pattern (*tianli zhi xing* 天理之性), another vital Neo-Confucian concept. Based on Confucius' belief that "men are nearly alike by nature" and Mencius' theory of "humans beings are good by nature," Phạm believed the following:

> At the beginning, both the noble person and the petty person have the nature of heavenly pattern. Protecting the pattern, one will ascend and become the noble person; losing the pattern, one will descend and turn to be the petty person. When the least bit of difference has occurred, heaven and earth automatically become apart.[18]

Furthermore, the "material nature" in Phạm's comments is subsequently linked to the "people," a move which has its origin in the *Classics of Poetry* (*Shijing* 詩經). The poem titled "Zhengmin 烝民" from this collection reads,

Heaven, in giving birth to the multitudes of the people,	天生烝民、
To every faculty and relationship annexed its law.	有物有則。
The people possess this normal nature,	民之秉彝、
And they [consequently] love its normal virtue.	好是懿德。

17 The *Humble Comments*, Book of "Learning", vol. 7; the original read, 人有四等氣質，然均之秉彝好德之民。故困而學可以至於生知。變化氣質非學不能也。困而不學，乃終於困，名曰民而實非民矣。

18 The original reads, 君子小人其初皆具天理之性。保其理則上而為君子。失其理則下而為小人。毫釐一分，天壤自隔。

Based on this poem, Phạm talks about people under heaven who by their "original nature" should be able to "hold fast to the law and love virtue." This also reminds us of Zhu Xi's concept of "Heaven's people" (*tian min* 天民) who are all the same in possessing the commiserating mind-and-heart (Hon 2012, 16). However, this potential equality turns out to be almost impossible in practice, due to differences among their "material natures." In this case, Phạm obviously follows Zhu Xi's line of thought on the uneven endowments of material nature that result in the unequal learning capabilities seen in human beings. Commenting on the same chapter of "Jishi," Zhu Xi explains,

> *Kun* 困 means that there is something obstructed. The passage indicates that since people's material natures are not the same, there exist these four ranks in general. Yang [Shi, 楊時] said, "From being born with the possession of knowledge, learning and getting possession of knowledge to getting possession of knowledge with difficulties due to personal imperfection, although their material natures are not the same, their [acquired] knowledge is identical. Hence, the noble man only treasures learning as precious. Thus, being entrapped in difficulties by imperfect material nature but not learning accordingly is regarded as inferior.[19] (*Chinese Text Project* 2017)

Thus, Phạm's willingness to put himself "after *kunzhi* people" can be construed as his self-identification with those who were born with limited "material nature" and acquired knowledge from the difficult circumstances in which they found themselves. This realization was undoubtedly a critical landmark in his life. Having achieved this insight, Phạm decided to "abolish learning for the purpose of the civil service examination", and instead began carrying the *Analects* with him day and night. This was the fifth phase of transformative learning ("Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions"), and the beginning of Phạm's new journey of "learning for the sake of one's self."

The *Humble Comments* and "Learning for the Sake of One's Self"

During Phạm Nguyễn Du's lifetime, a series of "abridged" (*tiết yếu* 節要) Confucian texts, including the Four Books and Five Classics, emerged. The series' compiler was Bùi Huy Bích 裴輝璧 (1744–1818), a high-ranking official and contemporary and acquaintance of Phạm Nguyễn Du. Bùi abridged not only the

19 The original reads, 困，謂有所不通。言人之氣質不同，大約有此四等。楊氏曰：「生知學知以至困學，雖其質不同，然及其知之一也。故君子惟學之為貴。困而不學，然後為下。」

Four Books and Five Classics, but also Neo-Confucian works, such as the *Great Compendia of Nature and Principle* (*Xingli daquan* 性理大全). As the purpose of this series was to help Confucian students prepare for the civil service examination, it was widely reprinted several times by various printing houses throughout the nineteenth century. A preface to the series found in the first book of the *Abridged Four Books – The Great Learning* (*Tứ thư tiết yếu – Đại học* 四書節要—大學, reprinted in 1850) confirms that the series was designed to help candidates in their preparation for the exam (*tiện ư quyết khoa nhi dĩ* 便於決科而已). The preface also distinguishes "learning for the sake of argumentation" (*nghĩa lý chi học* 義理之學) from "learning for the sake of the examination" (*khoa cử chi học* 科舉之學). According to the preface,

> Learning for the sake of the examination and learning for the sake of argumentation are not the same. Learning for the sake of argumentation moves from erudition to simplicity, whereas learning for the sake of the examination focuses only on simplicity. Therefore, the latter takes the entirety of the classics and their commentaries and abridges them.[20]

Another preface printed in the first book of the *Abridged Five Classics – The Classic of Documents* (*Ngũ kinh tiết yếu – Thư kinh* 五經節要—書經, reprinted in 1842) stated,

> Learning for the sake of the examination concentrates on the comprehension of the script, often abridging and simplifying it to prioritize memorization and preparation for the examination.[21]

Solemnly printed in large-size characters at the beginning of every subset in this popular series, the perception communicated in the prefaces of the differences between the two learning styles must have reflected a common belief in elite Vietnamese circles at the time. Moreover, the popularity of the abridged series was evidence of the tendency of "learning for the sake of the examination" in society. Led partly by Bùi Huy Bích's series, this tendency undoubtedly went against what Phạm Nguyễn Du was aiming at, namely "learning for the sake of one's self."

For Phạm Nguyễn Du, the two contrasting forms of learning reflect the mindsets of two differing personalities. Commenting on Chapter 6:13 of the *Analects*,

20 The original reads, 科舉之學與義理之學不同。義理之學必自博而之約，科舉之學則主於約。故取經傳之全而節之。

21 The original reads, 科舉之學專於理會文字，往往節而約之以優記誦、備決科。

"You should be a *ru* 儒 scholar after the style of the noble person, and not after that of the petty person,"[22] Phạm Nguyễn Du states that,

> After Confucius and Mencius, people who learn to become Confucian are numerous; but since their mindsets are false and not genuine, consequently their learning is only for the sake of reputation and fortune, and is not based on [the improvement of] the self to serve magnanimous affairs. In general, seeking knowledge turns people into the noble person, when being anxious [for reputation and fortune] changes people into the petty person. The tiny space existing in the contention between the principle and the temperament entails the difference between the two types of the noble person and the petty person.[23]

In a poem titled "Presented to Tồn Am" (Ký trình Tồn Am 寄呈存庵), Phạm addressed a statement on his purpose of learning directly to Bùi,[24]

> 為己既能希孔孟
>
> [Learning] for the sake of one's self, one has modelled oneself on the examples of Confucius and Mencius;
>
> 逢辰應不愧皋夔
>
> Finding oneself at a right time, one should not be ashamed with Gao Yao and Kui.[25]

Even though the context of this admiring poem remains unknown, it was certainly no accident that Phạm chose to offer a critical commentary on the goal of learning when learning for the sake of the examination had already become a trend. For Zhu Xi, even though the sages and worthies had numerous discussions on the objective of learning, none of them were as essential as Confucius' oft-cited dictum, "Learners of the ancient time learned for the sake of [cultivating] themselves; nowadays learners learn for the sake of [pleasing] others."[26] Based on the Master's dictum, the

22 "Yong ye 雍也" (6:13) of the *Analects*: 子謂子夏曰：「女為君子儒，無為小人儒。」

23 The original reads, 孔孟之後，世之學為如者多矣，惟其立心偽而不真，故其學只為名譽利祿，不於自己分上事。蓋為學則同於君子而操心則入於小人，所爭理欲一毫之間，遂有君子小人兩樣之別。

24 Tồn Am is the literary name of Bùi Huy Bích. The poem is in the collection called *Anthology of Poetry from the Imperial Việt* (*Hoàng Việt thi tuyển* 皇越詩選), also compiled by Bùi.

25 Gao Yao was the legal officer of the legendary emperor Shun, who also appointed Kui as the music master.

26 The original reads, 子曰：「古之學者為己，今之學者為人。」("Xianwen 憲問", *Analects*, 14:24). Zhu Xi's original line reads, 其說多矣，然未有如此言之切而要者 (*Collected Commentaries*).

phrase "Learning for the sake of one's self" became one of the most central themes for Neo-Confucians. Zhu Xi even employed it as an important criterion to identify who should be included in his circle of fellow scholars. An advocate of this spirit, Phạm would base his learning agenda on Zhu Xi's tradition.

Having established the new goal for his learning, Phạm Nguyễn Du undertook to devise a concrete agenda, which he tried to realize through a rereading of the *Analects*. As described in the preface, having resolutely abandoned "learning for the examination" (*cử tử học* 舉子學), Phạm read the *Analects* in three stages. First, he read the main text repeatedly until becoming intimately familiar with it (*shoudu* 熟讀). The term *shoudu* employed in this specific context is actually also a key term in the *Conversations with Master Zhu, Arranged Topically* (*Zhuzi yulei* 朱子語類), especially in the sections on reading. According to Zhu Xi, becoming intimately familiar with a text means the reader taking it into their heart-and-mind, an embodiment process that requires both physical experiences of and deep reflections on the focal subject. As stated in *Conversations with Master Zhu:*

> Generally speaking, in reading, we must first become intimately familiar with the text so that its words seem to come from our own mouths. We should then continue to reflect on it so that its ideas seem to come from our minds. Only then can there be real understanding. (Chu 1990, 135)[27]

Using this specific term, Phạm clearly shared the same thoughts with Zhu Xi, as the first stage of his reading method implied direct contact with and independent understanding of the text without assistance from any intermediary.

In the second and third stages of his reading, Phạm reread the *Analects* with the help of the *Collected Commentaries*, and later, in consultation with the annotations made by other Confucian scholars. This appears similar to the method described in *Conversations with Master Zhu,* which recommends reading commentaries only after the attainment of intimate familiarity with the text. In Zhu Xi's words, the order should go as follows: "At the moment I'm not even speaking about the recitation of commentaries; let's simply recite the classical texts to the point of intimate familiarity (Chu 1990, 138)."[28]

27 The original reads, 大抵觀書先須熟讀，使其言皆若出於吾之口；繼以精思，使其意皆若出於吾之心，然後可以有得爾。

28 The original reads, 而今未說讀得注，且只熟讀正經. As a breakthrough, the first and direct reading of a text requires great effort, and the consultation of commentaries should only come later. Zhu Xi reminds us that, "You must take the classical text and read it till you've become intimately familiar with it. Savor each and every word until you know its taste. If there are passages you don't understand, ponder them deeply, and if you still don't get them, then read the commentaries—only then will the commentaries have any significance" (ibid., 155).

The way Phạm studied the *Analects* was thus very much in line with Zhu Xi's reading method. According to Zhu Xi, if people do not read a classical text in this manner, their understanding of it will remain superficial: "the words will be hollow and learning will not be for their own sake, as is now the case with those preparing for the examinations" (Chu 1990, 156).

Besides the *Humble Comments*, Phạm Nguyễn Du's thoughts on "learning for the sake of one's self" are also well presented in a poem entitled "Bequeathed to Phạm Lập Trai, Who Passed the Imperial Examination in the Same Year as the Author"[29] (Di đồng niên Phạm Lập Trai 遺同年范立齋). The poem reads:

Memorizing well the remainder [of the teachings of the sages],	記誦得緒餘
Holding fast to them but losing their true subtleties,	攀持失真妙
People are remote in time and space from the thoughts of Confucius and Mencius,	悠悠孔孟意
And [the thoughts of the masters] increasingly become vague and unclear to them.	日望益幽渺
[Following such a learning method], people will ruin their intention,	以此壞心術
Run into the apertures of fame and gain,	走入聲利竅
And even until their death, remain unaware of its danger.	到死不自覺
This is both regrettable and mournful.	可嘆復可悼
I am glad that at your young age,	我喜君年髫
Through learning, you already found the gist [of the teachings].	學已見大要
Various schools of thinkers have discussed [the classics] in succession,	百家談紛紛
As a mixed assembly of disciples in chaos.	雜進徒擾擾
As gem-like stones, they can be thousands though,	雖累千碔砆
But can any small piece of preciousness be found among them?	何如一寸寶
Why don't we go back to the essence [of the teachings],	曷不反精義
Probing [into the texts], gradually analysing and understanding them?	探討漸剖瞭
When the latent has been revealed and honoured,	蘊蓄既寵遂
It will expand, exposing its depth and vastness.	克擴自汪浩
Confucians of the Song and Yuan dynasties had gone ahead,	宋元諸儒先
Closing the door and carefully studying [the classics].	閉門事講究
[Traveling on] the great road, one really looks up [to the high hill].	景行實在仰

29 Lập Trai 立齋 is the literary name of Phạm Quý Thích 范貴適 (1760–1825), who passed the civil service examination and earned the title "presented scholar," *jinshi* 進士, at the age of 19 in 1779. Like Phạm Nguyễn Du, he was uncooperative with the Tây Sơn.

All of the profound teachings can be examined	微訓皆可考
And traced back up to their sources.	淵源遡以上
The effects [of this learning method] are not small, indeed.	功用良非少
If the cause of truth does not perish,	斯文苟不喪
With it, one can rise again from decline and failure.	相與起衰倒

The last two lines in the poem are unmistakably based on Chapter 9.5 of the *Analects*. In that chapter, the Master remained fearless when facing threats because he confidently considered himself the embodiment of this culture.[30] Similarly, Phạm placed himself in a comparable position of a follower of the Way, who had learned and experienced the Sage's teaching, holding fast to and finally practicing it in his life. The poem nicely summarizes the last five phases of Phạm's transformative learning process, whose starting point is "Learning for the sake of one's self".

"Learning for the Sake of One's Self" in Modern Contexts

Determining the precise contexts of all Confucius' sayings, made thousands of years ago, remains an impossible task. In his discussion of the difficulties of contextualizing Confucian classics, Tu Wei-Ming mentions the dictum of "learning for the sake of one's self" as an example of this arduous task,

> The challenge all members of the scholarly community who are actively involved in comparative studies must face is whether or not, in principle, we can really understand such a deceptively simple Confucian statement as "learning is for the sake of the self" out of context. The answer, unfortunately, must be in the negative. We cannot know what it means if we do not situate it in its proper context. (Tu 1985, 54)

However, besides their efforts in reconstructing the contexts of the sayings, people often try to read the Master's words into their contemporary contexts. It is not difficult to see that both Zhu Xi and Phạm Nguyễn Du advocated "learning for the sake of one's self" on similar grounds, working against the socio-educational

30 The chapter reads, "The Master was put in fear in Kuang. He said, 'After the death of King Wen, was not the cause of truth lodged here in me? If Heaven had wished to let this cause of truth perish, then I, a future mortal, should not have got such a relation to that cause. While Heaven does not let the cause of truth perish, what can the people of Kuang do to me?'" (*Chinese Text Project* 2017)

evils of their times, which were learning exclusively for the sake of the civil service examination, for personal career-advancement and interest, and nothing else.[31] As pointed out by de Bary, Zhu Xi's thoughts started and ended with the goal of "learning for the sake of one's self" (de Bary 1991, 31), and the same is true of Phạm Nguyễn Du. They both read, understood, and carried Confucius' dictum into their contemporary contexts.

Although still trying to reconstruct the socio-political and cultural contexts of the tradition of "learning for the sake of one's self" (Kuang 2012, 27–37), modern scholars seem more interested in its potential impact on contemporary society (if it were to be widely taught and embraced). Bian Shiying believes that Confucian "learning for the sake of one's self" has nothing to do with vulgar individualism that is now popularly understood as striving egoistically for the benefit of oneself. On the contrary, it is the need to morally cultivate and perfect the self which is the core of strong human relationships (Bian 2005, 124).

Based on the same understanding, Li Can feels the urgency to recover and strengthen the tradition of "learning for the sake of one's self" in order to fight against utilitarianism, as well as the need to revivify it to reinforce the interactive effects of the "college humanistic quality education model." Li even goes further, and criticizes the abuse of multimedia in college teaching that can weaken the thinking abilities of the student, and suggests that the tradition of "learning for the sake of one's self" could be a way to reduce the overdependence of college teaching and learning on multimedia sources—one that can enhance the proactivity of the learners (Li 2015, 49; 2011, 17–20; 2010, 122–25).

Huang Jianhua and Wang Derong examine the principle in connection with Zhu Xi's *Learning Regulations of Bailudong Academy* (*Bailudong shuyuan xuegui* 白鹿洞書院學規). As Zhu Xi's Academy took the principle of "learning for the sake of one's self" as an integral part of its spirit, it emphasized three key issues: the cultivation of morality, the pursuit of the self-improvement of virtues, and the realization of an ideal personality. Like Xiao Qunzhong and other Chinese scholars (Xiao 2002, 5–9; Li 2008, 77–80), Huang and Wang see this traditional moral education trend as advantageous in modern society, because it can contribute to training a healthy personality, constructing a harmonious social environment, improving the self-consciousness and initiative of the moral subject, and removing utilitarian and instrumentalist tendencies from modern

31 Here is Zhu Xi's description of what was happening in his time, "But in today's world what fathers encourage in their sons, what older brothers exhort in their younger brothers, what teachers impart to their students, and what students all study for is nothing more than to prepare for the civil service examinations" (de Bary 1991, 32).

education (Huang 2012, 18–21).[32] Other scholars, such as Zhou Zhixiang and Zhu Hanmin, also study Zhu Xi's perception of the tradition of "learning for the sake of one's self," concluding that for Zhu, this tradition is both the goal and foundational principle of learning, and that the purpose of Zhu's interpretation of the *Great Learning* (*Daxue* 大學) is to theorize and systematize the tradition, as well as to implement it in his annotated text (Zhou 2011, 34–39). The principle is also studied in relation with Kant's concepts of moral self-discipline and freedom (Wen 2006, 63–70).

Since the tradition/principle of "learning for the sake of one's self" has travelled far beyond national boundaries, it has been practiced and studied not only within China, but also in other countries in East Asia. In Korea, the eminent Neo-Confucian Yi Hwang 李滉 (1501–1570, more widely known as Yi T'oegye 李退溪), had his understanding of the tradition linked directly to the study of the heart-and-mind (*simhak* 心學), which was systematized in the Study of Principle (*lihak* 理學) and centred on Substance-Function (*cheyong* 體用) (Lee 2010, 165–90). Studying the influence of the Cheng brothers' interpretation of the principle "learning for the sake of one's self" on Korean educational philosophy, Jang Jing Ho focuses on the case of Yi T'oegye, and concludes that the revivification of this tradition could be used to counter certain problems in contemporary education, such as egoism, commercialism, and the worship of money (Zhang 2002, 75–78).

The case of Phạm Nguyễn Du suggests that the notion of "learning for the sake of one's self" is both similar to and different from these latter-day attempts to revive the term as a principle of learning. Among Phạm's many elucidations of the dictum, his comments on Chapter 9:30 ("Zi Han子罕") of the *Analects* are worth considering. Here he stated:

> When understanding that learning is for the sake of one's self, one will be able to put forth one's strength conscientiously; hereafter one can believe in right principles with firmer sincerity[33]; hereafter one can stand erect in the middle without inclining to either side[34]; hereafter one can

32 There are a number of essays written in the same vein, such as Pang 2010, 8–9.

33 Chapter 19.2 ("Zizhang 子張") from the *Analects* reads, "Zi Zhang said, "When a man holds fast to virtue, but without seeking to enlarge it, and *believes in right principles, but without firm sincerity* (信道不篤), what account can be made of his existence or non-*existence?"* (*Chinese Text Project* 2017; emphasis mine).

34 The *Doctrine of the Mean* (*Zhongyong*) records a conversation between Confucius and Zilu 子路 on energy (*qiang* 強), in which the Master states, "The superior man cultivates a friendly harmony, without being weak. How firm is he in his energy! He *stands erect in the middle, without inclining to either side* (中立而不倚). How firm is he in his energy!" (*Chinese Text Project* 2017; emphasis mine).

> suit one's actions to changing conditions. The attainment of this level is already the sage's affair.[35]

For Phạm, "learning for the sake of one's self" is the foundation of the long process of becoming a sage. With the right motivation, he believed, a person will invest all efforts into the perfection of the self and knowledge. Self-cultivation and knowledge learning are thus processes that require the learner to use critical observation and analysis to verify the truthfulness of what he has learned. Only in such conditions can the learner accept and live up to the verified "right principles with firmer sincerity". This critical mind helps to prevent any biases, helping the follower of the Way to "stand erect in the middle without inclining to either side". Standing unbiased subsequently allows the sage-to-be to act flexibly according to any given circumstances when holding fast to his right principles. This depiction of this lifelong learning process can serve as advice that is universally applicable to anyone who sincerely wishes to become more morally cultivated, intellectually improved, and socially engaged. Thus, besides reading the dictum into contemporary contexts and employing it as a way to fight against egoism, commercialization, corruption, and other negative practices in modern education, Phạm's thoughts on the motto "Learning for the sake of one's self" presented in his *Humble Comments* can inspire us with suggestions of how to live this motto to the fullest.

