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Translation as an Expression of *Ren*

Philip J. Ivanhoe*

Like Buddhism, Confucianism is a long and complex tradition that has spread throughout East Asia and the world. While the two have at times competed with one another, they also have deeply influenced and learned from one another and can continue to do so today. One of the most impressive features of the Buddhist tradition is its concerted and enduring effort to translate Buddhist sacred texts. Even today, there exist more than 12,000 Chinese translations of Buddhist texts from Sanskrit, Pali, and other ancient foreign languages first produced between 100 and 1000 CE (Wang 1984, 113–115). The prominent Parthian monk An Qing or An Shigao (fl. c. 148–180 CE) produced 34 of these earliest translated Buddhist scriptures (Loewe 1986, 670), along with others, employing the strategy of "matching concepts" 格義, first mentioned in the *Biographies of Eminent Monks* (c. 530 CE).

One of many characteristics of this remarkable tradition of translation is its organized, team-based dimension, with Dao'an (312–385 CE) being the first organizer of such projects. Later, several members of his team assisted Kumarājīva (344–413 CE), one of the most renowned Buddhist translators in Chinese history, whose project was organized and sponsored by the imperial government of the later Qin era (384–417 CE) (Tang 2017). Such work was continued by Xuanzang, chief translator of the projects supported by Emperor Taizong, who composed a preface to their translation of the *Heart Sūtra*, in 649 CE (Guo 1994, 191).

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The work of translation continues in contemporary times. A number of Tibetan groups have announced the goal of translating all of the *sūtras* into English. This is part of a larger effort encouraged by meetings such as the *Translating the Words of the Buddha Conference*, held in Bir, India.[1] Soka Gakkai, an organization promoting Nichiren Buddhism, has supported an extensive translation project for many years, enlisting such scholarly luminaries as the late Burton Watson. Dharma Realm Buddhist University[2] has also produced a long list of excellent translations of Buddhist sacred texts, working closely and in close collaboration with the Buddhist Text Translation Society[3] and at times with *Vajra Bodhi Sea,* a monthly Buddhist journal published continuously since 1970.[4]

Now, there are numerous reasons why Buddhism produced this remarkable legacy of translation and continues to add to it in the present age: among these is that it has been and remains a highly organized, proselytizing religion. But other, deeper features having to do with the practice of compassion motivate and support this work. Given that those within the tradition regard Buddhist teachings as the one true path that can lead sentient beings to the elimination of suffering, it follows that making the *Dharma* available to people is an act of compassion and, not incidentally, spiritually beneficial not only for the translator but also any who support such work (Kieschnick 2003, 164–184). One need not be a follower of the Buddha to agree with and endorse this argument; as long as one believes that Buddhist teachings are good for humanity, a proposition that strikes me as well beyond reasonable doubt, one should want to see them translated and available to as many people as possible.

The point of this commentary is to highlight the fact that there is no comparable, explicit commitment to translation within the Confucian tradition. The primary reasons for this are contingent and his-

1 https://tricycle.org/trikedaily/translating-sutras/ (accessed November 2, 2019).
2 https://www.drbu.edu/ (accessed November 2, 2019).
3 http://www.buddhisttexts.org/ (accessed November 2, 2019).
4 http://www.drbachinese.org/vbs/publish/main_index.htm (accessed November 2, 2019).

torical. Confucianism developed in China and spread throughout East Asia over millennia, but for most of this time Classical Chinese was the *lingua franca* of literate people within these cultures. There was virtually no motivation to focus on, advocate, practice, and support translation and so no corresponding conception of it as *a good thing to do*. Times have changed. Confucianism now exists in a global context. Many people around the world are for a variety of reasons interested in Confucianism, but very few possess the linguistic skills needed to access many of the classic texts of the tradition, much less the vast reservoir of supporting works written by later commentators and other followers. Therefore, I suggest that those who espouse, admire, or are in other ways sympathetic to Confucian ideas should recognize a new imperative and initiate a new stage of the tradition, one that sees global outreach as an essential feature, core aim, and primary good. Confucian teachings have much to offer the world; one need not be a devoted believer in or committed follower of the Sage to agree with and endorse this claim. Those who appreciate the value of Confucian teachings should want to see the texts that embody them translated and available to as many people as possible and should want to do everything possible to ensure that the translations provided are of the highest possible quality—worthy of the classic works they represent. Such translations open the Way to those who presently cannot find or follow it; providing them is an act of benevolence 仁, not only on the part of translators but also those who support such work.