Conclusion

As a theory of adult learning, transformative learning theory allows us a deeper look into the intellectual life of Phạm Nguyễn Du and his *Humble Comments*, helping us to identify Phạm's deep shift in perspective from "learning for the sake of others" to "learning for the sake of one's self". His transformative learning process was a long-running attempt to find true knowledge in the predicaments and circumstances in which he found himself. Although his chosen path to Confucian sagehood was long and difficult, Phạm was determined to take it. By intensively reading the *Analects* in the light of Neo-Confucian philosophy and in the context of civil-war-torn eighteenth-century Vietnam, Phạm completed what would later be formalised as Mezirow's ten phases of the transformative learning procedure. Powerful and encouraging, Phạm's story is an example of how a pre-modern Vietnamese member of the literati could read a Confucian classic and adapt Neo-Confucianism to the socio-cultural and historical conditions in which he lived.

35 The original reads, 知學為為己，則能切實用力，然後能信道愈篤，然後能中立不倚，然後能達權與變。至是已為聖人之事矣。

Viewed in this light, Phạm's career and work offer a valuable perspective on the question of whether and how Confucian tradition(s) of learning can contribute to the acquisition of knowledge and self-cultivation in the information age. Phạm's agenda of "learning for the sake of one's self" does not mean egoism; instead, it reflects the quest for self-improvement as a means to promote positive social change. Phạm urged the learner not to blindly believe in and dogmatically repeat what she has learned, but to experiment and draw out meaningful lessons from her own experience. Moreover, the unconventional organization of *Humble Comments* reflects Phạm's commitment to the ideal of independent and creative thinking. Phạm's work thus offers us an opportunity to see Confucianism as a vibrant literary and philosophical tradition—a tradition that many in Vietnam and elsewhere have used to reflect critically on some of the most pressing issues of our contemporary era.

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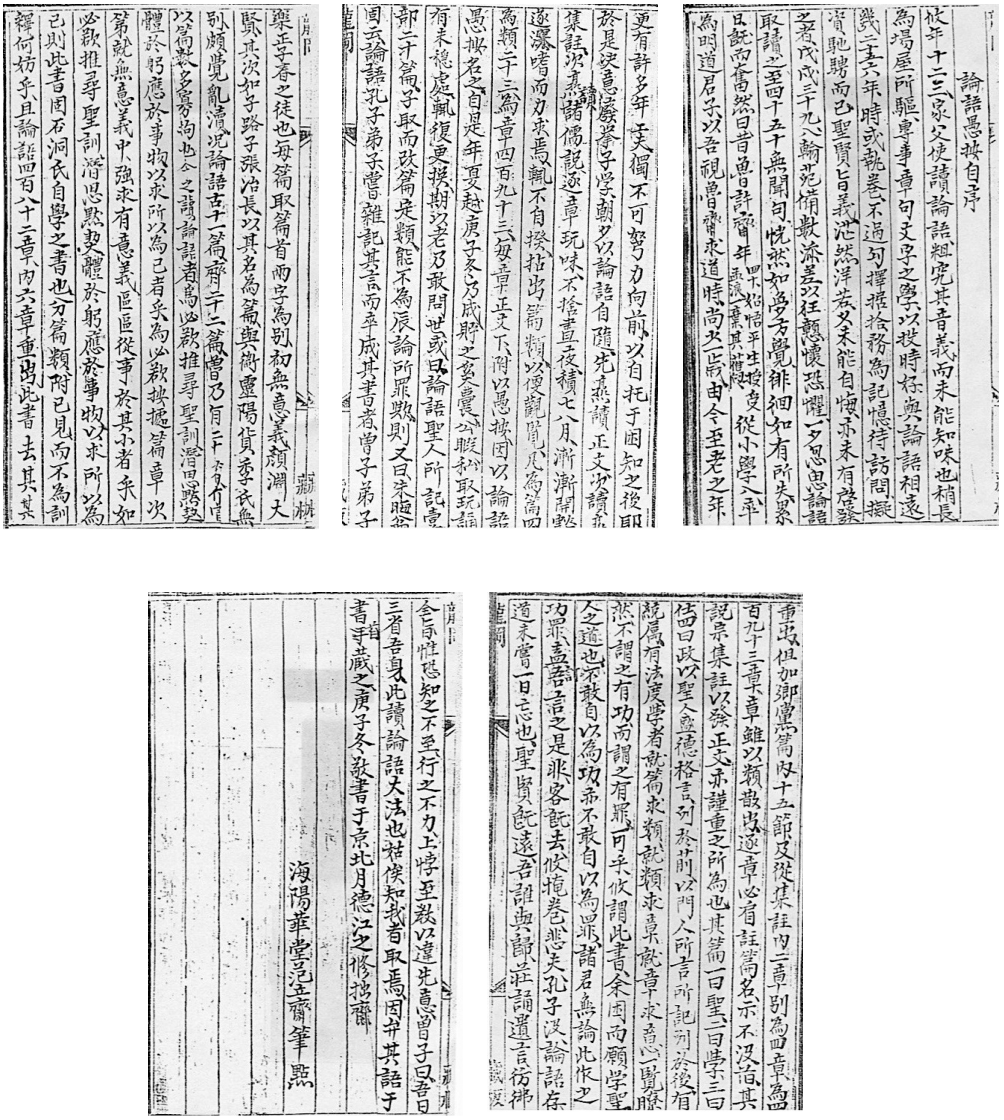
Appendix A

Phạm Nguyễn Du's

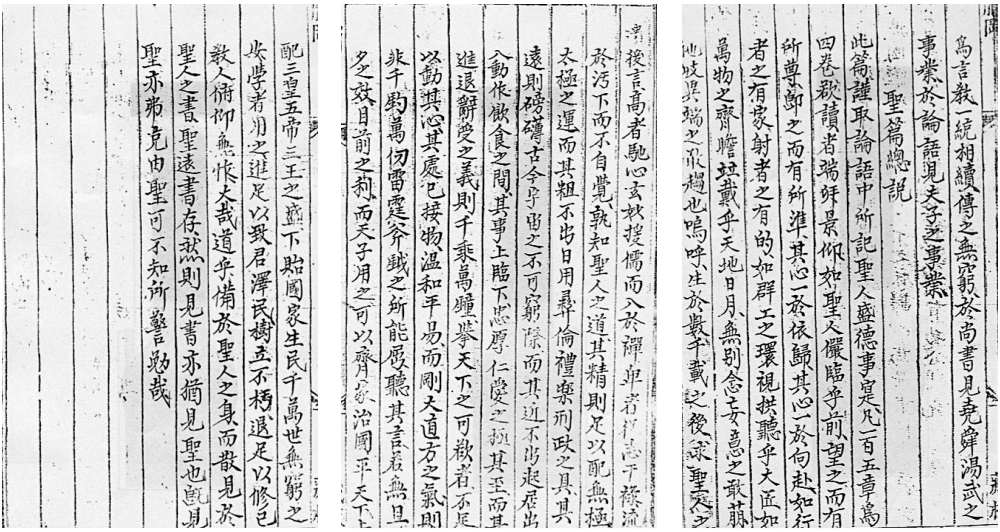
"Preface" to the *Humble Comments on the Analects*

(from *Luận Ngữ Ngu Án* 論語愚案, preserved in the library of the Institute of Han-Nom Studies, Hanoi, Vietnam, VHV.349/1-2)

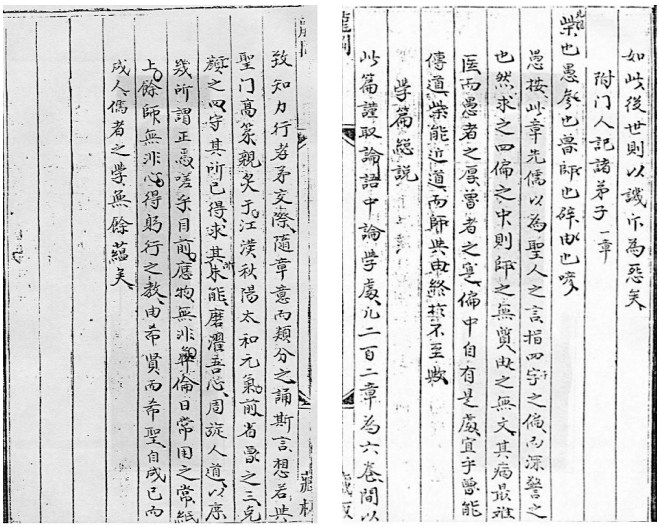


Appendix B:

"General Statements on the Sage"



"General Statements on Learning"



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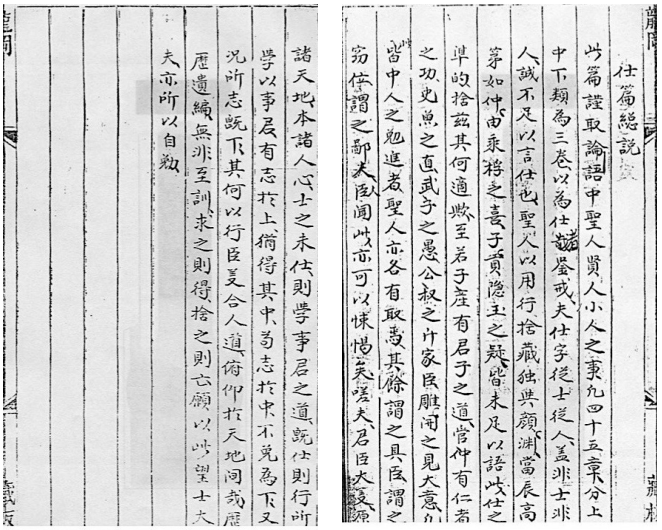
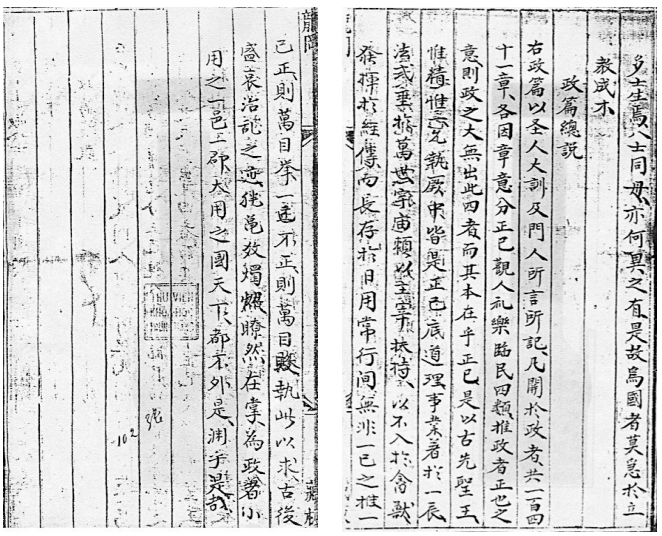


“General Statements on Politics”



Asian Studies in Slovenia

Zbirke starih japonskih razglednic v Republiki Sloveniji[1]

*Chikako SHIGEMORI BUČAR**

Izvleček

V okviru raziskave "Vzhodnoazijske zbirke v Sloveniji" smo identificirali stare japonske razglednice v več ustanovah po Republiki Sloveniji. Za večino zbirk vemo imena posameznih zbiralcev in ozadje zbiranja. Ta prispevek predstavlja 160 razglednic, ki so bile med letoma 1899 in 1920 natisnjene na Japonskem, nekatere med njimi pa so v istem obdobju tudi uporabili. Fotografije na teh razglednicah lahko delimo na štiri kategorije: 1) pokrajina, pristanišča, mesta in turistične znamenitosti; 2) hiše, vrtovi, oblačila, pričeske in navade Japoncev; 3) posebni predmeti npr. lutke, ladje; 4) naravne nesreče.

Obdobje od konca 19. stoletja do leta 1920 lahko imenujemo "Doba razglednic", saj so razglednice v tem času imele pomembno vlogo posredovanja informacij in novic iz daljnih krajev npr. z Japonske in iz Vzhodne Azije.

Ključne besede: razglednica, Japonska, Meiji, Taishō, Avstro-Ogrska

The Collections of Old Japanese Postcards in Republic of Slovenia

Abstract

During our research "East Asian collections in Slovenia", old Japanese postcards were found in various institutions in today's Republic of Slovenia. For most of these postcards we know the names of individual collectors and their backgrounds.

This paper presents 160 picture postcards, produced in Japan and some of them used for correspondence between 1899 and 1920. The photos on these postcards may be categorized into the following four: 1) ports, cities and tourist sights; 2) houses, gardens, clothes, hairstyles and customs; 3) particular objects, e.g. dolls, ships; 4) natural disasters. The period from the end of 19th century to the 1920s may be called "the period of picture postcards", since postcards had the important role to convey information and news from far places such as Japan and East Asia.

Keywords: picture postcard, Japan, Meiji, Taishō, Austria-Hungary

1 Predhodna verzija tega članka je bila objavljena v monografiji v japonščini oktobra 2016 (glej Shigemori 2016). Po dodatnem raziskovanju in preverjanju podatkov v letu 2016/2017 objavljam rezultate dosedanje raziskave starih japonskih razglednic v Sloveniji.

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Uvod

Leta 2013 smo na Oddelku za azijske študije na Filozofski fakulteti Univerze v Ljubljani s skupno pobudo sinologov, japonologov in koreanistov začeli z raziskavo "Vzhodnoazijske zbirke v Sloveniji – Identifikacija, kategorizacija in digitalizacija vzhodnoazijskih umetnostno-zgodovinskih zbirk in ostalega gradiva". Med raziskovanjem v letih 2014–16 sem bila pozorna na več zanimivih razglednic z Japonske, ki so ohranjene v različnih ustanovah po Sloveniji. Ta prispevek je poročilo o lokacijah in zgodovinskih okoliščinah posameznih zbirk japonskih razglednic v Sloveniji. V prispevku predstavljam vrste in značilnosti razglednic ter s slovenske (oz. srednjeevropske) perspektive analiziram "dobo razglednic" in funkcijo japonskih (in vzhodnoazijskih) razglednic v času med 1890 in 1920.

V drugem poglavju na kratko predstavljam zgodovinske in družbene okoliščine slovenskega in japonskega naroda v obravnavanem obdobju. V tretjem poglavju podrobno opisujem ustanove, v katerih sem našla japonske razglednice, in ozadje posameznih zbirk. Nato razpravljam o »dobi razglednic«, obdobju konca devetnajstega stoletja in prve polovice dvajsetega stoletja, in razčlenjujem funkcijo razglednic v tistem času. Na koncu predstavljam še načrt za nadaljne raziskave in naloge, zlasti v povezavi z razglednicami v zgodovinskem in sociološkem kontekstu.

Zgodovinsko ozadje

Tokrat sem analizirala 160 razglednic, ki so arhivirane v štirih različnih ustanovah po Republiki Sloveniji. Čas, ko so te razglednice nastale, ko so jih natisnili in uporabili, sega od devetdesetih let devetnajstega stoletja do dvajsetih let dvajsetega stoletja: to je čas, ko je slovenski narod živel v Avstro-Ogrske (do leta 1918) in nato postal del Kraljevine Srbov, Hrvatov in Slovencev, kasneje pa Kraljevine Jugoslavije.

V času Avstro-Ogrske je bil skupen javni jezik, na primer v poštnem sistemu, nemški. Po letu 1918 se je zaradi sobivanja z drugimi južnoslovanskimi narodi uporabljalo več sosednjih jezikov. Raba jezikov se vidi tudi na razglednicah, ki so jih dejansko uporabljali kot sredstvo komunikacije.

Na Japonskem pa sta bili to obdobji Meiji (do leta 1913) in Taishō (1913–1925). To je bil čas hitre industrializacije, večalo se je tudi število tujih obiskovalcev. V tem času sta bila del Japonske tudi Tajvan in Koreja. Po mirovni pogodbi v Shimonosekiju po prvi kitajsko-japonski vojni so bili Japonski prepuščeni polotok Laodong, Tajvan, in otočje Penghu, leta 1910 pa je bila aneksirana še Koreja. Vsa ta območja so bila pod nadzorom Japonske do konca druge svetovne vojne. V

okviru te raziskave sem našla tudi veliko razglednic, ki sicer predstavljajo pokrajino, navade in znamenite kraje na Tajvanu in v Koreji, ki pa so jih oblikovali in natisnili japonski založniki, zato so napisi oz. razlage slik v japonščini.

V dosedanji raziskavi sem v Piranu našla dvajset in v Celju šestnajst razglednic na osnovi fotografij, posnetih v današnji Koreji, na današnjem Kitajskem in na Tajvanu. V primeru današnje Kitajske so to pristanišče Lushun (Ryojun / Port Arthur) in bojišče rusko-japonske vojne v Mandžurji. Ohranjene so tudi razglednice, ki prikazujejo navade in kraje iz Tajvana iz istega časa. Večina teh razglednic v ta prispevek še ni vključena in čaka na obdelavo, vemo pa, da so bile izdelane v tem obdobju v istem okviru kot druge japonske razglednice.

Ustanove in zbirke

V Tabeli 1 so imena ustanov, v katerih sem našla stare razglednice, ki predstavljajo japonske turistične kraje, pokrajino, ljudi in navade. Zraven vsake ustanove navajam še ime zbiralca, če je znano, število razglednic in čas nastanka oz. uporabe teh razglednic. Nekateri od zbiralcev, ki so bili sami na Japonskem, so prinesli s seboj ne samo razglednice, temveč tudi fotografije, knjige, umetnostne slike in pohištvo, oblačila ter drobne spominke, ki jih ravno tako hranijo te ustanove. V tem prispevku predstavljam samo razglednice.

Ustanova	Zbirka（Ime zbiralca）	Število	Čas uporabe
NUK, Ljubljana	?	13	1899
Biblioteka SAZU, Ljubljana	Ivan Jager	3	1902
Pomorski muzej Sergeja Mašere, Piran	Ivan Koršič	28	1904–1914
	Viktor Kristan	61	1908–1909
	Anton Blaznik	16	1905–1913
	Matevž Štibil	3	1912
Regionalni muzej v Celju	Alma Karlin	36	1922–1923
	skupaj	160	

Tabela 1: Ustanove, zbirke in čas uporabe japonskih razglednic

Število in vrste razglednic, ki so navedene v tabeli, razkrivajo precejšnje zanimanje Slovencev za Japonsko v obdobju od konca devetnajstega stoletja naprej. Kot sem omenila, je slovenski narod v tem času doživljal velike politične in družbene

spremembe. S stališča vsakodnevnega življenja takratnih Slovencev je bil geografsko zelo oddaljeni "Daljni vzhod" (Japonska in Vzhodna Azija) zunaj dosega in obiskali so ga lahko samo določeni privilegirani ljudje. Razglednice, ki jih obravnavam na tem mestu, so bile verjetno dragocen vir informacije za manj privilegirane Slovence. Del radovednosti in občutkov Slovencev lahko razberemo tudi v rokopisnem besedilu na razglednicah, ki so bile dejansko poslane.

V nadaljevanju sledi opis ustanov, predstavitev posameznih zbiralcev in ozadje posameznih zbirk, kolikor je znano. Analiziram tudi značilnosti razglednic.

NUK, Ljubljana

Najstarejše japonske razglednice, za katere vemo, da so ohranjene v današnji Republiki Sloveniji, so arhivirane v Narodni in univerzitetni knjižnici v Ljubljani. Enota za kartografsko in slikovno zbirko NUK-a hrani stare razglednice in fotografije z vsega sveta, ki predstavljajo zanimive pokrajine, ljudi in navade različnih krajev, razvrščene po današnjih imenih držav. V kategoriji "Japonska" je danes shranjenih štirinajst razglednic, med katerimi je tudi ena razglednica z zemljevidom Japonske in Japonskega morja (napisi v nemščini razlagajo pomorsko bitko med rusko-japonsko vojno). Ker je očitno, da je bila ta razglednica natisnjena v Evropi, je ne upoštevam kot japonsko, zato kot število ohranjenih japonskih razglednic v NUK-u navajam trinajst. Med trinajstimi razglednicami so bile štiri leta 1899 dejansko poslane. Vse štiri so bile s podpisom "Pepon" poslane z Japonske, natančno iz Nagasakija, Jokohame in Kobeja, trem različnim naslovnikom v današnjem Knežaku in Rakeku v Sloveniji. Besedilo je v nemščini in razberemo lahko tudi sorodsvene vezi nekaterih ljudi, ki so si dopisovali. V Tabeli 2 za vse štiri razglednice, poslane z Japonske, navajam, datum korespondence, vsebino fotografije, naslovnika idr. Na drugih devetih razglednicah ne vidimo sledi uporabe, glede na slog in način tiskanja pa se vidi, da so nastale v istem času. Najbrž je vse kupil "Pepon", ko je bil na Japonskem, in je uporabil prej omenjene štiri razglednice, druge pa prinesel nazaj v Slovenijo ali pa jih podaril enemu od naslovnikov.