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How Virtue Reforms Attachment to External Goods: *The Transformation of Happiness in the* Analects

Bradford Cokelet*

Abstract

After distinguishing three conceptions of virtue and its impact on ordinary attachments to external goods such as social status, power, friends, and wealth, this paper argues that the *Analects* is most charitably interpreted as endorsing the whole-hearted internalization conception, on which virtue reforms but does not completely extinguish ordinary attachments to external goods. I begin by building on Amy Olberding's attack on the extinguishing attachments conception, but go on to criticize her alternative, resolute sacrifice conception, on which the virtuous retain their ordinary attachments to external goods but are able to master them and willingly settle for virtue. I argue that we should reject this view because, unlike the wholehearted internalization conception, it cannot capture the facts that virtue silences or attenuates attachment to viciously obtained external goods and that virtue grounds positive emotional and cognitive self-assessments that are incompatible with some ordinary attachments to external goods.

Keywords: virtue, Confucianism, *Analects*, well-being, external goods, Olberding

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1.

Across the millennia, many if not most people live their lives in pursuit of what we could call conventional success, and, again across the millennia, philosophers have argued that this is a mistake. Specific conceptions of conventional success vary from culture to culture and person to person but they typically include conventional goods (often called external goods or externalities by philosophers)[1] such as health and physical strength, power and social status, profit and material wealth, pleasure and luxury, flourishing friends and family, and leaving a significant mark on the world. The pursuit of conventional success certainly does not require, and is often at odds with, the earnest pursuit of sagely or saintly virtue or a life-defining devotion to wisdom, beauty, or knowledge so it is no surprise that philosophers are thought of as unconventional seducers of the young. Emerging adults who are tempted by philosophers to make life shaping choices with an eye to love, art, virtue, or a noble cause instead of conventional success are liable to be told that this is nothing but the naïve idealism of youth. Parents, politicians, and even alleged friends often assure budding adults that when they are older and wiser they will regret any failures to "be realistic." They often tell the young to focus on what matters in the "real world," namely the conventional world in which conventional goods and success are taken to be of prime importance.

Given that the pursuit of conventional success does not require and might be at odds with the pursuit of virtue and wisdom, it is no surprise that rebels such as Socrates, Aquinas, the Buddha, and Confucius argue that it is both imprudent (bad for us) and foolish (a regrettable, or even shameful, waste) to devote our lives to the ac-

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1 Roughly, external goods are putative goods that are available to the virtuous and vicious alike and they are called "external" because western moral philosophers such as Socrates and Plato take virtue to constitute the inner good of the soul. Olberding (2013) uses "ordinary, prosaic goods" but I think "conventional" is better because it highlights the possibility that philosophers aim to buck conventional thinking about these goods and the wisdom of devoting one's life to getting them. Refer to Olberding (2013, 429n13) where she discusses the term "external goods."

cumulation of conventional goods. In the first place, they maintain that it is a mistake to pursue conventional goods and success instead of, or at the price of, virtue. Second, they all hold that one needs to be virtuous to have a proper attitude toward or to make proper use of conventional goods such as health, a good reputation, material wealth and comfort, friends and family, They hold that to live well we must put conventional goods in their proper place. We must stop idolizing them and orient our lives toward more important and noble ends; and that means developing or cultivating virtue.

This essay focuses on the Confucian *Analects* and the attitude or attitudes that it suggests that the virtuous have toward conventional goods and success. I mention the possibility of multiple attitudes or views because, as Olberding (2013) makes clear, the text of the *Analects* can appear to contain conflicting passages that suggest different, incompatible answers to questions about how virtue shapes attachment to conventional goods.

First, there are more theoretical, argumentative, and didactic passages that might be taken to suggest that the virtuous completely shed or transcend ordinary attachments to conventional, external goods and success.[2] For example, consider the *Analects* 4.5 and 7.16:

> The Master said, "Wealth and social eminence are things that all people desire, and yet unless they are acquired in the proper way I will not abide them. Poverty and disgrace are things that all people hate, and yet unless they are avoided in the proper way I will not despise them."
>
> "If the gentleman abandons Goodness, how can he merit the name? The gentleman does not go against Goodness for the amount of time required to finish a meal. Even in times of urgency or distress, he necessarily accords with it."[3]

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2 See Section 3 of Olberding (2013). Of course, some of these have dramatic aspects—I use "didactic" and "dramatic" to refer to passages that seem to support the shedding concern and resolute sacrifice conceptions of virtue respectively because it is convenient and because those terms reflect the characteristic differences between the two types of passages.