V Enoti za kartografsko in slikovno zbirko v NUK-u so mi povedali, da ni nobene informacije o tem, po kateri poti so te razglednice prišle v arhiv. [2]

2 Naziv Univerzitetna knjižnica v Ljubljani si je knjižnica pridobila šele leta 1938. Pred tem je bila najprej jezuitska in licejska knjižnica, sredi devetnasjtega stoletja pa Deželna študijska knjižnica znotraj Avstro-Ogrske. Po koncu prve svetovne vojne je leta 1919 s preimenovanjem v Državno študijsko knjižnico postala osrednja knjižnica za vso Slovenijo. Ob ustanovitvi prve slovenske univerze v Ljubljani leta 1919 je knjižnica prevzela še funkcije in naloge centralne univerzitetne knjižnice. Vse do izgradnje Plečnikove stavbe leta 1941 so bile knjige in gradiva ohranjeni v 18 različnih čitalnicah. (Zgodovina NUK)

Pošta na Japonskem	Datum	Vsebina fotografije	Naslovnik	Opombe
Nagasaki	15. 6. 1899	Mati s pahljačo v roki gleda na spečega otroka (fotografija je približno 1/5 cele površine)	Oberförster Schollmayer, Mašun(?) Post Grafenbrunn b. St. Peter Krain	danes Knežak, tikanje
Nagasaki	15. 6. 1899	Reka in most (Brez pripisa. Fotografija je približno 1/2 cele površne.)	Wilhelmina Gräfin Lichtenberg in Hallerstein Post Altenmarkt Rakek Krain	danes Rakek, vikanje
Jokohama	6. 7. 1899	Hakone Yumoto, slap Tamadare no taki (fotografija je 1/2 površine)	Wilhelmina Gräfin Lichtenberg in Hallerstein Post Altenmarkt Rakek Krain	danes Rakek, vikanje
Kobe	25. 7. 1899	Kobe Oriental Hotel, Irisov vrt v Horikiriju (Tokio), gora Fuji s snegom (tri različne scene krasi približno 2/3 površne)	frau Marie Schollmayer Mašun pri Grafenbrunn bei St. Peter Krain	piše (njen) brat Pepon

Tabela 2: Podatki o štirih uporabljenih razglednicah v NUK-u

Slika 1: Čajna hiša v Hikoneju [levo] in Kobe Oriental Hotel, irisov vrt v Horikiriju in gora Fuji s snegom [desno] (NUK)

Glede na datume na štirih razglednicah domnevamo, da je pisec z vzdevkom Pepon potoval na križarki SMS Kaiserin Elizabeth.[3] Naslovniki so bili višji gozdar[4] in njegova žena ter grofica[5] na Notranjskem, v Knežaku oz. na Rakeku. Po besedilu vidimo, da sta pisec in gozdarjeva žena brat in sestra, grofico v Rakeku je pisec vikal.

Vse japonske razglednice v NUK-u predstavljajo takratne japonske pokrajine in ljudi. V primerjavi z novejšimi razglednicami, ki so bile narejene v dvajsetem stoletju, je razlika v tem, da je na sprednji strani s fotografijo vedno nekaj prostora pod fotografijo ali pa na njeni levi oz. desni strani, kamor so uporabniki lahko pisali besedilo. Razlaga fotografije je navadno v angleščini natisnjena takoj pod fotografijo ali na fotografiji. To kaže, da so bile te razglednice narejene za tuje obiskovalce, v večini primerov iz zahodnih držav. Fotografije na teh razglednicah prikazujejo veliko šintoistično svetišče Kasuga v Nari (*Kasuga taisha*), vrata Yōmei (*Yōmeimon*) in zgradbo za Mahāvairocano (*Dainichidō*) v Nikkōju, Ōgiya v Ōjiju, Tokio, čajno hišo v Hikoneju, prikaz japonskega čajnega obreda idr. Vse to so rjavkaste črno-bele fotografije, druge fotografije pa so črno-bele fotografije z barvami, ki so bile nanešene ročno. Motivi na barvnih razglednicah so pogled na goro Fudži iz vasi Ōmiya, gora Fudži in slapovi Shiraito, sprevod nosilnic čez Hakone in štirje zgoraj opisani (v Tabeli 2).

Biblioteka SAZU, Ljubljana: Jagrova zbirka

Nekoliko novejše razglednice iz Japonske najdemo v Biblioteki SAZU v Ljubljani, med razglednicami v zapuščini Ivana Jagra. Ivan oz. John Jager se je rodil v bližini Bistre pri Vrhniki leta 1871 in po končanem visokošolskem študiju na Visoki tehniški šoli na Dunaju ga je avstrijska vlada poslala na Kitajsko da bi obnovil v boksarski vstaji leta 1901 porušeno avstrijsko poslaništvo v Pekingu.[6] Med bivanjem na Kitajskem je Jager spoznal vzhodno azijsko kulturo in se začel zanimati ter zbirati oblačila in manjše kose kitajske svile, japonske lesoreze, orožje in branike mečev tsuba itd. Leta 1902 se je preselil v ZDA in je živel v Minneapolisu, kjer je bil aktiven kot arhitekt in strokovnjak za urbanizem itd. V njegovi zbirki je tudi veliko knjig o filozofiji, zgodovini, arhitekturi, antropologiji in jezikoslovju. Jagrova zbirka, ki je zdaj ohranjena v Biblioteki SAZU, je bila donacija Jagrove vdove (Pajsar 2007) in med njimi so tri razglednice z Japonske. Dve sta bili uporabljeni in popisani v slovenščini kot korespondenca med Ivanom Jagrom in takratno zaročenko Selmo, ki je živela na

3 Zahvaljujem se za pomoč ge. Nani Miyata, Österr. Akademie der Wissenschaften, Wien, Institut für Neuzeit- u. Zeitgeschichts-forschung.

4 Oberförster

5 Gräfin

6 O Ivanu (Johnu) Jagru glej Rothaus 2013 in Čeplak Mencin 2012, 140–1.

Dunaju. Datuma v besedilu sta 29. december 1901 in 10. januar 1902, po poštnem žigu pa vidimo, da sta obe prispeli na Dunaj januarja 1902.

Slika 2: Trganje čajnih listov (Biblioteka SAZU)

Sestava oz. oblika teh razglednic je podobna tistim v NUK-u, ki sem jih predstavila v prejšnjem poglavju. Del fotografije na sprednji strani je manjši od celotne površine razglednice, pokriva od polovice do dveh tretjin razglednice, pod fotografijo ali zraven nje je še prostor za besedilo. Fotografije so črno-bele s kasnejšim ročnim barvanjem. Motivi so svetišče Nankō pri Kōbeju, trganje čajnih listov z ozadjem gore Fudži, kamnit most, vsi brez razlag. Tisk na hrbtni strani (za naslove idr.) je v istem formatu kot razglednice v NUK-u, npr. napis "razglednica Univerzalne poštne unije" 萬国郵便聯合端書 (*Bankoku yūbin rengō hagaki*) je napisan po japonsko z desne proti levi.

Slika 3: Hrbtna stran razglednice Trganje čajnih listov (Biblioteka SAZU)

Pomorski muzej Sergeja Mašere v Piranu

Pomorski muzej Serjega Mašere v Piranu je zanimiv, ker se specializira za zgodovino pomorskih dejavnosti v tem kraju in njegovi okolici, najprej v avstrijskem in nato avstro-ogrskem času, kasneje pa v Sloveniji v okviru Jugoslavije. Hrani tudi gradivo o pomorstvu v povojni Jugoslaviji (Marinac 2005). Ima več zbirk in število razglednic v posameznih zbirkah je tudi večje. Veliko je tudi razglednic in fotografij, ki prikazujejo življenje pomorščakov v času, ko se je politična ureditev spreminjala. Kot drugo značilnost zbirk v tem muzeju lahko omenim, da so razglednice in/ali fotografije zbrane v albumih.

Osrednje pristanišče avstro-ogrske mornarice je bilo na začetku v Benetkah, nato v Trstu, po letu 1856 pa v Pulju. Na začetku dvajsetega stoletja je bila avstro-ogrska mornarica ena najmočnejših na svetu, leta 1914 je bilo v njej na primer skoraj dvajset tisoč vojakov. Narodnostno je bila zelo pisana: v njej so sodelovali Hrvati, Madžari, Avstrijci, Italjani, Slovenci, Poljaki, Čehi, Slovaki idr. (povzeto po letaku Muzeja Sergeja Mašere). Zbirke, ki sem jih našla med tokratno raziskavo, so nastale v času Avstro-Ogrske, zato so poštni naslovi ter besedila na razglednicah v različnih jezikih, npr. slovenskem, hrvaškem, nemškem, italjanskem.

Koršičeva zbirka

Najstarejša zbirka japonskih razglednic, ki se hrani v Pomorskem muzeju v Piranu, je album Ivana Koršiča. Ivan Koršič se je rodil 1870 v Solkanu, postal je katoliški duhovnik in je služboval pri avstro-ogrski mornarici kot mornariški superior (vojaški škof). Koršič sam pa ni nikoli potoval v Vzhodno Azijo, vendar so mu številni mornarji pošiljali razglednice z vsega sveta. Skupaj naj bi imel osem albumov, v katerih je ohranjenih 1871 fotografij in razglednic (Čeplak 2012, 98). Med njimi sem našla osemindvajset razglednic, ki prikazujejo japonske pokrajine in navade. Tri razglednice so črno-bele fotografije, druge pa, kakor sem ugotovila tudi pri drugih zbirkah, črno-bele fotografije z dodatnim obarvanjem.

Motivi na teh razglednicah so: pristanišča (Nagasaki, Kōbe, Jokohama), prizori iz mesta Tokio, stara svetišča in templji. Na 16 razglednicah vidimo pripis pod fotografijo (naslov fotografije) v japonščini in angleščini (japonščina je napisana po takratnem pravopisnem pravilu z desne proti levi). Med razglednicami brez pripisa so takšne, ki prikazujejo japonske navade in običaje: rikše; dekle, ki je oblečeno v kimono in igra na piščal; dekleti, ki plešeta v sobi; dekleta na japonskem vrtu; ženske na vrtu pod glicinijo idr. Na razglednici, ki prikazuje japonsko mizarsko delo s tremi mizarji oz. tesarji, je napis »CARPENTERS« v angleščini.

Slika 4: Yokohama (Koršičeva zbirka, Pomorski muzej v Piranu)

Slika 5: Ikuta tempelj, Kobe (Koršičeva zbirka, Pomorski muzej v Piranu)

Na treh od osemindvajset razglednic je na sprednji strani približno petina površine prostora za korespondenco. Na vseh drugih je fotografija po celi površini: ker so vse razglednice v tem albumu nalepljene, ne moremo pogledati na hrbtno stran. Po raziskavi Urakawe (2008 East Asia Image Collection Blog: 133) vemo, da so se japonske razglednice preoblikovale marca 1907 in od takrat je del hrbtne strani namenjen besedilu korespondence. To se pravi, da so bile tiste razglednice v Koršičevi zbirki, na katerih je fotografija po celotni površini sprednje strani, verjetno natisnjene po aprilu 1907. Vemo tudi, da je Koršič zbiral razglednice in fotografije med letoma 1904 in 1914.

Slika 6: Dekle igra na piščal (Koršičeva zbirka, Pomorski muzej v Piranu)

Slika 7: CARPENTERS (Koršičeva zbirka, Pomorski muzej v Piranu)

Izmed osemindvajset japonskih razglednic v Koršičevi zbirki jih je deset, na katerih je tudi besedilo oz. korespondenca. Na nekaterih vidimo tudi poštne žige in sledi poštnih znamk, ki so bile odstranjene. Tako vemo, da je bila vsaj polovica teh japonskih razglednic dejansko uporabljena oz. odposlana iz pristanišč na Japonskem ali nekje v Vzhodni Aziji. V tej zbirki večkrat vidimo podpis iste osebe, Zvonimirja Ožegovića. Po arhiviranih podatkih v Pomorskem muzeju je bil Ožegović rojen leta 1885 in delal kot vodja stroja 1. reda (podčastnik). Pogosto je pisal Koršiču: leta 1904 iz Kōbeja, 1905 iz Kōbeja in Jokohame, 1907 zopet iz Jokohame in 1908 iz Kōbeja in Nagasakija. Vsakič je dopisal nekaj besedila in se podpisal zraven fotografije (če je bilo prostora za besedilo) ali tudi čez fotografijo. Njegovo besedilo je vedno v nemščini. Obstaja tudi podpis Alojza Tepine, za katerega vemo, da je bil na križarki Kaiserin Elizabeth: leta 1910 je poslal razglednico iz Jokohame.[7]

Kristanova zbirka

Pomorski muzej Sergeja Mašere je junija leta 2014 pridobil nove albume Viktorja Kristana. V dveh med njimi lahko vidimo razglednice in fotografije iz Japonske in sosednih držav. Kristan se je rodil v Šentvidu pri Stični in je bil intendantski častnik na križarki Leopold. Na poti je zbral tri albume fotografij. Na platnici vidimo datuma odhoda in vrnitve križarke: S. M. S. Leopard, 15. IV. 1907–18. IV. 1909.

Med vsemi zbirkami, ki sem jih obravnavala v tej raziskavi, ima Kristanova zbirka največ razglednic z Japonske, kar enainšestdeset. Po vsebini jih lahko razdelimo na tri skupine.

Največja skupina razglednic prikazuje japonska mesta, svetišča in templje. Te fotografije so črno-bele, a so dodatno obarvane, natisnjene po celi površini razglednice in imajo kratko razlago (ponavadi krajevno ime ali naziv svetišča) v japonščini in angleščini. Poleg že zgoraj omenjenih znanih pristanišč so na njih še mesta Shimonoseki, Moji, Kagoshima in svetišča v teh mestih, park in gostišče v Itsukushimi, grad v Nagoyi, Hotel Monju pri znamenitem kraju Ama no hashidate, pogled na goro Fudži z različnih strani, cesarjeva palača v Tokiu idr.

Druga skupina razglednic v Kristanovi zbirki prikazuje življenje, navade in poklice takratnih Japoncev. Tudi te razglednice so prvotno črno-bele s kasnejšim barvanjem, nimajo pa pripisa oz. razlage. Ženski v kimonu, ki se priklanjata pred hišnimi vrati, skupina ljudi na čolnih v ribniku na japonskem vrtu, moški na vrtu perunik, okras pred hišo za praznik dečkov idr.

7 Za podatke o zbiralcih in pomorščakih v zvezi z razglednicami v Pomorskem muzeju Sergeja Mašere v Piranu se zahvaljujem kustosinji g. Marinac.

Slika 8: Kristanov album (Pomorski muzej v Piranu)

V zbirki pa so tudi razglednice, ki predstavljajo japonsko življenje znotraj hiše, npr. tri dekleta, ki skupaj prebirajo časopis. Med njimi so tudi trije nepobarvani črno-beli posnetki lutk, ki so oblečene v japonske zgodovinske noše: po napisih vidimo, da so to dvorne dame, fevdalni gospod in žena fevdalnega gospoda v obdobju Tokugawa. Ti napisi so samo v japonščini, napisani z desne proti levi po takratnem pravopisu.

V tretji skupini so razglednice, na katerih vidimo vojne ladje in pristanišča ter bojišča na takratnem japonskem ozemlju na korejskem polotoku in v Mandžuriji. Zanimive so razglednice z napisom »Russian Cruiser Variag off Chemulpo«, »Exprosion of the Corietz«[8] in »The Corietz and a Transporter«. Najverjetneje so to fotografije, ki jih je posnel novinar na japonskih vojnih ladjah. So črno-bele in pripis na vsaki od teh razglednic je v angleščini in japonščini.

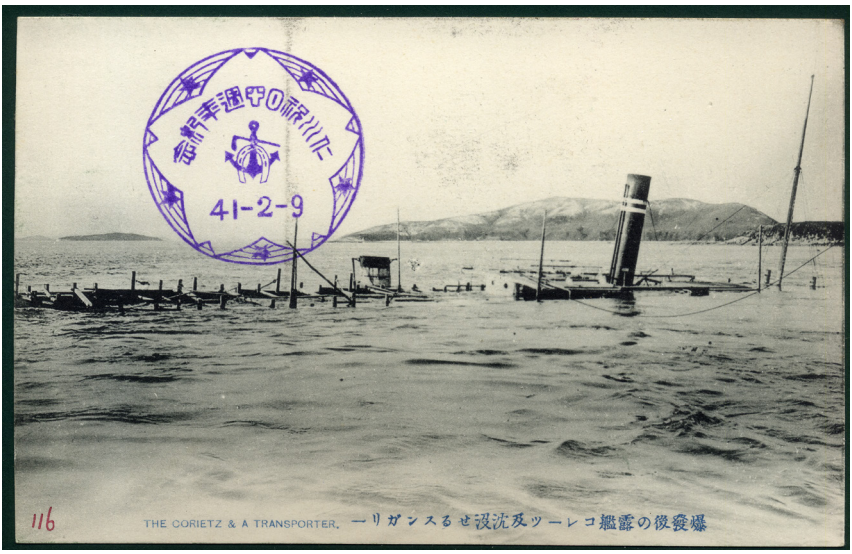
Kot sem že omenila, je bil Kristan od druge polovice leta 1907 do prve polovice 1909 na križarki Leopard, kar pomeni, da je nekaj let po končanem rusko-japonski vojni potoval po vzhodnoazijskih pristaniščih. Vidimo, da je bilo možno dobiti take posnetke v obliki razglednic v tem času.

V Kristanovi zbirki, pa tudi v Blaznikovi, je kar nekaj razglednic, ki prikazujejo ljudi in navade v Koreji in na Tajvanu, a jih v tokratno raziskavo nisem vključila. Upam, da bodo kmalu pravilno identificirane in uvrščene v ustrezni obliki.

8 S tipično japonsko napako v črkovanju (explosion/exprosion).

Slika 9: Oblačila iz obdobja Tokugawa (Kristanova zbirka, Pomorski muzej v Piranu)

Slika 10: Eksplozija ruske vojne ladje Corietz (Kristanova zbirka, Pomorski muzej v Piranu)



Slika 11: Corietz in Sungari (Kristanova zbirka, Pomorski muzej v Piranu)

Blaznikova zbirka

V Pomorskem muzeju Sergeja Mašere v Piranu je tudi album Avgusta Blaznika. Blaznik je bil rojen v Fari pri Kostelu na Kočevskem in je končal podoficirsko artilerijsko šolo v Šibeniku. Do leta 1918 je delal na različnih ladjah. Njegova zbirka je ohranjena tudi v albumu, na njegovi sprednji platnici vidimo naslov »BLASNIK A. 1905–1913«. Tematika njegovega zbiranja je bila nedvomno vojna ladja, vendar med razglednicami in fotografijami ladij najdemo tudi pokrajine, znamenitosti raznih krajev, pristanišča ipd. Japonskih razglednic je v tem albumu šestnajst in vidimo lahko podobnosti s Kristanovo zbirko: čeprav so razglednice z Japonske maloštevilne, so vseh treh vrst: pokrajina in mestni prizori, navade in poklici ter vojne ladje. Najbolj zanimivo pri tem albumu je, da vidimo razglednice vojnih ladij iz časa Japonskega imperija. Ohranjene so razglednice križark Mogami, Izumo in Takachiho.

V Blaznikovem albumu je kar nekaj fotografij in razglednic, ki prikazujejo pokrajino takratnega japonskega ozemlja na celini (npr. mesto Dalian/Dairen, koncesija pri Inchonu, bojišča pri pristanišču Ryojun – Port Arthur, bojišče Shōjusan). Vse te razglednice (in fotografije) so črno-bele.

Štibilova zbirka

Pomorski muzej Sergeja Mašere hrani tudi predmete, ki so bili v lasti Matevža Štibila, rojenega leta 1890 v Struženem pri Kranju. Postal je inštruktor topništva v avstro-ogrski mornarici in služboval na ladjah Tegetthoff, Maria Theresia in Prinz Eugen. V njegovi zbirki so tri japonske razglednice, ki so mu jih verjetno njegovi učenci poslali iz kitajskih pristanišč. Na eni od teh razglednic je razvidno, da je bila oddana v Tjanjinu 9. februarja 1912. Na naslovu se vidi, da je bil naslovnik Štibil z ladjo Maria Theresia enkrat v pristanišču Trst, drugič pa v Pulju. Tretja razglednica je poslana na ladjo Tegetthoff v pristanišču Pulj. Naslovi so napisani v nemščini in italjanščini, besedilo dopisovanja pa je slovensko.

Slika 12: Japonska križarka Izumo (Blaznikova zbirka, Pomorski muzej v Piranu)

Motivi teh razglednic so mlada Japonka v prazničnem kimonu z japonsko pričesko (črno-bela fotografija brez napisa); dekleti v takratnih kopalkah z rokavi in do kolen, ki ležita na pesku (črno-bela fotografija z dodanimi barvami) in narisana obmorska pokrajina s kočo, borom in pticami. Polovica hrbtne (naslovne) strani prvih dveh razglednic je namenjena za besedilo. Tretja razglednica ima tudi del za korespondenco in v sredini naslovne strani vidimo napis MADE IN JAPAN.

Slika 13: Mlada Japonka v prazničnem kimonu z japonsko pričesko (Štibilova zbirka, Pomorski muzej v Piranu)

Slika 14: Hrbtna stran razglednice Slike 13 (Štibilova zbirka, Pomorski muzej v Piranu)

Slika 15: Dekleti v kopalkah (Štibilova zbirka, Pomorski muzej v Piranu)

Pokrajinski muzej v Celju

Pokrajinski muzej Celje hrani obsežno zbirko predmetov, ki jih je zbrala Alma Maksimilijana Karlin na potovanju okoli sveta med letoma 1919 in 1928. Med njenimi razglednicami so tudi japonske, ki prikazujejo Japonsko v obdobju Taishō. To so nekoliko novejše razglednice v primerjavi s tistimi, ki jih hranijo v NUK-u, Biblioteki SAZU in v Pomorskem muzeju Sergeja Mašere v Piranu.

Alma Karlin se je rodila leta 1889 v Celju (Cilli). Starši so bili Slovenci, a so za vzgojo Alme uporabljali izključno nemški jezik. Kasneje je kot novinarka in pisateljica pisala v nemškem jeziku. Kot mlado dekle se je v Londonu, Oslu in Stockholmu naučila številnih jezikov, ki jih je poučevala v domačem Celju. Leta 1919 je šla na potovanje okoli sveta in preko Peruja ter Havajijev junija 1922 prispela na Japonsko. Malo več kot eno leto je ostala na Japonskem, v glavnem v Tokiu, in nato nadaljevala pot na Korejo, Kitajsko, Polinezijo itd. V Slovenijo se je vrnila leta 1927. Z Japonske je poleg razglednic prinesla fotografije, ki jih je vsaj del posnela sama, drobne vsakdanje predmete in turistične spominke ter oblačila (yukata idr.). O svojem potovanju je pisala članke in jih pošiljala v nemške in angleške časopisne hiše. Na osnovi njenega pisanja in predmetov v zbirki lahko rekonstruiramo precejšnji del njenega potovanja okrog sveta (Stanonik 1983; Trnovec 2011).

Večina razglednic, ki jih je Alma Karlin poslala svoji materi in prijateljicam v Celju, prinesla domov ali pa s potovanja poslala domov z drugimi predmeti, je danes ohranjena v Pokrajinskem muzeju v Celju. Med njimi jih je 36 z Japonske. Številčno jih ni veliko, vendar je ta zbirka v primerjavi s prejšnjimi zbirkami bolj

raznolika. Alma Karlin je živela na Japonskem leto dni in nekaj časa delala za nemško veleposlaništvo. To pomeni, da je bila v stiku z Japonci in tujci, ki so takrat živeli na Japonskem, in ti so jo morda peljali na različne japonske kraje, ali pa je sama obiskala kraje, za katere je slišala, da so zanimivi. Tudi časovno je ta zbirka več kot osem let mlajša od drugih, kar pomeni, da so razglednice tudi novejše in z več novimi idejami pri oblikovanju. Med tem časom je cesar Meiji umrl in Japonska je začela novo obdobje, Taishō.

Največ razglednic v zbirki Alme Karlin prikazuje svetišče Meiji v Tokiu. Med njimi so: narisana skica celotnega svetišča, črno-bele fotografije posameznih zgradb ali vrat, ki so opremljene z razlago v japonščini. Posebno zanimiva je razglednica, ki nam kaže, da je bilo obdobja Meiji že konec, črno-bela fotografija treh lutk, ki so jih takrat postavili v nekdanji hiši generala Nogi iz rusko-japonske vojne.

V tej zbirki vidimo tudi pokrajinske in turistične razglednice, ki predstavljajo Tokio (park v Asakusi; svetišče v Kandi; rdeča vrata Tokijske cesarske univerze; zadnji dve sta narisani in imata japonski napis), Beppu, Ashikaga, Kjoto, Nara (templja Daian-ji in Hōryūji), Itsukushima, Kamakura, lokalni praznik v Akiti, gore Sagami Ōyama, Tochigi Taihei-san idr. Ravno v času, ko je Alma Karlin prispela na Japonsko, so v predelu Ueno v Tokiu prirejali Razstavo miru (The Tokyo Peace Exhibition 平和記念東京博覧会). Najbolj verjetno je šla na razstavo, ker je od tam tudi razglednica lutke "ples" kiparja Nakatanija Gankoja (中谷翫古 1868–1937).

V tej zbirki sem našla tudi šest razglednic novega tipa. To so posnetki naravne katastrofe na Japonskem. Dve prikazujeta prizora v starem predelu Tokia (Minami senju in Mukōjima) takoj po veliki poplavi avgusta 1910, ostale štiri pa kažejo škodo, ki jo je v starem predelu Tokia (Aioi-bashi, Fukagawa, Etchūjima, Suzugamori) julija 1911 povzročil cunami. Vidimo, da so prebivalci v času poplave v čolnih veslali po mestu. Po cunamiju pa so naredili posnetke lesene barke in torpedovke, ki ju je naplavilo na kopno. Vsi posnetki so črno-beli in pod vsakim posnetkom je kratka razlaga v japonščini, natisnjena z desne proti levi. Originalni napisi so v Tabeli 3.

	Besedilo pod posamezno fotografijo
1	明治四十三年八月都下稀有ノ大洪水　向島牛ノ御前ノ浸水 (velika poplava avgusta 1910, Mukōjima Ushi no gozen)
2	明治四十三年八月大洪水惨況（南千住天王前） (velika poplava avgusta 1910, Minami senju tennō-mae)
3	明治四十四年七月廿六日午前二時海嘯ノ襲来ヲ受タル相生橋中島ノ橋畔一部洗イ去ラル (Po cunamiju ob dveh zjutraj 26. julija 1911, Aioibashi Nakashima)

	Besedilo pod posamezno fotografijo
4	明治四十四年七月廿六日午前二時海嘯ノ為メ達磨船深川黒船橋通リエ吹上ゲラル (Po cunamiju ob dveh zjutraj 26. julija 1911, lesena barka na cesti Kurofunebashi dōri, Fukagawa)
5	明治四十四年七月廿六日拂暁ノ椿事（つなみ）水雷艇越中島陸上ニ打上ラル (Cunami zgodaj zjutraj 26. julija 1911, torpedovka na Etchûjimi)
6	明治四十四年七月廿六日拂暁ノ椿事（つなみ）鈴ケ森附近ノ惨状 (Cunami zgodaj zjutraj 26. julija 1911, Suzugamori in okolica)

Tabela 3: Napisi na fotografijah naravnih katastrof v zbirki Alme Karlin

Slika 16: Lutka "Ples" kiparja Naktanija Gankoja (Zbirka Alme Karlin, Pokrajinski muzej v Celju)

Slika 17: Po cunamiju ob 2:00. 26. julija 1911: lesena barka na cesti Kurofunebashi dōri, Fukagawa (Zbirka Alme Karlin, Pokrajinski muzej v Celju)

Slika 18: Velika poplava avgusta 1910, Mukōjima Ushi no gozen (Zbirka Alme Karlin, Pokrajinski muzej v Celju)

Tretja razglednica v tabeli, most Aioibashi, je bila tudi uporabljena: naslovljena je na Almo Karlin na njenem celjskem naslovu, nalepljena je angleška poštna znamka za en peni[9]. Na tretjini hrbtne strani, namenjeni korespondenci, piše: "Tu je šest kartic, ki prikazujejo škodo zaradi (japonskega) cunamija v predmestju Tokia, 26. julija lani. N. G.".[10] Na koncu naslova pa piše Avstrija, kar pomeni, da te razglednice ni dobila med svojim potovanjem okoli sveta, ampak pred odhodom, ko je bila še v Celju, od znanca v Angliji. Ne glede na to, kako je razglednica prišla v Almino last, vidimo, da so imele japonske razglednice proti koncu obdobja Meiji funkcijo posredovanja novic.

Med razglednicami v zbirki Alme Karlin so tudi take, ki predstavljajo pokrajino in navade takratne Koreje in Tajvana. 11 korejskih razglednic skupaj z 39 fotografijami iz Koreje v Alminini zbirki sem podrobno obravnavala leta 2012 v članku v angleščini.[11] Razglednice s Tajvana v zbirki pa še čakajo na obdelavo.

9 Rdeča znamka z obrazom kralja Jurija V., ki so jo uporabljali okoli 1911–1912.

10 These six cards are the photos of the damage caused by the tsunami (Japanese) in skirt of Tokyo, on the 26th July last. N.G.

11 "Koreans and citizens of the Habsburg monarchy or its successor-states: early individual encounters (until 1950)" na Koreanistiki Dunajske univerze, 30.–31. januarja 2012
Chikako Shigemori Bučar: "A Slovenian woman in Korea: Alma Karlin's observations", Koreans and Danubians – Early informal contacts, Praesens, Vienna.

Doba razglednic in funkcija razglednic

Večina starih razglednic, ki sem jih analizirala v tem prispevku, je bila oblikovana za tuje, zlasti zahodne obiskovalce Japonske. Najbolj pogosti motivi so bili mesta in zgodovinske znamenitosti, prizori iz vsakdanjega življenja takratnih Japoncev (hiše, vrtovi, stanovanja, pričeske, oblačila), vrste poklicev in prazniki. Podobne razglednice najdemo tudi danes, čeprav so se tudi druga komunikacijska sredstva precej razvila. Morda je danes manj razglednic, ki prikazujejo oblačila in poklice, ker je zaradi globalizacije vedno manj razlik med navadami in življenjem ljudi različnih kultur.

V zbirki Viktorja Kristana v Pomorskem muzeju sta bili razglednici, na katerih smo videli eksplozijo ruske vojne ladje in potop ruske križarke Varjag. V Celju sem v zbirki Alme Karlin našla razglednice, na katerih so bili posnetki takoj po naravnih nesrečah, po poplavi avgusta 1910 in neurju 26. julija 1911. Te razglednice so igrale vlogo današnjega časopisa oz. radia in televizije, ki posredujejo trenutne dogodke in poročajo o nesrečah. Namesto da bi objavljali fotografije o dogodkih v časopisju, so jih oblikovali v razglednice, podobne tistim iz znamenitih krajev, in jih skušali na isti način prodajati tujim obiskovalcem. Na začetku dvajsetega stoletja so v Evropi še vedno samo nekateri posamezniki dobivali tuje revije in časopise, verjetno z zamudo. V tem času pa se je poštni sistem po vsem svetu hitro razvijal in tudi Slovenija, ki je bila del takratne Avstro-Ogrske, se je povezovala z Japonsko, ki v obdobju Meiji hitro urejala poštni sistem po zahodnem vzorcu. V prvi polovici dvajsetega stoletja, ko še ni bilo televizije, so te razglednice s fotografijami, ki so posredovale novice o dogodkih, najbrž precej vplivale na prebivalce manjših evropskih krajev. Lahko rečemo, da so bile razglednice, skupaj s poštnim sistemom, pomemben medij, s pomočjo katerega so ljudje lahko izvedeli za dogodke v oddaljenih krajih.

V kontekstu tokratne raziskave lahko rečem, da je bilo obdobje od konca devetnajstega stoletja do prve polovice dvajsetega stoletja za Slovence »doba razglednic«.

Sklep

Predvidevam, da je v Sloveniji še več ustanov, ki hranijo stare japonske razglednice. To so pokrajinski muzeji in knjižnice, ki jih sodelavci Oddelka za azijske študije še nismo obiskali. Morda obstajajo tudi zasebne zbirke. V tem članku sem obravnavala zbirke samo do leta 1923, vendar je velika možnost, da obstajajo tudi zbirke razglednic iz kasnejših let, tridesetih in štiridesetih let dvajsetega stoletja. Funkcija novejših razglednic je verjetno drugačna. V primeru Slovenije,

ki je bila po drugi svetovni vojni del Socialistične federativne republike Jugoslavije, je bilo razmerje med razglednicami in komunikacijo po radiu in televiziji morda drugačno kot v zahodnih državah. Tudi po številu turistov in poznejšem razvoju poštnega in telefonskega sistema v novejšem času bi verjetno našli posebnosti.

Zanimiva je tudi povezava med razvojem fotografske tehnike in razglednicami na Japonskem od obdobja Edo dalje v Meiji. Saitō (2004) na primer piše, da so najprej tuji fotografi iz zahoda fotografirali japonske pokrajine in ljudi, nato so se posamezni Japonci naučili fotografiranja in počasi v pristaniščih in večjih mestih odprli svoje fotografske studie.

V zbirkah v Pomorskem muzeju vidimo več primerov, pri katerih so razglednice in fotografije mešano spravljene v albumih. Za fotografije pa večkrat ne vemo, ali so jih posneli posamezni zbiralci oz. potniki ali pa so jih na potovanju kupili. V nadaljnem raziskovanju se bom posvetila tudi razliki med komercialnimi razglednicami in fotografijami ter zasebnimi fotografskimi posnetki.

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Analiza in kritično ovrednotenje Xu Fuguanove interpretacije koncepta *qiyun shengdong* 气韵生动

Téa SERNELJ[*]

Izvleček

Članek obravnava Xu Fuguanovo analizo in interpretacijo koncepta *qiyun shengdong* 气韵生动, ki velja za enega od najpomembnejših, najbolj temeljnih in hkrati najtežje dojemljivih konceptov v kitajski estetiki in umetnosti. Nastal je v obdobju Wei Jin (220–420 n. št.), ki je eno od najbolj ustvarjalnih in prelomnih obdobij na področju kitajske estetike in umetnosti. Njegova kompleksnost se izraža tako v literarnih delih, slikarstvu, kaligrafiji in glasbi, kot tudi v literarni teoriji ter teoriji slikarstva, pri čemer se *qi* nanaša na zunanje značilnosti umetniškega dela, medtem ko izraža *yun* notranje značilnosti, ki so del človeške notranjosti oziroma človeškega duha, medtem ko *shengdong* pomeni manifestacijo, delovanje in zlitje obeh konceptov v umetniškem delu.

Avtorica najprej predstavi Xu Fuguanovo interpretacijo in jo prikaže v kontekstu sodobnih debat o kitajski estetiki. V nadaljevanju se osredotoči na njegovo filološko in historično analizo semantičnega ter filozofskega razvoja obravnavanega koncepta in na koncu poda kritično evalvacijo njegove študije v kontekstu ponovnega ovrednotenja osnov klasične kitajske estetike.

Ključne besede: Xu Fuguan, kitajska estetika, *qiyun shengdong*, *chuanshen*

Analysis and Critical Evaluation of Xu Fuguan's Interpretation of the Concept *qiyun shengdong* 气韵生动

Abstract

The present article deals with Xu Fuguan's analysis and interpretation of *qiyun shengdong*, which is regarded as one of the most significant and fundamental, as well as complex, concepts in Chinese aesthetics. It was developed in the Wei Jin period (220–420 AD), which is considered the turning point in Chinese aesthetics and art. Its complexity is expressed in literary works, painting, calligraphy and music, as well as in literary and painting theory. In Xu's interpretation, the concept of *qi* refers to the outward characteristics of the art work. The concept *yun* reflects the inner characteristics that are an integral part of the human spirit, while *shengdong* is merely a spontaneous and natural effect of the interaction between *qi* and *yun*.

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First, the author presents Xu Fuguan's interpretation and places it in the context of contemporary debates on Chinese aesthetics. The author then concentrates on Xu Fuguan's philological and historical analysis of the semantic and philosophical development of the concept, and at the end gives a critical evaluation of his study in the context of the re-evaluation of the basics of classical Chinese aesthetics.

Ključne besede: Xu Fuguan, Chinese aesthetics, *qiyun shengdong*, *chuanshen*

Uvod

Xu Fuguan 徐复观 (1903–1982) je predstavnik druge generacije filozofske struje Modernih konfucijancev (*Xinrujia* 新儒家), ki si je prizadevala za revitalizacijo konfucijanstva ter z njim celotne kitajske antične idejne tradicije in ju želela prilagoditi procesom kitajske modernizacije (Rošker 2014, 68).

Xu Fuguanov širok opus sega od političnih teorij do literarne kritike, pregleda in evalvacije kitajske antične filozofije, sociologije kulture, ter kitajske tradicionalne estetike. Ta članek obravnava Xu Fuguanovo analizo in interpretacijo koncepta *qiyun shengdong*, ki ga Xu razume kot najbolj temeljnega in esenčnega v tradicionalni kitajski estetiki. Bil je mnenja, da je za resnično dojetje esence kitajske umetnosti nujno razumevanje pomena koncepta *qiyun shengdong*. (Xu 2002, 84)

Članek je strukturiran tako, da sledi Xujevi shemi analize omenjenega koncepta, v kateri najprej obravnava posamezne koncepte znotraj *qiyun shengdonga*, torej *qi* in *yun*, *qiyun* in nazadnje *shengdong*. Zadnje poglavje je namenjeno evalvaciji Xujeve interpretacije *qiyun shengdonga*, v kateri se članek dotakne problema Xujeve teze o absolutni samoniklosti in ekskluzivnosti nekaterih značilnosti tradicionalne kitajske estetike.

Xu Fuguan je koncept *qiyun shengdong* podrobno obravnaval v svojem osrednjem delu *Esenca duha kitajske umetnosti* (*Zhongguo yishu jingshen* 中国艺术精神), ki ga je napisal leta 1966 v Tajbeju. V njem podrobno obravnava zgodovinski in idejno – filozofski razvoj kitajske tradicionalne umetnosti in estetike. V omenjenem delu Xu koncept *qiyun shengdong* podrobno analizira in interpretira. To delo, ki mimogrede še ni bilo prevedeno v nobenega od indoevropskih jezikov, je tudi temeljni vir tega članka.

Qiyun shengdong 气韵生动 se v zahodnih sinoloških in umetnostno teoretskih virih večinoma prevaja kot ritmična resonanca (*rythmic resonance*), resonanca duha (*spirit resonance*), ustvarjanje ritmične vitalnosti (*create rythmic vitality*), resonanca duha in gibanje življenja (spiritual resonance and life motion), pa tudi kot skladnost duha, ki ustvarja občutek življenja (spirit consonance engendering a sense of

life) in podobno[1]. Xu Fuguan pa je kritičen do prevajanja yuna v smislu ritma ali resonance, ker meni, da ima yun dosti širši pojmovni spekter in je odvisen tudi od samega konteksta, v katerem se pojavlja.

Qiyun shengdong kot estetski koncept prvič zapiše Xie He[2] sredi petega stoletja v delu Zapisi o antičnem slikarstvu (*Gu huapin lu* 古画品录)[3] in sicer ga, kot bomo videli v nadaljevanju,postavi kot prvo in s tem tudi najpomembnejšo zakonitost slikarstva[4]. Sam koncept *qiyun* 气韵 pa se pojavi že dosti prej in sicer najprej v poeziji. Ta princip ostane v veljavi vse do začetka dvajsetega stoletja, ko so ga japonski in kitajski teoretiki začeli povezovati z idejo subjektivizma in subjektivnega izražanja, kot nekaj, kar je bilo nasprotno od forme ter s tem objektivnosti zahodnega realizma (Vampelj Suhadolnik 2013, 97–98).