3 All translations are from Slingerland (2003).

> The Master said, "Eating plain food and drinking water, having only your bent arm for a pillow—certainly there is joy to be found in this! Wealth and eminence attained improperly concern me no more than the floating clouds."

In his commentary, Slingerland maintains that these and other didactic passages[4] indicate, "the gentleman's independence from externalities" (2003, 61). He claims that the *Analects* in general expresses the view that, "the true gentleman[5] is dedicated to the Way as an end in itself, and does not pursue it for the sake of external goods . . . as a result, he embodies the Way unselfconsciously and effortlessly, and derives a constant joy that renders him indifferent to externalities" (2003, 31). He thereby apparently adopts the *shedding conventional* concerns conception of virtue,[6] on which virtue utterly transforms ordinary thinking about well-being and how to live well. On this view, the virtuous embody the view that conventional success and failure simply have no impact on the quality of one's life, and this allows them to joyfully follow the righteous course even when it leads to conventional failure or requires conventional sacrifice.

In apparent contrast to these didactic passages, there are more dramatic passages in which Confucius reacts to the loss or lack of conventional goods in his own life. Assuming that Confucius is some sort of exemplar of virtue, his reactions can seem[7] to conflict with the idea that the virtuous are indifferent to conventional goods or "externalities." For example, these passages depict Confucius as being dramatically upset (e.g. angry or sad) about losing his students

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4 In his commentary, Slingerland connects the theme of indifference to lack of orientation towards externalities with 1.14, 4.2, 4.5, 4.9, 4.16, 6.11, 7.12, 7.16, 7.19, 8.12, 9.29, 14.1, 14.24, 15.32.

5 It is generally agreed that the terms translated as "gentleman" and "true gentleman" refer to virtuous exemplars of some sort or other.

6 Olberding calls this view "moral maturity as autonomy," but I prefer a label that highlights the way virtue shapes attachment to conventional goods. However, like Olberding (2013, 433), following Annas (1998), I use "transform" and "alter" to distinguish the ways that one can picture virtue affecting ordinary assumptions about well-being and the well lived life.

7 See the response I develop on behalf of shedding concern interpreters in Section 3.

and failing to influence rulers as he wishes he could. Take *Analects* 11.9–10:

> When Yan Hui passed away, the Master lamented, "Oh! Heaven has bereft me! Heaven has bereft me!"
>
> 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?"

Of course, we might answer the rhetorical question at the end of 11.10 with "How about your wife?"; but, that aside, the passage can be taken to imply that the virtuous may or should care about more than virtue and that they may or should take more than virtue to impact their level of well-being.

This is how Olberding takes things; she argues that various dramatic passages[8] depict Confucius as a relatively down to earth guy, who cared and complained about the conventional failures and sacrificed "externalities" that marred his life. On her view, the virtuous have more or less typical or ordinary attachments to conventional goods and success, but they differ from the rest of us because they "resolutely regulate," their attachments to conventional goods so that they never "trump" or "overmaster" their apt commitments to doing the virtuous thing (2013, 433). On this *resolute sacrifice conception*[9] of virtue, virtue alters but does not radically transform ordinary thinking about well-being and how to live well—for example, it leaves in place the assumption that conventional success and failure have a huge impact on the quality of our life but leads us to recognize that it is better to do the virtuous thing and have a lower quality of life than to abandon virtue in order to gain conventional goods or success.

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8 See Section 4 of Olberding. She points to the following passages: 5.7, 5.27, 9.9, 9.12, 9.13, 9.14, 11.17, 11.26, 14.35, and 17.19.

9 Olberding calls this view "moral maturity as settling," but I prefer a label that highlights the way virtue shapes attachment to conventional goods.

In the light of the apparently conflicting (what I will call didactic and dramatic) passages, there are two interesting questions that readers of the *Analects* face. First, there is the interpretive or exegetical question about whether there is an account of how virtue shapes attachment to conventional goods that can explain all of the passages and yield a unified interpretation of the whole text. Second, there is the substantive question about whether there is an intuitively and philosophically plausible account of how virtue shapes attachment that is suggested by the *Analects*, i.e. an account we can accept or take seriously in our own lives. In what follows, I will address the exegetical question and the question about intuitive plausibility. In short, I will criticize both the shedding concern and resolute sacrifice conceptions of virtue and introduce a better, third option—what I call I call the *wholehearted internalization conception* of virtue. As I will explain, this conception is better than the other two because only it can ground a unifying interpretation of the *Analects* and fit with our ordinary intuitions or assumptions about virtue and the good life.

My discussion proceeds as follows. Section 2 more carefully describes the three conceptions of virtue and their implications for our guiding question. Section 3 critically assessess the shedding concern conception, starting from Olberding's attacks on it. Section 4 turns to the resolute sacrifice conception of virtue, which Olberding prefers. I argue it actually fares worse than the shedding concern conception when it comes to giving a unified reading of the dramatic and didactic passages and that it is also counter-intuitive for reasons that Olberding does not discuss. I conclude that we need to find a better third option that avoids the problems that bedevil the shedding concern and resolute sacrifice conceptions. Section 5 returns to the wholehearted internalization conception of virtue and explain why it is more in line with ordinary pretheoretical sensibilities and intuitions than the resolute sacrifice or shedding concern conceptions and how it also grounds a unified interpretation of the *Analects*. Finally, Section 6 returns to the opening questions I raised about how virtue transforms ordinary attachments to conventional goods and success and explain how the wholehearted internalization

conception grounds answers that are more plausible than ones suggested by the other conceptions.

2.

Before we evaluate and build on Olberding's discussion of the shedding concern and resolute sacrifice conceptions of virtue, it will be useful to more carefully describe those views and the wholehearted internalization conception of virtue that I ultimately favor. To begin, it is worth noting that all three of these conceptions of virtue fit with the idea that Confucian virtue enables people to achieve a kind of reflective self-determination or autonomy—an arguably essential part of a good or ethical human life that some older interpreters have taken the Confucians to ignore or dis-value.[10] Following many other more recent interpreters,[11] I disagree and think that we can attribute the following view to various Confucian texts.

> **Virtuous Self-determination:** Virtue involves (a) improving one's character, interactions with others, and activities, (b) appreciating and valuing virtue in oneself and others, (c) noticing and disvaluing the lack of virtue in oneself and, to a lesser extent,[12] in others, and (c) transforming and guiding one's activity in the light of one's apt appreciation of virtue and its absence in oneself and others. For one thing, the self-reflective appreciation of virtue leads the virtuous

10 Fingarette (1972) is most commonly associated with this reading and he may have been influenced by western thinkers such as Hegel and Weber.

11 For a recent overview of related interpretive debates, see Kim (2013).

12 There are passages in the *Analects* that suggest that virtue requires the ability or tendency to notice the lack of virtue in other people (e.g. 1.16, 2.9, 2.10, 4.7, 12.20; cf. the *Great Learning* 9.1). But there are also passages that suggest that the virtuous person's awareness of, negative reactions to, and attempts to correct, her own lack of virtue should be more reliable and stronger than her awareness of, negative reactions to, and attempts to correct lack of virtue in other people (e.g., 1.4, 3.26, 4.17, 7.22). Fuller discussion of this issue would also need to take into account the different attitudes that the virtuous have when they inhabit specific roles such as teacher, ruler, parent, or child, and related Legalist attacks on Confucians discussed in Hutton (2008).

> to choose virtue instead of conventional goods if and when a choice must be made.[13]

While likely agreeing with this background view, advocates of the shedding concern, resolute sacrifice, and wholehearted internalization conceptions provide us with different accounts of how virtue, and its self-reflective appreciation, shapes attachment to the various externalities that are conventionally taken to be good and bad, e.g. social affirmation and rejection, wealth and poverty, health and sickness, and refined and shabby material goods. Consider, first, the conception favored by interpreters such as Slingerland:

> **Shedding Conventional Concerns:** The virtuous person ceases to care about winning conventional goods and never chooses conventional goods at the price of virtue. Her awareness of her degree of virtue completely determines her assessment of how well her life is going and this assessment is wholeheartedly embodied in her attitudes and actions (e.g. emotions and verbal statements). She presupposes that one's degree of virtue is the only thing that affects one's level of well-being and determines whether one is living a good, satisfactory life or not.[14]

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13 See, for example 4.11. This appreciation of virtue should not be thought of as necessarily propositional; see Darwall (2002) chapter four. In addition, it is worth noting that the sort of self-reflective appreciation of virtue need not be focused on the self or the virtuous person's character. Instead the appreciation can be responsive to the value of the virtuous person's modes of activity and the ways in which he or she thinks and feels about, interacts with, and relates to others (and herself). This value will often be relational and can be second-personal in a broad sense. From what I can tell, Confucian thinking about virtue is better able to ground these views than Aristotelian thinking, but that is an issue in need of more exploration. For a related discussion of virtue and social morality see Cokelet (2014).