Za razumevanje tega kompleksnega koncepta pa je osrednjega pomena tudi poznavanje družbenega ozadja in specifike obdobja, v katerem je nastal.

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1 *Qiyun shengdong* je, kot bomo videli v nadaljevanju, zaradi njegovega širokega spektra pomenov zelo težko ustrezno prevesti v indoevropske jezike. Avtorica članka predlaga, da se koncept *qiyun* ohrani v izvirniku in se ga ne prevaja. Nekaj takih neprevedljivih konceptov se je že uveljavilo in se v zahodnih študijah uporablja v izvirniku, kot na primer koncepta *dao* 道 ali *qi* 气.

2 Xie He 谢赫 (aktiven okoli leta 479–502 n. št., t.j. v obdobju Wei Jin 魏晉) je bil slikar in umetnostni kritik. Najbolj znan je po svoji definiciji šestih zakonitostih kitajskega slikarstva (*huihua liufa* 绘画六法), ki jih je potrebno upoštevati v kritičnem presojanju slikarskega dela. Teh šest zakonitosti je zapisal v predgovoru h knjigi Zapisi o antičnem slikarstvu (*Gu huapin lu* 古画品录), v kateri razvrsti umetniška dela sedemindvajsetih slikarjev v tri razrede glede na umetniško vrednost njihovih del. Vsak razred ima še tri podrazrede. Teh šest zakonov se je skozi čas spreminjalo in dobivalo drugačne in vselej nove pomene, vendar kljub temu v okviru kitajske estetike še danes veljajo za osnovni kriterij slikarske izobrazbe in presoje kritikov. Xie Hejevih šest zakonitosti je zapisanih v obliki paralelizmov, ki velja za tipično obliko zapisovanja v klasični kitajščini. Po Xu Fuguanu sta prvi dve pismenki jedro paralelizma, drugi dve pa se referirata na njegovo konkretno aplikacijo, ki se kaže v praksi. Samo prevajanje teh zakonitosti je še vedno predmet akademskih razprav. Razen prve zakonitosti, ki jo Xu Fuguan podrobno analizira in je jedro te raziskave, je prevod ostalih prevzet po interpretaciji Victorja H. Maira.

3 Xie He navede posamezne zakonitosti v obliki numeričnega naštevanja, kar naj bi bilo po mnenju Victorja H. Maira (2004, 100) prevzeto po indijski teoriji slikarstva *Sadangi*. (Z vprašanjem verodostojnosti te hipoteze se članek ukvarja v zadnjem poglavju): 一曰, 气韵生动是也: *qiyun shengdong* (*qiyun* je to, kar naredi delo živo), 二曰, 骨法用笔是也: *gufa yongbi* (*gu* se pravzaprav referira na *qi*, *fa* je metoda in *yongbi* pomeni uporaba čopiča, torej tehnika skozi katero se reprezentira *qi*); 三曰, 应物象行是也: *yingwu xiangxing shi ye* (ujemanje objektov se doseže skozi reprezentacijo oblik); 四曰, 随类赋彩是也: *suilei fucai* (glede na vrsto (objektov, oblik) se nanaša barve); 五曰, 经营位置是也: *jingying weizhi* (postavitev in pozicioniranje (objektov) skozi razporeditev in samo zgradbo); 六曰, 传移模写是也: *chuanyi moxie shi ye* (prenos poustvarjanje in kopiranje (starih mojstrov) skozi prenos modela (ibid.).

4 Xie Hejevih *šest zakonitosti* je kljub temu, da je bila njegova teorija slikarstva takrat še na nek način v embrionalni fazi, kasneje postala koncizen, jasen in celovit sistem, ki je po Xujevem mnenju narejen mojstrsko (ibid.).

Obdobje Wei Jin in rojstvo klasične kitajske estetike

Obdobje Wei Jin (220–420 n.št.) velja za enega najbolj plodnih in ustvarjalnih obdobij na področju filozofije, umetnosti in psihologije v kitajski zgodovini. Kulturno idejnemu preboju so botrovale velike družbeno politične spremembe, ki so nastale zaradi razpršenosti oblasti in vpadov nomadskih ljudstev iz severa (zlasti Hunov in kasneje ljudstva Xianbei), ki so začeli zavojevati sever Kitajske, kar je privedlo do množične migracije Han kitajskega prebivalstva iz visoko razvitega severa na sorazmerno nerazviti jug. Ekonomsko in družbeno politično oblast so prevzeli bogati aristokratski klani (zlasti klana Cao in Sima), ki so se (poleg izvajanja nenehnih političnih intrig in boja za prevlado) navduševali nad poezijo, kaligrafijo, pitjem vina in daoistično filozofijo, torej nad vsem, k čimer so se v tistih turbulentnih časih zatekali filozofi in umetniki[5].

To je privedlo do zatona študija konfucijanskih klasikov, ki so prevladovali v dinastiji Han, pri čemer moramo upoštevati dejstvo, da konfucianizem v dinastiji Han nima kaj dosti opraviti z izvornim konfucijanskim naukom, saj se je konfucijanstvo v dinastiji Han zlilo z legalizmom, kar poznamo kot prvo reformo konfucijanstva, ki je privedla do konfucianizma kot državne doktrine. Po drugi strani pa so zatonu konfucijanstva botrovala tudi ljudstva na severu, ki niso nadaljevala s sistemom državnih izpitov, čigar zametke je postavil Han Wudi 汉武帝 v Zahodnem Hanu. Posledično so uradniki izgubljali možnost pridobivanja visokih nazivov, hkrati pa so se vedno bolj začeli usmerjati v umetnost, slikarstvo in literaturo.

Kot odgovor na rigidnost hanskega konfucianizma in zavrnitev njegovih togih moralnih principov in standardov nastane neodaoizem, ki ga poznamo pod imenom Šola misterijev (Xuanxue 玄学), katere glavna predstavnika sta bila filozof Wang Bi 王弼 in He Yan 何晏. Vsebina šole Xuanxue je v glavnem temeljila na filozofiji Laozija in Zhuangzija, vključevala pa je tudi nekatere konfucijanske elemente. Filozofske debate, v katere je bila vključena intelektualna elita in aristokratska smetana, so znane pod imenom Čisti pogovori (*qingtan* 清谈). Ukvarjali so se z iskanjem nove morale, metafiziko in logiko. Čistim pogovorom so prisostvovali tudi modreci iz bambusovega gozdička. (Rošker 2005, 86)

5 Iz tega obdobja poznamo znamenitih Sedem modrecev iz bambusovega gaja (*Zhulin qi xian* 竹林七仙) med katerimi sta najbolj znana Ji Kang 嵇康 in Ruan Ji 阮籍. Kljub temu, da je imela večina od njih možnost in priložnost delovanja na političnem nivoju, so se zaradi negotove politične situacije in izprijenosti ter koruptivnosti aristokratskih klanov, odločili za odmik v samoto, kjer so uživali v ustvarjanju poezije, glasbe, kaligrafije in filozofije. Političnim temam so se zavestno popolnoma odpovedali, predvsem zato, da si s kritiziranjem politične situacije ne bi ogrozili svobodnega življenja in tvegali morebitnega obglavljenja (Ji Kang na primer se temu na žalost ni mogel izogniti). To, k čemur so težili, je bilo uživanje življenja na najbolj spontan možen način, kar je znano kot Zhuangzijev *xiaoyao you* (svobodno in lahkotno lebdenje).

Po Li Zehouju lahko o obdobju Wei Jin govorimo kot o prebujenju človeka oziroma ljudi (*ren de juexing* 人的觉醒). (Li 2003, 80) Za razliko od togega poudarjanja starih tradicij, običajev, časti in moralne integritete, ki je bilo značilno za dinastijo Han, pride v Wei Jinu v ospredje človek in njegova osebnost. V umetnosti in literaturi obdobja Wei Jin so v središču zanimanja vrednost človeškega življenja in izražanje človeških čustev ter občutij; njegov značaj in njegov duh v smislu neomejenih potencialnih možnosti postane središče političnih, družbenih in kulturnih razprav. (ibid.) Kakšen je bil odnos do življenja, se najbolj jasno in neposredno kaže skozi poezijo tistega obdobja. Osrednje teme v poeziji so bile zavedanje smrtnosti, minljivosti in kratkosti življenja, žalost in obžalovanje, strah pred prezgodnjo smrtjo, obenem pa čaščenje in uživanje življenja dokler le-to traja. Estetski lepotni ideal vladajoče elite je bil v izrazu človekove modrosti in vzvišenega značaja skozi impresivni zunanji izgled.

Novonastali slog Wei Jina je bil torej zgrajen na zavedanju minljivosti življenja, predajanju užitkom in poglabljanju v filozofske razprave. Te se v prvi vrsti niso več toliko ukvarjale s človekovim opazovanjem narave kot raziskovanja zunanjega sveta (*waizaishijiede tansuo* 外在世界的探索), temveč je bil poudarek na ontologiji v smislu iskanja notranje substance (*neizai shitide chuiqiu* 内在实体的追求), pri čemer je bilo bogastvo in raznolikost stvarnosti moč doseči samo takrat, ko so bile za to izpolnjene vse potencialne možnosti. To je pomenilo pridobiti vzvišeni duh, ki je primerljiv z duhom modrecev oziroma plemenitnikov, a vendar hkrati ohraniti človeške žalosti in radosti. Osredotočanje na človeško notranjost, ki ima neomejene možnosti namesto na zunanji svet, je bil hkrati kriterij lepote v umetnosti in srčika filozofije. Ta je v tem obdobju temeljila na Wang Bijevi ontologiji binarne kategorije *benmo* 本末 (korenina in veje), pri kateri je prvo izvor in hkrati vir (*dao*) vseh stvari (*wanwu* 万物), slednje pa njihov konkretni (fizični) izraz. Wangova ontologija je bila osnovana na konceptu odsotnosti (*yi wu wei ben* 以无为本) (ibid. 84–86), ki pomeni:

> najizvornejši *dao*, ki je enak naravi, brezskrajnosti, novorojenemu, preprostosti in resnici. Ampak zakaj se imenuje "odsotnost"? Zato, ker je vse to – namreč dao, narava, preprostost, resnica – nepoimenljivo. Kakor hitro se pojavi ime, se dao izgubi. (Rošker 2005, 207)

Wang Bijeva ontologija je močno vplivala na umetnost in estetiko obdobja Wei Jin. Po Xu Fuguanu in Li Zehouju se temeljni koncepti kitajske estetike, kot tudi literarna teorija in slikarstvo izgradijo ravno v obdobju Wei Jin in ne prej.

Osrednji koncepti v estetiki obdobja Wei Jin

Osredotočenost na natančne upodobitve zunanjega okolja, vedenja ter naravnanosti ljudi in pomembnih dogodkov je bila značilnost slikarstva in literature v dinastiji Han. V obdobju Wei Jin pa začneta cveteti tudi lirična poezija in figuralika. Osrednji koncepti v estetiki in umetnosti obdobja Wei Jin so

- izraz duha skozi obliko (*yi xing xie shen* 以形写神),
- *qiyun shengdong* 气韵生动 (*qiyun* naredi umetniško delo živo) in
- besede ne morejo v celoti posredovati pomena (*yan bu jin yi* 言不尽意).

Koncept izraz duha skozi obliko v tradicionalno kitajsko estetiko in umetnost vpelje Gu Kaizhi, o katerem bomo spregovorili v nadaljevanju, koncept besede ne morejo v celoti posredovati pomena pa izvira iz Wang Bijeve ontologije.

V nadaljevanju članka se bomo podrobno ukvarjali s Xu Fuguanovo interpretacijo teh osrednjih konceptov, s poudarkom na konceptu *qiyun shengdonga*, za uvod pa si pa si poglejmo, kako te osrednje koncepte definira Li Zehou[6]:

> 所谓气韵生动就是要求绘画生动地表现出人的内在精神气质，格调风度, 而不在外在环境, 事件, 形状, 姿态的如何铺张描述.
>
> Zahteva tako imenovanega *qiyun shengdonga* je v tem, da slika živo izrazi človeški notranji značaj in stanje duha, umetniški stil kot tudi moralne lastnosti in držo ustvarjalca, ki pa se ne ne kaže skozi razkošno opisovanje oziroma upodobitve zunanjega okolja, okoliščin, dogodkov, obliki in drži (Li 2003, 86).

Izražanje duha skozi obliko (*yi xing xie shen* 以形写神) ima podoben pomen. Gre za izražanje človeške notranjosti, značaja, stanja duha, ki se kaže skozi telesno (zunanjo) obliko. Kot pravi Gu Kaizhi 顾恺之 (približno 345–406), eden najbolj cenjenih in najbolj slavnih slikarjev v dinastiji Vzhodni Jin:

> 四体妍蚩本无关于妙处, 传神写照正在阿堵中.
>
> Ali so štiri okončine (deli telesa) lepi ali ne, to ni merilo. Pomembna je upodobitev duha, ki se kaže skoznje.

Kot pravi Li Zehou, so oči ogledalo duše in ravno to je tisto, kar so si umetniki prizadevali upodobiti. To pomeni, da so sama oblika telesa ali človekova dejanja pravzaprav sekundarna in podrejena izrazu notranjega duha. (ibid., 87)

6 Li Zehou je eden od glavnih in osrednjih teoretikov kitajske estetike. Njegova dela so prevedena v angleški in nemški jezik, zato je dobro poznan tudi zahodni publiki (gl. Rošker 2017a, 1). Xu Fuguanova dela zaenkrat še niso prevedena v indoevropske jezike.

Pri estetskem kriteriju in konceptu besede ne morejo v celoti posredovati pomena (*yan bu jin yi* 言不尽意) v literarni umetnosti gre po mnenju Li Zehouja za izražanje pomena, ki ga konceptualne besede in fraze ne morejo v celoti posredovati. Ta koncept v osnovi izraža načela filozofske šole Xuanxue. Iz Wang Bijevih komentarjev h Knjigi premen, vidimo, da so tako besede kot podobe orodja prenosa duha, ki so sama po sebi omejena. Kar je kljub tem omejitvam pomembno, je to, da si prizadevamo izraziti neomejenost esence (*benti* 本体) stvari:

> 尽意莫若象, 尽象莫若言, 言者所以明象, 得象忘言, 象者所以以存意, 得意忘象.
>
> Nič ne more bolj v celoti izraziti pomena kot podoba. Nič ne more bolj v celoti izraziti podobe kot besede. Besede so tiste, ki razjasnijo podobo. Ko se ta zgodi, se pozabijo besede. Podoba je tisto, kjer obstaja pomen. Ko je dosežen pomen, se podoba pozabi (Wang Bi v Li 2003, 87).

Po Liju gre pri vseh treh konceptih bodisi za izraz notranjega značaja, ki je lastna samo modrim (plemenitnikom), ki je neomejena, neizčrpna in onkraj dosega navadnih ljudi, bodisi za izražanje transcendentnega doživetja vsakdana preko različnih čustev, ki so skupna vsem ljudem. (ibid.)

Xu Fuguanova analiza in interpretacija koncepta *qiyun shengdong*

Xie Hejev koncept *qiyun shengdo*ng je najpomembnejši in najtežje razumljiv koncept v njegovi teoriji slikarstva, ki jo je natančno definiral v predgovoru h knjigi *Zapisi o antičnem slikarstvu* (*Gu huapin lu* 古画品录). V njej poda šest zakonitosti slikarstva, katerim je potrebno slediti in jih dosledno upoštevati, v kolikor želi slikar ali slikarka (slednjih takrat zaradi neenakega položaja žensk v družbi seveda ni bilo ravno v izobilju) doseči vrhunsko dovršeno umetniško delo. Xie He tako velja za enega prvih umetnostnih kritikov na področju slikarstva.

Xu Fuguan pa v svoji obravnavi izpostavi, da je pred Xie Hejem *qiyun shengdong* omenjal že znameniti slikar Gu Kaizhi (344 n.št. do 406 n. št.), čeravno je pri tem uporabil drugo izrazoslovje. Gu je za temeljno zakonitost oziroma glavni kriterij slikarstva postavil *prenos duha* (*chuanshen* 传神). Tako pravi, da je v umetnosti slikarstva ključnega pomena avtorjevo portretiranje prenosa duha (*chuanshen xiezhao* 传神写照) in njegova upodobitev skozi zunanjo obliko (*yixing xieshen* 以形写[7]神). Tovrstna upodobitev (*xiezhao* 写照) je torej to, kar lahko vidimo, duh

7 V tradicionalnem kitajskem slikarstvu se je pogosto namesto glagola slikati (*huihua* 绘画) uporabljal glagol pisati, opisati (*xie* 写画) zato, ker se je slikarstvo kot umetniška zvrst pravzaprav razvilo iz kaligrafije (Xu 2002, 85).

pa je tisto, česar ne moremo videti, vendar ga lahko občutimo[8]. Duh (*shen* 神) je esenca človeka in posebna značilnost vsakega posameznika. Duh oziroma esenca ljudi in medčloveških odnosov se tako izraža skozi slikarstvo (Xu 2002, 92). Po Xu Fuguanu gre pri tem za konceptualni premik v estetiki, ki se je zgodil ravno v obdobju Wei Jin.

V tem obdobju se je slikarstvo namreč osredotočalo na upodabljanje ljudi, pri čemer se je zlasti razvila figuralika, v kateri so ljudje objekt slikarstva. V obdobju Wei Jin se skozi reprezentacijo ljudi zrcali prepoznanje lepote človeškega značaja in medčloveških odnosov. Pri tem ne gre za upodabljanje človeških fizičnih lastnosti, temveč bolj za upodobitev človeškega duha (*shen*[9]). Tovrstna tendenca se ne kaže zgolj v slikarstvu, temveč v vseh umetniških zvrsteh.

Pri teh elementih je šlo za popolnoma nove usmeritve, kajti če opazujemo kiparstvo in slikarstvo dinastije Han (206 pr. n. št. do 220) vidimo, da je takrat slikarjem v glavnem šlo za upodabljanje zgodb iz kitajskih antičnih del in slavnih osebnosti. To se je seveda delno preneslo tudi v obdobje Wei Jin, ampak s to razliko, da so se pri osebah, ki so jih upodabljali, slikarji v glavnem osredotočali na prikazovanje njihovega duha, skozi katerega sta se izražala njihova notranja vrednost in pomen. Reprezentacija duha je torej glavno vodilo in kriterij umetnosti obdobja Wei Jin. Ta predstavlja izjemen napredek v tradicionalni kitajski umetnosti, ki je še posebej viden na področju slikarstva[10]. Tisto, kar tovrstno transformacijo (t.j. prenos človeškega duha v sliko) omogoča, pa je po Xuju ravno *qiyun shengdong* (Xu 2002, 91).

Prenos duha (*chuanshen* 传神) je torej temelj figuralnega slikarstva na Kitajskem, ki se je od dinastije Wei Jin dalje prenašal naprej. Xu meni, da je pomen Gu Kaizhijevega *prenosa duha* še bolj jasno in natančneje prikazan v Xie Hejevem opisu koncepta *qiyun shengdong*. Vse to, kar je Gu imenoval *chuanshen* pa tudi vse druge izraze, povezane z duhom, kot so npr. 神气 *shenqi* (vitalnost duha), 神明 *shenming* (jasnost duha), 神灵 *shenling* (božanskost duha) itd., je Xie He združil v enega in ga poimenoval *qiyun shengdong*.

8 To, s pomočjo česar lahko občutimo ta notranji duh, ki se v podobi latentno manifestira, je *qiyun shengdong*, četudi ga Gu kot takega še ni eksplicitno imenoval.

9 Izraz *shen* se v angleščino prevaja kot *spirit* (duh). Problem tovrstnega prevoda je njegova religiozna konotacija, ki pa v kitajski idejni tradiciji (zlasti v filozofiji in estetiki) ne obstaja. Če definiramo duha (in duhovnost) kot je to posrečeno storil Ewert Cousins, potem lahko po mojem mnenju brez težav sprejmemo duh kot ustrezen prevod besede oziroma pojma shen. Takole pravi: "Spirituality can be described as the inner dimension of the person called by certain traditions 'the spirit'. This spiritual core is the deepest center of the person. It is here that a person is open to the transcendent dimension; it is here that the person experiences ultimate reality." (Wu 2002, 441).

10 Zato ni slučaj, da Xu poudarja (2002, 91), da se slikarstvo kot samostojna in dovršena umetniška zvrst ne začne prej kot v obdobju Wei Jin.

Qiyun shengdong je dejansko konkretiziranje in preciziranje ideje duha in zato, pravi Xu, je vreden natančne analize. Xu Fuguan se te natančne analize loti tako, da ločeno obravnava posamezne koncepte, ki tvorijo frazo *qiyun shengdong*. Pri tem gre v prvi vrsti za dva koncepta, tj. za koncept *qi* in koncept *yun*, ki imata vsak svoj pomen, vendar sta, kot bomo videli v nadaljevanju neločljivo povezana znotraj umetniškega dela. V naslednjih podpoglavjih bomo na temelju metode, ki jo je uporabil Xu Fuguan kritično ovrednotili njegovo analizo posameznih konceptov znotraj besedne zveze *qiyun shengdong*.

Qi *kot filozofski in etični koncept*

Qi 气 je eden od najbolj kompleksnih konceptov v kitajski idejni tradiciji in filozofiji. V indoevropskih jezikih obstaja cela paleta različnih prevodov tega pojma; najpogostejši med njimi so zrak, dih, vitalnost, izvir življenja, energija, pa tudi materija, snovnost ipd.

Že od najzgodnejših filozofskih diskurzov na Kitajskem, sodi *qi* k najbolj temeljnim kategorijam razumevanja stvarnosti (Rošker 2017b). Izvorno so antični kitajski filozofi *qi* razumevali kot utelešenje naravnih pojavov.

Šest vrst *qija* neba so: *yin*, *yang*, veter, dež, tema in svetloba, ti pa so v povezavi s petimi elementi zemlje: kovina, les, voda, ogenj in zemlja. Izmed šestih *qijev* neba, dež in veter prinašata rojstvo vseh stvari oz. bitij. *Qi* svetlobe in teme prikazuje spremembo dneva in noči kot ene od zakonitosti narave; binarni kategoriji *yin* in *yang*, pa sta pravzaprav značaj vseh zemeljskih oziroma vremenskih pojavov. Poleg ustvarjanja vseh naravnih pojavov, *qi* neba in zemlje ustvari tudi človeka. (Wong 1989, 46). To definicijo najdemo na primer tudi v poglavju *Neiye* 内业 pomembnega političnega besedila *Guanzi* 管子, ki je bilo napisano v obdobju Pomladi in jeseni, tj. okoli 770–476 pr. n. št.:

> 凡人之生也，天出其精，地出其形，合此以为人
>
> Vsi ljudje nastanejo tako, da jim prispeva nebo svojo esenco, zemlja pa fizično obliko. Ko se oboje združi, nastane človek (Guanzi s.d. Neiye: 7).

Ta esenca (*jing* 精) je kasneje definirana kot esenca *qija* (*jingzhe, qizhi jing ye* 精者, 气之精也). Koncept *qi* kot *jing*, torej kot esenca oz. izvor življenja, je tako postal neke vrste ontološka osnova obstoja:

> 有气则生，无气则死
>
> Stvari so žive, dokler imajo *qi* in čim ga izgubijo, so mrtve (ibid. Shu yan: 1).

Kozmični *qi* torej ustvarja vse bivajoče. Ker človeku (in drugim živim bitjem) omogoča preživetje na zemlji, na katerega se mora človek odzvati tako, da se obnaša krepostno. V nasprotnem primeru človek poruši ravnovesje, kar pripelje do kaosa:

> 夫天地之气, 不矢其序, 若过其序, 民乱之也.
>
> Če človek ne deluje v skladu s *qij*em neba in zemlje, je med ljudmi kaos (Guoyu v Wong 1989, 47).

Qi kot kozmološko ontološka entiteta je torej dobil moralni značaj, ki je imel v konfucijanstvu osrednji pomen. Zaradi teorije *yinyanga* in petih faz (*yinyang wuxing* 阴阳五行), ki je bila v ospredju v času dinastije Han, mnogo ljudi dojema *qi* kot metafizični koncept. Vemo pa, da se koncept *qi* v smislu »nege *qija* (*yangqi* 养气)« začne z Mencijem (379 pr. n. št.–289 pr. n. št.) in kaže na povezanost s fizičnim, s telesnim, in ga zato lahko imenujemo tudi fizična življenjska sila (*shenglide shengmingli* 生理地生命力). (Xu 2002, 94)[11]

A Mencij je hkrati izpostavil, da so za nego *qija* v človeškem telesu nujne tudi moralne kreposti, predvsem pravičnost in iskrenost, ki potem recipročno delujejo na delovanje neba, ki se kaže v umirjenih in stabilnih družbenih razmerah (Wong 1989, 48).

Ozaveščenost in nega *qija* je bila seveda osrednjega pomena tudi v daoističnih telesnih in meditativnih praksah, kot so *qigong* 气功, *taiji quan* 太极拳 in *zuowang* 坐忘[12]. Kot esenca življenja je *qi* torej tesno povezan s telesnimi čuti in percepcijo. V tem smislu pa že seže tudi na področje kitajske estetike:

> 天有六气, 降生五味, 发为五色, 征为五声.
>
> Nebo ima šest *qijev*, ti ustvarijo pet okusov, se izrazijo v petih barvah in potrdijo v petih tonih (Zuo zhuan s.d. v Wong 1989, 48).

Kot smo videli zgoraj, se *qi* kot moralni koncept pojavi v filozofiji Mencija. Kot temeljni estetski koncept pa se pojavi v obdobju Wei Jin. Okusi, barve in zvoki in drugi elementi so transmutacije *qija*. Posredovanje *qija* in še posebej njegove esence, ki se kaže skozi delovanje *yina* in *yanga*, je postalo osrednji in najbolj temeljni namen v kitajski umetnosti (Wong 1989, 45).

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11 Kot protipol dinamični strukturi *li* 理 se pojavlja v vlogi snovnosti tudi v okviru neokonfucijanstva dinastije Song.

12 Razlika med daoističnimi in Mencijevimi oz. konfucijanskimi tehnikami izpopolnjevanja osebnosti je v tem, da je bil cilj in namen prve doseči harmonično zlitje človeka z daotom oz. naravo, namen druge pa je bil predvsem kultivacija moralnega značaja.

Qi *kot estetski koncept*

Qi se kot estetski koncept najprej pojavi v povezavi z literaturo. Kot prvi ga v tem kontekstu omeni Cao Pi 曹丕 (187–226) v svojem delu *Razprave o literaturi* (*Dianlun lunwen* 典论伦文):

> 文以气为主, 气之清浊有体, 不可力强而致.
>
> V literaturi je *qi* glavni. Lahko je jasen in čist ali medel in kalen in se ga ne da doseči na silo (Cao Pi s.d. 4).

Po Xuju je *qi* v literarni umetnosti povezan z delovanjem fizičnega v smislu ustvarjalnega potenciala, ki se transformira v umetniški produkt. Vse metafizične konotacije koncepta *qi* so v tem kontekstu zanj odveč, kajti človeške ideje, čustva, in domišljija se rodijo v *qiju* in se šele potem začnejo izražati v umetniških delih. (Xu 2002, 95)

Qi, ki se v literarni umetnosti izraža skozi ideje, čustva in domišljijo, so pravzaprav nakopičen *qi*. Zato se individualni značaj, ki oblikuje posameznikovo umetnost določa skozi *qi*. Prenos duha (*chuanshen*), o katerem smo govorili v prejšnjem poglavju, se dejansko kaže skozi *qi*. *Qi,* ki se sublimira in zliva z duhom (*shen*), postane umetniški *qi*. Tako se skozi delovanje *qija* jasno kaže ustvarjalčevo notranje življenje navzven in to je ena najzanimivejših posebnosti kitajske literarno umetnostne teorije ter kitajske umetnosti nasploh. Povezanost *qija* z duhom postane tako entiteta oziroma enotnost. Zato so v tistem času zelo pogosto uporabljali izraz *shenqi* 神气 (duh *qija*).

Po drugi strani pa qi reprezentira tudi ustvarjalčev moralni značaj (*pinge* 品格) kot vzvišeno kvaliteto (*qigai* 气概), ki ustvarja ozadje umetniškega dela. V obdobju Wei Jin so *qi* v kontekstu umetnosti pogosto imenovali tudi moč *qija* (*qili* 气力) ali njegov momentum (*qishi* 气势). Pogosto pa so namesto *qija* v tem pomenu uporabljali tudi besedo *gu* 骨 (skelet, okvir), ki ga je pravzaprav simbolizirala. (ibid., 95)

Iz zgoraj navedenega vidimo, da se *qi* kot estetski koncept nanaša na človeški ustvarjalni potencial, ki je osnova umetniškega ustvarjanja. Ta potencial je tesno povezan s človeškimi čustvi, občutji in domišljijo, ki nastajajo skozi percepcijo in dojemanje sveta preko čutnih organov, in ki v estetiki obdobja Wei Jin odsevajo lepoto človeške notranjosti. Reprezentacija le-tega je bila, kot smo videli v uvodu, temeljni cilj in estetski kriterij v umetnosti tega obdobja.

Osnovne pomenske konotacije pojma yun

Beseda *yun* 韵 se je prvič pojavila v dinastiji Han. Najdemo jo v najstarejšem kitajskem etimološkem slovarju *Shuowen jiezi* iz prvega stoletja našega štetja, kjer

je definirana kot harmonija oziroma harmoničnost: 韵, 和也[13]. Enako definicijo najdemo tudi v enciklopediji Guangya 广雅 iz obdobja Wei v tretjem stoletju. Po mnenju Xu Fuguana je torej v tistem obdobju pismenko za harmonijo (*he* 和) nadomestila pismenka *yun* 韵 (Xu 2002, 94).

Tako kot *qi* ima tudi *yun* v različnih kontekstih in različnih umetniških zvrsteh različen pomen. V fonetiki (*yinyunxue* 音韵学) pomeni ton. V poeziji pomeni rimo. V slikarstvu je *yun* najpogosteje prevajan kot ritem ali ritmična resonanca. Kot smo omenili zgoraj, ta prevod po mnenju Xuja ni ustrezen, ker ne pokriva vseh njegovih pomenov. Tudi Wong (1989, 57) meni, da v glasbeni teoriji prevod besede *yun* kot ritmična resonanca ni neoporečen. V estetiki in filozofiji ima *yun* še precej globlji in bolj kompleksen pomen, zato je nujno potrebno podrobneje raziskati tako njegov izvorni pomen, kot tudi njegove različne konotacije v različnih kontekstih. (ibid.)

Kot navede Wong (ibid.) se je *yun* v kitajski tradiciji tesno povezoval predvsem z glasbo. Najzgodnejši pojav te besede zasledimo v Cao Zhijevem 曹植 (192–232) *Eseju belega žerjava* (*Baihe fu* 白鹤赋):

> 聆雅琴之清韵.
>
> Poslušam jasen in čisti *yun* prefinjenega *qina*[14] (Cao Zhi v Wong 1989, 57).

Prav tako ga zasledimo v Ji Kangovem (224–263 n.št.) *Poetičnem eseju o qinu* (*Qin-fu* 琴赋), kjer pravi (Wong 1989, 57)

> 改韵易调,奇弄乃发.
>
> Iz spremembe *yuna* in melodije v glasbi, se pojavi čudovito občutje.

Četudi se je *yun* sprva uporabljal v pomenu ritma v glasbi, je kaj kmalu besedo za ritem nadomestila pismenka *lü* 律. Od takrat dalje se je pismenka *yun* zelo redko uporabljala v povezavi z glasbo. (Xu 2002, 98)

V glasbi pomeni *yun* glasbeni izraz oziroma melodično gibanje. Kasneje so *yun* prevzeli v literarnih in fonetičnih kontekstih. Iz fonetičnega gledišča je *yun* bolj ali manj definiran kot ton. V poeziji oziroma v poetičnih esejih, postane pomen *yuna* bolj jasen, in če pogledamo Liu Xiejevo 刘勰 definicijo *yuna*, zapisanega v njegovem delu *Srčna zavest literature in rezbarjenje zmaja* (*Wenxin diaolong* 文心雕龙), ki velja za največje delo o literarni estetiki, napisano v 6. st., kjer pravi:

13 Wong (1989) v svoji dizertaciji z naslovom *The manifestation of Chinese Philosophy and Aesthetics in the Performance of the pipa Music* napačno navede, da besede *yun* ni bilo zapisane v slovarju *Shuowen jiezi* (Wong 1989, 57).

14 Kitajsko brenkalo podobno citram.

> 異音相從謂之和，同声相应谓之韵.
>
> Zaporedje različnih tonov imenujemo harmonija, zaporedje enakih zvokov pa yun (Liu Xie s.d.: VII, Shenglü: 2).

Wong (1989, 58) opozarja, da se *yun* tukaj nanaša na rimo in ne na ritem. Xu meni, da ne glede na to, ali uporabljamo *yun* v glasbi ali literaturi, ima v obeh primerih prizvok pomena *tiaohe* 调和, ki pomeni biti v harmonični proporciji. Eden izmed pomenov *yuna* je po Xuju harmonični zvok oziroma duh zvoka, v nobenem primeru pa se pomen *yuna* ne more razumeti kot ritmičnost. (Xu 2002, 99)

Wong (1989, 62) pa konkretneje opredeli tudi pomen *yuna* v glasbi, ki tam pravzaprav pomeni umetnost obvladanja modulacije tona, kateri ustvari nek presežek občutek (*yunwei* 韵味).

V slikarstvu pa nastopa *yun* v glavnem v povezavi s *qijem*, zato ga je v kontekstu slikarstva težko obravnavati ločeno od njega. Koncept *qiyun* si bomo podrobneje ogledali v naslednjem podpoglavju.

Yun *kot estetski koncept*

Kot estetski koncept se *yun* v prvi vrsti nanaša na izraz človeškega značaja in duha, kakršen se razkriva v umetniškem delu. Xu Fuguan ga definira tudi kot prepoznanje medčloveških odnosov (*renlun jianshi* 人伦鉴识), ki je bil v filozofiji *Xuanxue* razumljen kot odraz samo-kultivacije. V tem kontekstu namreč izraža enotnost duha in oblike (*shenxing heyi* 神形合一), ki se reprezentira navzven, tj. skozi podobe v umetniških delih. Le-to so v tistem času imenovali atmosfera oz. splošno občutje (*fengqi* 风气).

Ta izraz *yuna* je viden tudi v naravi:

> 自然有雅韵
>
> Eleganco in vzvišenost *yuna* je najti v naravi (Xu 2002, 100).

Xujeva interpretacija *yuna* kot koncepta, ki izraža prepoznanje človeških odnosov (oziroma njihove etike) se nanaša na preslikavo harmoničnosti in vzajemnosti zvokov na medčloveške odnose (ibid., 101). Tako pravi, da je *yun* v glasbi in literaturi dejansko ustvarjen skozi harmonično enotnost različnih zvokov. Ta različnost zvokov pa je v glasbi vrhunske kakovosti presežena in tako nastane takim. enotni zvok. To vrsto enotnosti lahko izkusimo, po drugi strani pa to ni stvar, na katero bi lahko konkretno pokazali. Zato lahko rečemo, da je *yun* duh zvoka (ibid.) To

si lahko predstavljamo s pomočjo analogije človeka: tudi ljudje po eni strani ne morejo zapustiti svoje oblike ali svojega značaja, po drugi pa lahko vendarle transcendirajo svojega duha v harmonično enotnost s soljudmi.

Xu Fuguan je torej prepričan, da nosi *yun* v sebi pomen lepote posameznikovega značaja in njegovih občutij, vendar seveda samo pod pogojem, da so ta harmonična in temeljijo na ponotranjenju konfucijanske etike. V tem smislu Xu koncepta *yun* ne povezuje z zvokom. Ta vrsta lepote se kaže navzven, tj. skozi človeški izraz. Tovrstni *yun*, v katerem sta zlita duh in zunanjost, se izrazi na slikah in prav v tem je osrednji pomen *yuna* znotraj koncepta *qiyun*. (Xu 2002, 102)

Kot estetski koncept se na prvi pogled zdi, da je *yun* odvisen od *qija*. *Qi* je življenjska oziroma kreativna sila, ki se manifestira skozi celotno umetniško delo, medtem ko se *yun* kaže v fragmentih posameznih podob ali izrazov. Zato je bil koncept *qi* osrednji kriterij v vrednotenju umetniškega dela, *yun* pa bolj izraz njegove popolnosti.

Podobno definicijo obeh konceptov znotraj tradicionalne kitajske estetike poda Wang Qingwei (2004), ko pravi, da je *qi* je izvor vseh stvari in življenja univerzuma in osnovna ideja samega univerzuma, življenja in umetnosti v tradicionalni kitajski kulturi. Prezentacija in izraz *qija* pa je dosežena skozi yun. Značilnost yuna je, da ni opis ali upodobitev zunanje oblike, temveč izraža notranjo naravo človeka oziroma stanje duha, ki prikaže stvari onkraj njihove podobe in je kot tak odvisen je od stanja duha subjekta. (Wang 2004)

Kasneje so umetniki iz dinastije Song *yun* razvili v globlji koncept in ga pojmovali kot najvišjo lepoto, ki jo umetnik (ali umetnica) lahko doseže (Wong 1989, 63). Od takrat dalje je bil *yun* v estetiki, če ne že bolj pomemben, pa vsaj enako pomemben kot *qi*. Predstavljal je razkritje dovršene umetniške uprizoritve, ki jo spremlja zrela in dovršena osebnost skozi določen umetniški stil. (ibid.)

V glavnem pa se je smatralo, da *qi* vključuje *yun*. Pa vendar so elementi, kot so notranjost, občutek in izraz dejavniki, ki so povezani bolj z *yunom* kot s *qijem*. Čeravno obstajajo med *qijem* in *yunom* razlike, sta oba koncepta v bistvu neločljiva in recipročna.

> Če *qi* velja za substanco dela, potem *yun* določa način, na katerega je substanca izražena. *Qi* je vitalna ustvarjalna sila in *yun* čudovito in prefinjeno izražen *qi*. (Wen Fong v Wong 1989, 65)

V naslednjem podpoglavju se bomo osredotočili na vzajemen odnos *qija* in *yuna* in si bolj podrobno ogledali notranjo strukturo besedne zveze *qiyun*.

Pomen vzajemnega delovanja qija *in* yuna – *koncept* qiyun

Qi in *yun* torej oba sodita h konceptom, skozi katera se izraža človeški duh. Zato so *qi* pogosto imenovali tudi *shenqi* 神气, medtem ko so *yun* poimenovali *shenyun* 神韵. Xu Fuguan meni (Xu 2002, 101), da je *qiyun* druga narava ljudi (*ren de di er ziran* 人的第二自然). Lepota umetnosti se lahko dogodi samo znotraj in na osnovi te druge narave, kakršno opisuje že Zhuangzi. Xu izpostavi, da opozarja Zhuangzi na možnost, da ljudje v svoji prvi naravi opazijo oz. prepoznajo drugo. Pri tem gre v glavnem za doseganje enotnosti narave (kozmosa, *daota*) in človeka. To je stanje preboja, najvišja sfera Zhuangzijeve filozofije. Ta preboj je neke vrste inspirativen preskok, dejanje transformirane človeške zavesti, ki ga spremlja stanje absolutne svobode. Po njem človek vstopi v nek drugi svet oziroma vidi svet iz drugega zornega kota.

Za Xuja je *qiyun* globlji izraz pojavljanja te druge človeške narave, tj. zlitja oz. enotnosti človeka in narave (*dao*), ki se kaže v umetniških delih. Hkrati pa meni, da sta oba, tako *qi* kot *yun* koncepta, ki neposredno izhajata iz prepoznanja in občudovanja medčloveških odnosov. To prepoznavanje se v prvi vrsti nanaša na obče človeška občutja in čustva, ki so ljudem skupna. *Qi* in *yun* poleg tega jasno izražata lepoto enotnosti duha in zunanje oblike. V tem ne vidi nikakršne povezave z zvoki, zato ponovno poudarja, da prevajati pojem *yun* z besedo ritem ni ustrezno oziroma pravilno. (Xu 2002, 102)

Zlitje *qija* in *yuna* v en sam koncept (oziroma v binarno kategorijo) se je zgodilo v obdobju Wei Jin, torej v času, v katerem je nastala klasična kitajska estetika kot izjemno kompleksna teorija. Zato nas dejstvo, da je Xie He kot prvi estetski kriterij določil prav koncept *qiyun shengdong* pravzaprav ne preseneča. Kot bomo videli v nadaljevanju, je Xie He konceptu *qi*, ki je že sam po sebi izjemno večplasten, namreč dodal še koncept *yun*, ki ga lahko razumemo tudi kot njegov binarni protipol. V kontekstu Wang Bijeve ontologije *benmo* 本末 (korenine in vejice), bi lahko razumeli *qi* kot *ben* in *yun* kot *mo*. V tem smislu bi pomenil *qi* esenco, *yun* pa njen izraz. V nadaljevanju bomo videli, ali lahko *qiyun* dejansko razumemo kot binarno kategorijo.