14 Olberding (2013, 429) describes the relevant view as one on which becoming virtuous, "transforms how happiness and satisfaction will be constituted, such that being virtuous is the principal good of life, the good [one] wins for [oneself] independently of luck and from which comes profound joy." I think we should distinguish between the view that only virtue affects one's level of well-being and the view that our well-being is unaffected by luck. If the scope of the field in which one can engage in virtuous activity and interactions is conditioned by luck, then one might hold that virtue is all that matters when it comes to well-being but also hold that one's level of well-being is subject to luck. For more on this version of the shedding concern view, see page 21.

On this view, the virtuous are always and everywhere free in the sense that they always whole-heartedly and joyfully choose the virtuous path as they navigate their way through life. Because they have transcended conventional attachments to things such as fancy food and a soft bed and pillow, they *never* feel ambivalent about taking the "high road" of virtue, which sometimes lacks conventional goods or leads to conventional failure. In addition to this forward-looking attitude, the virtuous person's indifference to conventional fortune is reflected in present and past-focused judgments and feelings about herself and her life; her judgements and feelings about how her life as a whole is turning out, about how well or poorly she has lived her life, and about herself are all unaffected by conventional factors such as her social standing or rejection, her material wealth or poverty, or her health and sickness. For example, on the shedding concern conception, a virtuous person will feel no shame if, due to misfortune, she has to show up at a job interview or a fancy dinner with her prospective in-laws in worn, second-hand clothes (cf. *Analects* 9.27).[15]

Although Olberding recognizes that the didactic passages in the *Analects* can reasonably be taken to suggest the shedding concern conception of virtue, she argues in favor of a different conception that we can formulate as follows:

> **Resolute Sacrifice**: The virtuous person cares about winning conventional goods in ways that ordinary people do but she is resolutely committed to sacrificing all relevant conventional goods in order to follow the path of virtue and always acts on this commitment. Her assessment of how well her life is going reflects the view that both virtue and conventional goods impact one's level of well-being and whether one is living a good life or not. Her assumption that conventional goods sacrificed to pursue virtue have prudential value is wholeheartedly embodied in her attitudes and actions (e.g. emotions of anger, fear, and sadness).

[15] See Olberding's discussion (2013, 421–422), including her reference to 9.27.

On this view, which is, incidentally, embraced by Immanuel Kant,[16] the virtuous are down to earth in the sense that they have the same sort of conventional attachments that the rest of us do. When the "high road" of virtue requires conventional loss or sacrifice, these virtuous people feel ambivalent but they are willing to settle for the better option, namely the path of virtue, and they feel good knowing they have what it takes to act in line with that choice. In addition to this forward looking attitude, the virtuous person's ordinary attachments to conventional fortune are reflected in present and past-focused judgments and feelings about herself and her life; her judgements and feelings about how her life as a whole is turning out, about how well or poorly she has lived her life, and about herself all reflect her attachment to conventional factors such as her social standing or rejection, her material wealth or poverty, or her health and sickness. For example, Olberding interprets Confucius' past-focused attitudes at the end of his life as follows:

> The cumulative complexity of [the virtuous exemplar's] responses to his life are perhaps distilled in one final passage, one in which Confucius appears to summarize the mixed results of his life. Believing his death near, Confucius addresses Zilu's disappointment with Confucius' lack of success by noting the great consolation that he shall die among friends (*Analects* 9.12). But this is not all he says. He elaborates, "Even though I do not get a grand state funeral, I am hardly dying by the roadside," an addendum that again suggests wit pitched at self-consolation. Confucius will "not get a grand state funeral" and, implicitly, did not get the life he wanted but, he dryly notes, things could be worse. (426)

Finally, I want to introduce the third conception of virtue, which I contend we should attribute to the *Analects*:

> **Wholehearted Internalized Virtue**: Full virtue involves (a) improving one's character, interactions with others, and activities, (b) wholeheartedly appreciating and valuing virtue in oneself and

[16] See Baxley (2010a).