Ko je Xie He govoril o *qiyunu*, ga je vedno obravnaval v povezavi z umetniškim delom, ki kot tako nikoli ni določeno objektivno, temveč ga vzpostavi ustvarjalčeva osebnost. To razmerje je bilo obravnavano že v delu *Wenxin diaolong* 文心雕龙. (Xu 2002, 102) Ustvarjalčeva osebnost oz. njegova notranjost vsebuje *yin* 阴 (osojnost) in *yang* 阳(prisojnost) ter *gang* 刚 (močno in trdo) in *rou* 柔[15] (mehkost

15 Omenjeni koncepti oziroma principi izvirajo iz Knjige premen, katerim je dodan še nebeški in zemeljski *qi*.

in nežnost). Vsi štirje principi se prenesejo v umetniško delo in se zlijejo v njem. Yinyang ter gangrou so izraz različnih stanj oz. dinamičnost *qija*. *Qi*, o katerem govori Xie He, kaže na upodobitev lepote *yanga* in *ganga* v umetniškem delu (*yanggang zhi mei* 阳刚之美), medtem ko je *yun* prikaz lepote *yina* in *rouja* (*yin rou zhi mei* 阴柔之美), pri čemer je osnova lepote *yuna* čistost (*qing* 清). (Xu 2002, 102) Po Xuju se čistost nanaša na ustvarjalčevo osebnost, ki je prosta sebičnih želja in utilitarističih intencij.

Kljub razliki med konceptoma *qi* in *yun* moramo vedeti, da med njima obstaja tudi dinamični odnos. Zato ju nikakor ne moremo absolutno ločiti. Četudi so nekateri v elementu *qi* videli vodilni princip, pa v bistvu nobeden od obeh polov ne more dominirati ali biti primaren. (Wong 1989, 64) *Yin*, *yang*, *gang*, *rou* morajo soobstajati znotraj umetniškega dela, pri čemer se ne sme nobenega od njih preveč poudarjati ali zapostavljati. Delo, ki vsebuje preveč *qija*, lahko rezultira v pomanjkanju rahločutnosti, če pa je prevelik poudarek na *yunu*, lahko to pripelje do pomanjkanja notranje napetosti in moči. Zato je ohranjanje harmoničnega ravnovesja med *qijem* in *yunom* ključno v ustvarjanju umetniškega dela (ibid.) kot tudi v vrednotenju njegove kakovosti in njegovega dometa.

Po drugi strani pa lahko iz zgoraj navedene analize konceptov *qi* in yun ter iz značaja njunega vzajemnega odnosa sklepamo, da ju je možno razumeti tudi kot binarno kategorijo, v smislu Wang Bijeve ontologije *benmo* in njegove estetike *yixiang*[16]. Kot že omenjeno, nastopa v tej binarni kategoriji *qi* kot korenina, osnova oziroma esenca (*ben*), medtem ko je *yun* prefinjeno dovršen izraz te esence (*mo*). V tem pogledu *yun* ne more obstajati brez *qija*, sama kvaliteta izraza *qija* pa je tako možna samo in zgolj skozi *yun*.

Strukturo njunega odnosa vidi tudi Xu Fuguan na podoben način. Vendar opozarja na to, da lahko *qi* obstaja tudi brez *yuna*, medtem ko slednji v umetnosti ne more obstajati brez prvega. Po drugi strani pa verjame, da izvira sama ideja *qiyuna* že iz Zhuangzije filozofije, saj vsebuje mnoge Zhuangzijeve koncepte, kot na primer *qing* 清 (čistost), *xu* 虚 (praznino), *xuan* 玄 (globino) in *yuan* 远 (odmaknjenost). (Xu 2002, 102)

Kot smo omenili že na začetku, je za Xie Heja prva lastnost, ki določa dovršenost umetniške slike *qiyun shengdong*. Četudi se ta fraza zelo pogosto zapisuje v celoti, in jo glede na različne kontekste tudi sama opisujem z izrazom »*qiyun je to, kar naredi delo živo*«, pa v klasičnih delih ne najdemo podrobnejše oziroma

16 Pri tem gre za *xiang* 象 (podoba, simol) in *yi* 意 (pomen, ideja), ki sodita k osrednjim konceptom Wang Bijeve kozmološko – epistemološke teorije, katero smo na kratko opisali v prejšnjem poglavju. Oba omenjena koncepta sta bila namreč prenesena tudi na področje umetnosti oziroma estetike. Njuna fuzija je znana kot yixiang, ki ga je kot prvi zapisal Liu Xie in pomeni estetski ideal.

nedvoumne razlage glede tega, ali ima *shengdong* samostojni pomen ali je zgolj učinek *qiyuna* oziroma izraz njune komplementarnosti.

V tem kontekstu Xu poudarja, da so teoretiki obdobja Wei Jin, še preden so začeli uporabljati besedo *shengdong*, v podobnih pomenih pogosto omenjali izraz *shengqi* 生气, kar lahko interpretiramo kot premikanje (*yuedong* 跃动), rojevanje, stvarstvo in proizvajanje *qija*. Kot kaže, se je ta pojem kasneje transformiral v izraz *shengdong*[17]. (Xu 2002, 108) Celotna struktura izraza *qiyun shengdong* je enaka, kot struktura sestavljenke *qiyun*. Medtem ko namreč njen prvi element lahko obstaja brez drugega, obratno ni mogoče[18] (ibid.).

Po Xu Fuguanu je pomen Xie Hejevega *shengdonga* v konceptu *qiyun shengdong* ter vzajemno razmerje med obema terminoma, ki tvorita to sestavljenko, opredeljeno kot:

> 有气韵, 则有生动矣.
>
> Če je *qiyun*, potem je tudi *shengdong* (ibid.).

Ker lahko pojem *shengdong* razumemo tudi kot dinamiko življenja ali življenjsko silo, in ker je koncept *qiyun* potemtakem pogoj za vzpostavitev le-te, ima Xu Fuguan verjetno prav, ko meni, da je *qiyun* sublimacija življenjske sile, ali – v daoističnem smislu – esenca življenja.

Ker gre pri tem seveda za esenco življenja umetniškega dela, ki je produkt človeške ustvarjalnosti, se pri tem seveda pojavi vprašanje o tem, ali je *qiyun* stvar kultivacije in izobrazbe ali pa je stvar intuicije, talenta in dovršenega značaja ustvarjalca. Če je *qiyun* kot estetski kriterij oziroma koncept možno razmeroma jasno definirati, pa obstaja v njem vendarle dimenzija, ki jo je težko zaobjeti z uporabo analitične metode. To, kar je Xu izrazil s frazo *druga narava človeka* in to, kar je za Zhuangzija stanje popolne osvoboditve duha, je področje, ki se izmika definicijam. Občutja *qiyuna* v umetniškem delu ne moremo razumeti samo kot lepoto ravnotežja med posameznimi elementi in deli, ki umetniško delo sestavljajo, ampak gre pri njem v prvi vrsti za izraz človeškega občutja. Seveda

17 *Shengqi* je pravzaprav osnova pojma duha (*shen*) pri Gu Kaizhiju in prav tako pri Xie Hejevem *qiyunu*. *Shengdong* je zunanji izraz občutja, ki se kaže na sliki, *shengqi* pa je notranje življenje, ki se kaže skozi zunanjost, tj. na umetniškem delu. Iz tega lahko rečemo, da *shengdong* po svojem notranjem pomenu ne dosega globine pomena *shengqi*. *Shengdong* nastane skozi *qiyun* in je njegov naravni, spontani učinek, kateremu je dodana naracija. Torej se *shengdong* nanaša izključno na *qiyun* in nima samostojnega pomena. (Xu 2002, 108)

18 Seveda pa se beseda *shengdong* lahko pojavlja tudi v drugih kontekstih, v katerih nima nobene povezave s konceptom *qiyun*, podobno kot se tudi koncept *yun* v drugih kontekstih (t.j. izven slikarstva) lahko pojavlja tudi samostojno in neodvisno od koncepta *qi*.

lahko pri tem govorimo o univerzalnih občutjih, ki jih pravzaprav poznamo vsi ljudje. A vendar je *qiyun* v glavnem izraz individualne notranjosti posameznika ter njegovega unikatnega, enkratnega in neponovljivega duha, ki na svoj lasten način doživlja notranji in zunanji svet, katerega je sposoben izraziti tudi skozi umetniška dela. V tem kontekstu Xu meni, da *qiyun* ni nekaj, čemur se človek lahko priuči skozi izobrazbo in prakso, ampak je prirojen talent, ki se ga ne da in ne more naučiti.

Tako pravi, da je ena največjih zmožnosti umetnika točno v tem, da lahko v prvi naravi vidi drugo naravo človeka (Xu 2002, 119). V kolikšni meri je ta sposobnost prisotna, pa se kaže v tem, ali (in v kolikšni meri) lahko umetnik oz. umetnica znotraj svojega življenja to drugo življenje kreativno sublimira. *Qiyun* na sliki ali drugem umetniškem delu je izraz njegovega duha. Duh tega dela, torej umetniškega objekta, pa izhaja iz duha ustvarjalca. Transformacija duha umetnikove notranjosti in njegov prenos v ta objekt je nekaj, kar presega vprašanje ustvarjalčeve veščine oziroma tehnike. *Qiyun* je pravzaprav »od neba dani« talent oziroma neke vrste prirojena dispozicija (*tianfu de qizhi* 天赋的气质) (ibid.).

Prenesti duha pokrajine pomeni izraziti *qiyun* pokrajine. Da to ustvarjalec lahko izrazi, mora v prvi vrsti najprej (biti zmožen) transformirati sebe in svoje življenje ter se stopiti v enoto s tem duhom. To pomeni, da mora odstraniti sebične želje, se dvigniti nad njih in izraziti tišino in mirnost, ki sta subjekt in esenca duha umetnosti. Na ta način lahko v osvetlitvi subjekta svojega umetniškega duha, ki je dejansko v opazovanju lepega, transformira pokrajino v objekt lepote in to je osvetlitev in prikaz duha pokrajine. Ta duh pokrajine gre skozi osvetlitev umetnikove lepote duha. Zato duh pokrajine spontano prodre v lepoto duha kot subjekta umetnosti. V tem se zlijeta skupaj in temu se v kitajski estetiki pravi »iskanje notranje oddaljene pokrajine« (Xu 2002, 120)

Pri tem prenosu, ki je torej *qiyun*, pa nikakor ne gre za imitacijo (*mimesis*) pokrajine oziroma narave na sliki, temveč bolj za prenos duha pokrajine skozi lastnega duha, ki se razkrije skozi veščino (*suishou xiechu, jiewei shanshui chuanshen* 随手写出, 皆为山水传伸, ibid.). Izvor tega prenosa torej ni v veščini, ampak izvira iz esence duha umetnosti, ki se pojavi skozi transcendenco in transformiranje življenja ustvarjalca oz. ustvarjalke. Iz tega razloga je tudi umetnost sama po sebi zmožnost transformiranja in transcendiranja človeka.

Predpogoj za prenos duha življenja (lastne notranjosti ali zunanje narave) v fizično podobo umetniškega dela, t.j. predpogoj za realizacijo *qiyuna* je torej doseganje izpraznjene in umirjene srčne zavesti (*xin* 心) in stanja absolutne svobode, o kateri govori Zhuangzi v svoji filozofiji »Svobodnega in lahkotnega

lebdenja« (*xiaoyao you* 逍遥游)[19]. Zato ustvarjalni vnos *qiyuna* v umetniško delo tudi pri njem izvira iz očiščenja oziroma postenja srčne zavesti (*xinzhai* 心斋).

Če želi umetnik v svojem delu doseči *qiyun*, mora seveda slediti določeni strukturi, ki se lahko pokaže skozi njegovo obvladanje tehnike. Ampak *qiyun*, ki se kaže skozi objekt, dejansko izvira iz lastnega truda samokultivacije, ki iz srčne zavesti očisti »blato in kaos«. V zlitju duha (umetnika in umetniškega objekta) pride do osvoboditve. Prav tovrstna samo – kultivacija, tj. kultivacija lastnega značaja in posledična zmožnost osvoboditve duha je predstavljala tisto osnovo vseh umetniških veščin, ki je bila potrebna za to, da si lahko na Kitajskem veljal za velikega umetnika, in da si lahko to tudi dejansko postal. Imeti ali ne imeti tovrstno osnovo je pravzaprav ločnica, ki ločuje mojstre od tistih, ki zgolj obvladajo veščino.

Kritična evalvacija Xu Fuguanove interpretacije koncepta *qiyun shengdong*

V zadnjem delu članka bomo podali kritično oceno Xujeve interpretacije tega pomembnega koncepta klasične kitajske estetike. Pri tem bom podrobneje osvetlili predvsem dve stališči, ki se kot rdeča nit vlečeta skozi vse Xujeve razprave o omenjenem konceptu. Pri prvem gre za Xu Fuguanovo stališče o avtohtonosti tega koncepta oziroma za njegovo negacijo teorij, po katerih naj bi bil ta koncept (skupaj z vrsto drugih) prevzet iz staroindijske umetnostne teorije *Sadanga* (*Šest vej*). Drugo stališče je stališče o tem, da konceptov *yun* in *qiyun* v zahodne jezike nikakor ne moremo prevajati s pojmi ritem, ritmičen ali ritmičnost. Kritična evalvacija obeh zgoraj navedenih stališč v sodobnem kontekstu je pomembna v okviru ponovnega ovrednotenja klasičnih konfucijanskih in daoističnih elementov v sestavi klasične kitajske umetnostne teorije oziroma estetike in tudi za vključevanje medkulturnih razsežnosti v diskurze tega področja.

Kritična evalvacija teze o prevzemu koncepta qiyun shengdong iz indijske teorije slikarstva

Victor H. Mair v članku *Xie He's »Six Laws« of Painting and their Indian Parallels* (2004, 81) skozi lingvistično in historično analizo dokazuje vpliv indijske teorije slikarstva, zapisane v delu *Sadanga* (*Šest vej*) na Xie Hejevih *Šest zakonitosti*. Obe

19 To ni samo Xu Fuguanovo mnenje, temveč gre pri tem za stališče, ki so ga zastopali tudi mnogi tradicionalni teoretiki. Tako je na primer že Guo Ruoxu 郭若虚, znan umetnostni kritik iz 11. stoletja, zapisal: »V vseh umetniških slikah je esenca *qiyuna* v lebdenju srčne zavesti.« (凡画, 气韵本乎游心) (Zhongguo hualun 2017, s.p.).

deli sta nastali približno v istem času[20] in sta imeli v enaki meri izjemen vpliv na slikarstvo v obeh kulturah. Obe kulturi sta bili takrat v zelo tesnih stikih zaradi budizma, ki je globoko vplival na kitajsko kulturo prav v obdobju Wei Jin. Mair meni, da obstaja velika možnost, da je Xie He v svojih teorijah pravzaprav prevzel model in vsebino indijske *Sadange*. To dokazuje na podlagi dejstva, da antični kitajski teksti, torej besedila, ki so nastala pred prihodom budizma, ne vsebujejo numeričnih naštevanj (prvo, drugo, tretje itd.), ki jih najdemo pri Xie Hejevih šestih zakonitostih. Mair omeni, da večina kitajskih akademikov zastopa nasprotno mnenje z argumentom, da sta prvi dve Xie Hejevi zakonitosti vidni že v prejšnjih produktih avtentične kitajske tradicionalne estetike slikarstva[21]. (ibid., 116)

Xu Fuguan je podobno idejo o podobnosti in prevzemu *Sadange* pri Xie Hejevih *Šestih zakonitostih* zasledil v delu *Indian Painting* avtorja Percyja Browna iz leta 1920, ki pa jo absolutno zanika (2002, 121). Xu namreč meni, da je podobnost zgolj plod naključja, in da izvora Xie Hejevih *Šestih zakonitosti* nikakor ne gre pripisovati indijski *Sadangi*, kjub temu, da naj bi bil sam izvor slednjega dela kar nekaj stoletij starejši. Xu to dokazuje tudi na podlagi dejstva, da v *Sadangi* najdemo samo tri od šestih zakonitosti, ki jih poda Xie He, in ki naj bi korespondirali s *Sadanginim* konceptom. Eden od teh treh konceptov naj bi bil tudi *qiyun shengdong*, za katerega Xu pravi, da ima dosti globlji pomen kot njegov formalni ekvivalent iz *Sadange*.

Kljub izjemni analizi in novim dokazom, ki jih poda Victor H. Mair, je glede numeričnega oštevilčevanja, ki naj bi bil prenesen iz Indije in katerega naj bi Xie He prenesel na svojih šest zakonitosti slikarstva, pomisliti še na možnost, da je Xie He pri oštevilčevanju zakonitosti prevzel obliko heksagrama iz *Knjige premen*. Slednja je bila namreč v obdobju Wei Jin znotraj neodaoistične šole *Xuanxue* zelo v ospredju. Glede na to, da je v konceptu *qiyun shengdong* zajeta manifestacija dinamičnega odnosa *yinyang* in *gangrou*, ter nebeškega in zemeljskega *qija*, ki jo poznamo prav iz *Knjige premen*, je morda potrebno upoštevati tudi možnost, da se je Xie He ravno na tej osnovi odločil za tovrstno šestdelno klasifikacijo. Po drugi strani pa šestdelno klasifikacijo najdemo tudi v *Knjigi pesmi* (11. do 7. st. pr. št.), kjer so posamezne oblike in vsebine pesmi razdeljene kronološko. Iz obojega lahko sklepamo, da je število šest simboliziralo neke vrste kozmično in strukturno urejenost. Seveda je to predmet nadaljnjih premislekov in raziskav[22].

20 Pri tem pa je treba omeniti, da naj bi imela sama *Sadanga* svoj izvor v *Vedah*, ki pa je besedilo iz osmega stoletja pr. n. št.

21 Vsekakor ne moremo mimo dejstva, da sta si obe deli po vsebini zelo podobni. Na tem mestu ne bomo navajali posameznih delov *Sadange*, za podrobno razlago glej Mair (2004).

22 Poleg tega pa moramo vzeti v obzir tudi dejstvo, da so kitajski teoretiki v idejnih konceptih, ki so prihajali iz drugih kultur, vedno poskusili najti ekvivalentni ali vsaj podobni idejni koncept znotraj svoje lastne kulture.

Xu Fuguan je, kot smo videli zgoraj, nazorno pokazal, da je *qiyun* tradicionalni estetski koncept, ki je precej starejši od njegove prezentacije v delu Xie Heja. Sicer je teoretično možno, da se je Xie He dejansko srečal z indijsko teorijo slikarstva, in da je *Sadango* ter njeno strukturo prenesel v kitajski okvir, kot trdi Victor H. Mair; vendar moramo biti pri tovrstnih trditvah previdni, saj so konec koncev nedokazljive in zato dvomljive. Kot smo videli v gornjih poglavjih, nam prav Xu Fuguan v svojem delu *Esenca duha kitajske umetnosti* nudi tudi obilo težko ovrgljivih dokazov za tezo, po kateri so osnove estetike, ki je nastala pod Xie Hejevim čopičem, daoistične narave in vsebujejo veliko elementov najstarejših kitajskih klasikov iz obdobja avtohtone, t.j. predbudistične tradicije.

Problem prevajanja koncepta qiyun shengdong *v indoevropske jezike*

Kot smo videli v uvodu članka, se Xu ne strinja s prevodom *qiyuna* v smislu ritmičnosti. Na tovrsten prevod Xu naleti v delih *Chinese Art* avtorja Stephena Woottona Bushella iz leta 1904, *Painting in the Far East* avtorja Laurenca Binyona iz leta 1908 in *The meaning of Art* Herberta Reada iz leta 1931. Pri tem Xu problematizira sam prevod *yuna* kot ritmičnost, kot tudi to, da so ti tuji teoretiki ta prevod prenesli na celotni koncept *qiyun*. Pri tem opozori, da se v delu *Shishuo xinyu* 世说新语 (*Nov opis zgodb sveta*), zbirki dialogov in zgodb iz pozne dinastije Han (25–220) do Severnih in Južnih dinastij (420–589) izpod peresa Liu Yiqinga 刘义庆 (403–444), *qi* in *yun* nista uporabljala skupaj, temveč ločeno. Xu iz omenjenega dela navede frazo, v kateri se *qi* in *yun* navajata ločeno v frazi *fengqi yundu* 风气韵度, pri čemer naj bi bil izraz *fengqi* 风气 ena beseda, ki je pomenila atmosfero oz. vzdušje, *yundu* 韵度 pa druga, ki je pomenila stopnjo oziroma intenzivnost *yuna*. Do Xie Heja so po Xuju slikarji in teoretiki *qi* in *yun* torej jasno ločevali med seboj. (Xu 2002, 94)

Xu precej strogo zavrača Readovo postavko, po kateri lahko skozi harmonično urejenost potez na sliki občutimo ritem. Pravi, da je to izključno stvar človeške domišljije, subjektivnega občutka in metaforičnosti ter da *qiyun* ni ritmičen v tem smislu. Seveda gre pri *qiyunu* tudi za enotno harmonijo potez, ampak ta ne more ustvariti *qiyun shengdonga*. Poleg tega izpostavi Xu, da naj bi bila razlika med zahodnim in kitajskim slikarstvom v tem, da iščejo zahodni slikarji to, kar je v potezah samih, medtem zasledujejo kitajski slikarji tisto, kar je onkraj potez. V zahodnem slikarstvu je ritem tista presežnost, ki se izrazi skozi harmoničnost potez. Seveda se kitajski slikarji prav tako osredotočajo na poteze, vendar je končni cilj njihovega ustvarjalnega procesa v tem, da slikar poteze pozabi, se osvobodi iz omejenosti njihovih spon in ter izrazi kreativnost in svobodo svojega duha. Iz tega razloga se za Xuja *qiyuna*

(ali *yuna*) nikakor ne sme prevajati kot ritem ali ritmičnost. (Xu 2002, 98) Glede na to, da pa je po drugi strani ritem izpostavil kot nekaj, kar je vezano izključno na zaporedja zvokov (ibid., 99), se ob tem lahko vprašamo tudi po tem, ali je Xu dejansko pravilno razumel angleški pojem *rhythm*, saj gre pri tem za izraz, ki zdaleč presega konotacijo razmeroma hitrih in ponavljajočih se zaporedij zvokov v glasbi. V članku smo poleg tega navedli tudi Xujev citat, v katerem trdi, da naj bi bil prefinjen *yun* najti v naravi (*ziran you yayun*). Iz tega navedka lahko *yun* (in tudi *qiyun*) dejansko razumemo kot ritem, ki se kaže skozi ponavljajoče se procese v naravi. Narava (ali nebeški *dao*) imata namreč nek svoj ritem, ki mu sledi in ga hkrati ustvarja. Če prenesemo tak pomen *yuna* (ki pa seveda ni njegov edini pomen) na področje umetnosti in na konkretne umetniške stvaritve, ga lahko pravzaprav dejansko razumemo tudi na tak način. Če je estetski ideal kitajskega slikarstva v obdobju Wei Jin in kasneje, v krajinskem slikarstvu dinastije Song, prenos duha narave na kar najbolj neposreden način (pri čemer je potrebno imeti v mislih, da pri kitajskem slikarstvu ne gre za *mimesis*), gre pri tem nujno tudi za upodobitev ritmov, ki se v naravi dejansko dogajajo. Ta ritem se ustvarja skozi poteze ali v primeru poezije skozi rimo, ritem in zven (ton) posameznih besed.

Vsekakor se lahko strinjam s Xujem, da ritem ali ritmičnost ni ustrezen prevod koncepta *yun* oz. *qiyun*, ker ne pokriva vseh njegovih pomenskih dimenzij, vendar pa hkrati menim, da je ritem tudi ena izmed njegovih pomembnih in osrednjih pomenskih konotacij.

Kljub temu pa Xujeva analiza in interpretacija koncepta *qiyun shengdong* jasno pokaže, da je omenjeni koncept pravzaprav zelo težko, če že ne kar nemogoče prevesti v katerikoli indoevropski jezik, ki bi lahko ustrezno izrazil njegov kompleksen pomen. Seveda pa bodo šele nadaljnje raziskave lahko pokazale, ali bo najbolj smotrno, ta izraz prevzeti in ga uporabljati v izvirniku kot *terminus technicus*, ali pa se bo disciplina sinološke estetike vendarle odločila za nek splošni in kolikor toliko verodostojen prevod tega pomembnega pojma.

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Reports and Announcements

A Report on the "Global Integration of Ancient Chinese Books" Project

Project leader: Prof. Zheng Jiewen 郑杰文, *Shandong University*
Peter Wai Ming CHENG[*]

Part 1

Zheng Jiewen is one of the few prestigious third generation scholars studying the traditional Chinese classics in China, coming after Feng Youlan, Ji Xianlin and Tang Yijie.

Professor Zheng has been studying the Pre-Qin scholars and has made remarkable achievements with regard to Mohism, the School of Diplomacy, and the School of the Minor-talks.

He is one the leading lights of Zi (a category for philosophical works, established in the first encyclopedia during the Han Dynasty) studies, and especially the study of Mohism, in China. His book *The History of Mohism* (中国墨学通史) has been placed in the National Social Sciences Foundation Library, and won first prize in the highest awards given for liberal arts disciplines by the Chinese government, the National College Humanities and Social Science Outstanding Achievements Awards. Articles were published in *Guangming Daily, China Reading Weekly, Oriental Philosophy Research (Korean)* and ten other academic journals, all noting its creativity. Ping-ti Ho of the University of Chicago, member of the Academia Sinica and American Academy of Arts and Sciences at that time, cited and spoke highly of this book. It is seen as a work that addresses previous gaps in the academic literature, because it is the first that elaborates on the general history of Mohism.

Professor Zheng is also a leader in the study of the School of Diplomacy and the School of the Minor-talks. His books, *New Theory of the Warring State* Strategies (战国策文新论), *Theory of Chinese Ancient Political Strategists* (中国古代纵横家论), *Study of Gui Guzi* (鬼谷子研究), and *Explanation of the Biography of Mu Tianzi* (〈穆天子传〉通释), are all of tremendous academic influence. Due to his extraordinary achievements in Zi studies, in 2010 Professor Zheng was invited

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to work as the chief expert of the biggest liberal arts research project at the national level in China, *Zihai Compilation and Research.*

Part 2

Zihai Compilation and Research is a major project of the National Social Science Fund, established by the National Planning Office of Philosophical and Social Sciences at Shandong University. The final result of this project will be the *Zihai Essential Editions*, which will include hundreds of important Zi books, *Zihai Rare Editions* that will have hundreds of Zi rare editions, and *Zihai Research Editions* that will collect many research work on Zi studies.

The collections *Zihai Special Volumes* (子海特辑), *Zihai Rare Editions* (子海珍本编), *Zihai Rare Edition Images Catalogue* (子海珍本编图录), *Zihai Essential Editions* (子海精华编), and *Zihai Research Editions* (子海研究编) will be published individually over a period of years. In 2011, three *Zihai Special Volumes* (子海特辑) were published by Phoenix Publishing House, and this included 20 unpublished papers written by Gao Heng, Luan Diaofu, Ding Shan, and Wang Xiantang. In 2013, the first volume of *Zihai Rare Editions* (子海珍本编), including 120 books in the Mainland Chinese volume and 50 books in the Taiwanese volume, were published by Phoenix Publishing House and Taiwan Commercial Press, respectively. Five kinds of Zi books have been digitized, including 47 block-printed editions and 47 autographs from the Song Ming period, 148 manuscripts from the Yuan Ming period, and 224 carved editions from the Ming period. There are thus a total of 503 of these works in the digital archive, representing 92.6% of the content, providing a resource of great academic value.

The first volume of *Zihai Rare Editions* (子海珍本编) was very well-received. Shandong University established a project called the Global Compilation of Ancient Chinese Books (hereinafter referred to as the Integration), enlarging the scope of target books from Zi to all four categories of ancient Chinese books. This project includes partnership not only with individuals and organizations in Taiwan, but also in Europe and America. In this way, the Integration will collect ancient books from all over the globe and publish them.

It is no accident that Shandong University has been entrusted with such an important project. Shandong University has always been very strong in its work in the liberal arts. In particular, it is known for its ability to organize projects that compile ancient documents and undertake thorough explorations of the ideas within them. Such efforts are supported by various academic teams that contain

with numerous and highly specialized experts. With regard to the project considered here, an editorial board was set up drawing on staff from Shandong University along with 170 experts from other institutions, such as Nanjing University, Tokyo University, Howard University, the University of Munich, the University of Macau, National Taiwan University, Hong Kong Chinese University, and other universities from Hong Kong, Taiwan Macau, mainland China and the West. The resulting team was divided into three units working on the digitization of rare editions, compilation of essential editions and academic research.

Digitization is led by Professor Liu Xinming, who was hired by the Ministry of Culture in China as an expert on the inscriptions that appear on ancient bronzes and stone tablets. He is well-known in the field of cataloguing, literary criticism, and the identification of editions. Professor Liu is one of the main leading experts of the Integration and International Chinese Study Research Collaboration, and in this capacity presides over the cataloguing and digitization of the related books that are held overseas. Professor Liu has edited *Zihai Rare Editions* (子海珍本编) and *Collection of Bibliographies in the Twenty-Five Histories* (二十五史艺文经籍志考补萃编) among other significant academic achievements, and he also works on philological theory and ancient stone inscriptions.

The compilation of essential editions is led by Professor Wang Chenglüe. Professor Wang helped Professor Wang Shaozeng in the compilation of the *Shandong Literature Catalogue* (山东文献书目), and an edition of the *Records of Art and Literature in the Qing Dynasty* (清史稿艺文志拾遗), and compiled the *Collection of Various Editions of the Twenty-Four Histories* (百衲本二十四史校勘记). Professor Wang also helped Professor Dong Zhian in compiling *The Collected Works of the Han Dynasty* (两汉全书), *Integration of Important Books for the Biographies of the Characters Outside the Twenty-Five Histories* (二十五史外人物总传要籍集成), and *The Four Categories of Books in Tang Dynasty* (唐代四大类书). His own books include *Picture on the Things of Mao's Song* (毛诗品物图考), *Notes About Pictures of Lisao* (离骚全图校释), *Zheng Xuan and Classics* (郑玄与今古文经学), *Research on Li Tao's Life and Works* (李焘学行诗文辑考), *New Notes on the History of the East Han Dynasty* (后汉书新注), and *Collection of Bibliographies in the Twenty-Five Histories* (二十五史艺文经籍志考补萃编).

The research unit of the project is led by Professor Zheng Jiewen.

The three units outlined above have achieved significant results after five years of diligent work.

Following the publication of the first volumes of the *Zihai Rare Editions* (from both Mainland China and Taiwan), the *Zihai Rare Editions Overseas Volume* (Japan)

(子海珍本编•海外卷（日本）) and *Mainland Volume* (Shanghai Library) (子海珍本编•大陆卷（上海图书馆）), and will be published. The Zihai *Rare Edition Overseas Volume* (Japan) will include 150 books in 34 digitized Zi volumes from Japan's National Cabinet Document Library, National Diet Library, Housabunko Library, and Library of the Imperial Household Agency, Seikado Library, the University of Tokyo Library, and Waseda University Library. *Mainland Volume* (Shanghai Library) (子海珍本编•大陆卷（上海图书馆）) will be published in three batches, and contain 1,000 ancient books in total, and the *Three Editions of Conspectus of Penal Cases* (刑案汇览三编) will also be published, with these edited by Shen Jiateng.

In 2016, the first volume of the *Zihai Essential Editions* (子海精华编) came out, containing three million characters from a collection of nine different books. The *Zihai Essential Edition* (子海精华编) team has collected a total of 97 books, with the remaining 88 scheduled to be published soon.

The academic research unit is responsible for the *Zihai Research Edition* (子海研究编). They are now working with overseas academics, as seen in the publication of Chinese version of *Confucian Role Ethics* by Professor Roger Thomas Ames, *Probing into Zi Books* (子书探微) by Wiebke Deneck, from Columbia University, *A Study on Gui Guzi and Political Strategists* (〈鬼谷子〉与纵横家研究) and *Yilin and Ancient Culture Study* (〈易林〉与上古文化研究) by Professor Hans van Ess, from the University of Munich.

Part 3

The Integration is in progress, and includes the following four parts.

1. Co-compilation of the *Catalogue of Global Ancient Chinese Books* (hereinafter referred to as the Catalogue). The Catalogue is the academic foundation of the Integration. Through the collaboration of members of the Global Consortium for Chinese Studies, the expert team will be able to obtain detailed information about the major book collections held by overseas institutions, gather and compile a catalogue of ancient Chinese books, publish it and then issue a digitized version.
2. The outcomes of the Integration. Based on the Catalogue the expert team will select books with the most ideological value and academic representativeness, digitize and selectively publish them. The final result will be serval times larger than the *Complete Library in the Four Branches of Literature* that was produced in the Qing Dynasty.
3. Database for the Integration. This database aims to collect ancient books from both inside and outside China, and especially rare editions. The database

will be equipped with rigorous academic system and a refined collection of collated and noted ancient books, and will provide a powerful search function for users. The database will be divided into the following sub-databases: 1. Database of the Catalogue of Global Ancient Chinese Books, 2. Database of the book images of Global Ancient Chinese Books, 3. Database of links to images on other servers (this will replace the first database after its completion). Together these sub-databases will offer the results of this project on the same platform.

4. Translation and other promotional work. Once the books have been selected and entered into the database, it is hoped that this project will influence the direction of scholars studying Chinese culture worldwide. One thousand books will thus be selected and then translated into modern Chinese and published outside of China. Two hundred books will be translated into foreign languages and published outside China, and this is also likely to influence the cultural choices of elite groups in other countries.

Part 4

Many ancient Chinese books are stored in collection agencies in Mainland China, but a large number remain in other areas due to historical reasons, among which there are books of great academic value. For example, among some 3,000 Song-Yuan Period ancient books, around 500 rare editions are stored in Taiwan. In addition to their academic value, these books have great value as antiques and artifacts.

Such items include the printed version of the *Li He Poetry Anthology* (李贺歌诗编) on official document paper dates back to the end of the Northern Song / beginning of Southern Song, the *Brief History of the East Capital* (东都事略) home-printed by Cheng Sheren at Mount Mei during Southern Song Shaoxi Period, the 10-line-per-page version of *Picture and Classification on Xuncius* (纂图分门类题注荀子) printed in Jianyang, *New Compilation of Geography and Scenic Spots* (新编方舆胜览) printed in Jian'an in the third year of Xianchun, *Xiaozhuan Notes on the Book of Loyalty* (忠经篆注) printed at the end of Southern Song, the 11-line-per-page version of *Picture and Mutual Notes on Book of Changes* (纂图互注周易) printed in Jianyang during the Southern Song period, and *Collection of Ouyang Xingzhou* (欧阳行周文集) printed in Sichuan during the Song Dynasty. These books are of great significance for academic research. Moreover, when originally in circulation certain ancient books were segmented into several parts, and these parts stored in difference places. Fortunately, although the books are thus

fragmentary in nature, by putting them together we can get most of their content, and in some case even the whole content. The first volume of the *Zihai Rare Editions* is a good example of such piecing together of ancient works. Academia Sinica in Taiwan was able to preserve 122 volumes of the Japanese manuscripts of the *Second Edition of Chinese Medicine Encyclopedia in Dade* (《大德重校圣济总录》), while the Japanese Imperial Household Agency Library kept another 35 volumes from the Song period, and a further 37 volumes are stored in libraries in Mainland China. The project team thus gathered all these volumes during their digitization efforts, and so were able to provide very comprehensive data. As such, Professor Zheng believes that instead of keeping the books to themselves, book collection institutes, libraries and so on should contribute these resources to academic research efforts. This is why Professor Zheng advocates a complementary and integrated approach to the collection and study of ancient Chinese books, both in and outside China.

Part 5

As part of the Integration project the team of experts is devoted to the investigation, cataloguing and digitization of these ancient books, as well as the construction of a database, in order to meet current research trends. Since the 1990's, the construction of this ancient books database has been gaining speed, helped along by a number of such databases with high academic value that have been developed over the years. The basic Chinese ancient books database, developed by the Beijing Airusheng Digital Technology Research Center and published by Huangshan Publishing House, includes 10,000 works in 170,000 volumes of ancient books from the Qin to the Republican periods. It provides a public version that contains the full content and images from one or two important versions of each work. Overall, this database contains 1.7 billion Chinese characters, 12,700 editions, and 10 million pages of images.

The National Ancient Books' Preservation Center, relying on the large ancient collections of the National Library, co-operates with a microcopy center and transfers the ancient text to high-definition images, which are then used in the Chinese Ancient Book Resources Database. This now has images of rare and good editions of 10,975 volumes, 91,467 books, and 6,124,464 images, which account for around one third of the total number of good editions collected by China's National Library. Zhonghua Book Company also has a collection of recently-collated editions of ancient books in its Database of Ancient Books of Chinese Classics. The first volume collects 260 kinds of books texts from all four categories, as

collated by Zhonghua Book Company, among which are *The Twenty-Five Histories* (二十五史), *Consultancy* (通鉴), *Newly Organized Integration of Ancient Chinese Scholars* (新编诸子集成), *Notation of the Thirteen Confucian Classics by Qing Scholars* (清人十三经注疏), *Notes of Historical Materials* (史料笔记丛刊), *Classical Chinese Literature Basic Books* (中国古典文学基本丛书), and *Ancient Buddhist Books and Records* (佛教典籍选刊). The Ancient Books Preservation Center of China's National Library recently published a Database of Ancient Chinese Books as part of the national general survey. This is part of the *Ancient Books Protection Plan,* and it carried out for the first time a unified search for ancient books at the national level.

Although a valuable database for ancient Chinese books has been built up, based on those works in China, as yet there is now database featuring ancient books from outside the country. In the Global Integration for Ancient Chinese Books project the expert team will develop such a database based on the Catalogue and the final results of this project.

The database thus aims to collect ancient books from China and overseas, and especially rare editions. As noted earlier, this database will be based on a rigorous academic system and will include a collection of noted ancient books, and will provide a powerful search function. The database will be divided into the following sub-databases: 1. Database of the Catalogue of Global Chinese Ancient Books, 2. Database of the book images, 3. Database of links to images on other servers (which will replace the first database after its completion). There will be a physical database and virtual database, and together they will offer the results of the Integration project on the same platform.

The database of book images of Global Ancient Chinese Books is the catalogue containing information about books collected by the Integration. In the first stage the database collects around 190,000 different books. The information included in the database includes the serial number, title, number of volumes, author, version, form of arrangement, existing and lost volumes, collection institutes, and so on. As the project develops there will eventually be information on around 250,000 books, and the database will be connected to related databases both in and outside of China.

The database of book images of Global Ancient Chinese Books is also built as part of the Integration project. It contains images and information on selected books, mostly the good and rare editions. Shandong University has signed an agreement with The British Library, Bibliotheque Nationale de France, the China National Library, the Taipei Palace Museum, Housabunko Library, Seikado Library, the University of Tokyo Library, and the Russian State Library, and they will issue

license agreements enabling the project to upload the original images of ancient books. In 2015 the International Sinology Research Center (hereinafter referred to as the Center) appointed Professor Wang Peiyuan as its chief, and twice sent a team to Russia to carry out cataloguing, selection, identification and digitization. The first batch of images included 600 rare editions stored at the Center, and 1,800 good editions stored in Shandong University Library. More will be included later. The search system of the database of the Catalogue of Global Ancient Chinese Books will be connected with the related book image database.

From a technical perspective, the aforementioned database constitutes two system: a catalogue database and a literature system. According to the current plan, 90,000 kinds of ancient Chinese books in 1.2 million volumes and 16.22 million pages will be included in the database, with a total of 8.61 million Chinese characters, and a data size of 1.813TB. The search system meets the Unicode international standard, and includes a very large set of Chinese characters, both traditional and simplified, as the search language. Moreover, it will also provide a major non-Chinese language environment, vague and specific search system, and online and offline versions for different users.

The Catalogue database will include comprehensive information on the books, such as name, sub-content, period, author, category, edition, and so on. By adopting text formatting, users can conveniently search for general information about the books using category name, period, and Pinyin. The database of book images will adopt the PDF graphic format. The original images will be shown to the users, which ensures both accuracy and practical value. At the same time, users can make notes with system, just like on paper books. These notes can then be saved separately, or along with the resources downloaded from the database.

The process of digitizing and integrating the collections of ancient Chinese books held outside of China outlined in this paper will provide systematic research data for sinologists worldwide, and provide a relatively comprehensive overview of this aspect of Chinese culture.