> others, (c) noticing and wholeheartedly disvaluing the actual or potential lack of virtue in oneself, and (d) transforming and guiding one's activity in the light of one's apt appreciation of virtue and its absence in oneself and others. The self-reflective appreciation of virtue leads the virtuous to choose virtue instead of conventional goods if and when a choice must be made, to wholeheartedly spurn vice, and to stake their self-assessments on their degree of virtue instead of their social standing or conventional fortunes.

On this conception, the virtuous have some but not all of the attachments to conventional goods that the rest of us do. Looking forward they have no desire for conventional goods attained by vicious means or goods whose general pursuit is inimical to virtue, so they can wholeheartedly and joyfully pursue the "high road" of virtue if and when it requires turning away from those. But in other cases, the virtuous will be willing to act virtuously while bearing misfortune but feel ambivalent about the conventional costs of righteousness. In addition to these forward-looking attitudes, the virtuous person's *reformed* attachments to conventional fortune are reflected in present and past-focused judgments and feelings about herself and her life; her judgements and feelings about how her life as a whole is turning out, about how well or poorly she has lived her life, and about herself all reflect her reformed attachment to conventional factors such as her social standing or rejection, her material wealth or poverty, or her health and sickness. She might feel disappointed about having a meager, rather than grand, 80th birthday party but she would not feel ashamed as a result because she stakes her self-assessments on her degree of virtue not her conventional fortunes.[17]

3.

Now that we have the different conceptions of virtue on the table, we are ready to start assessing them on exegetical and substantive

[17] For more details, see sections 4 and 5.

grounds. To begin, we can consider Olberding's two-step argument against the shedding concern conception. First, she argues that although there are didactic passages that can be taken to suggest the shedding concern reading, we should prefer a reading that also accounts for the dramatic passages that testify to Confucius' complaints (about conventional losses and failures). Olberding admits that when we take both kinds of passages into account the *Analects*, "appears to offer two bodies of testimony regarding the felt, experiential qualities of leading a life of virtue" (2013, 417), but she goes on to argue that while the shedding concern conception can explain the didactic but not the dramatic passages, there is a way for the advocate of the resolute sacrifice conception to account for both. Second, she argues that we should prefer the interpretation that is more in line with "ordinary pretheoretical sensibilities" (419–420) and that this tells strongly in favor of the resolute sacrifice conception. In short, she claims that the shedding concern view is out of step with ordinary sensibilities, because the virtuous person it depicts, "risks appearing insensate where the sorrows of ordinary lives and ordinary people are concerned" (432). The resolute sacrifice view, on the other hand, is sensitive to these sorrows because it entails that they are compatible with virtue. So, she concludes that, on both exegetical and substantive grounds, resolute sacrifice is the way to go.

Olberding is surely right that we should prefer an interpretation that can account for both kinds of passages over one that can only explain one, but I don't think she establishes that the shedding concern conception fares worse on this exegetical score than the resolute sacrifice conception. To see why, we need to first consider her argument that fans of the shedding concern view, such as Slingerland, cannot explain the dramatic passages. She recognizes that fans of the shedding concern interpretation might respond to her initial observation—that the text at least seems to offer conflicting bodies of testimony—by showing how the shedding concern view can explain the dramatic passages that she takes to favor her resolute sacrifice approach.

To head off this line of response, Olberding considers some possible shedding concern explanations of the relevant dramatic passages and argues they are inadequate (430–431). For example, she mentions and rejects the proposal that Confucius' complaints could be explained as manifestations of virtuous dismay at the bad character of the people and corrupt times with which he finds himself confronted. Olberding rightly rejects this suggestion because Confucius is depicted in dramatic passages as being upset about the impact of these people and time *on his life*, and not just about the fact that his world is peopled by corruption, bad luck, and vice. In addition, she argues that while shedding concern readers might try to explain specific reactions to conventional losses, such as Confucius' sorrow at Yan Hui's untimely death, as reactions that are themselves virtuous and that embody the proper spirit of the relevant rites, this strategy cannot explain the, "*general* frustration and despair Confucius sometimes appears to confess or a rather global despair about how one's life is going" (431). For example, she points to her interpretation of Confucius' past-focused attitudes at the end of his life.[18]

Olberding does not consider, however, what I take to be the most promising approach that is open to shedding concern interpreters. On the shedding concern view, virtue involves assessing how well one's life is going solely by appeal to the extent of one's virtue, but this presumably includes assessment of both one's inner virtue and character and the extent to which one is able to engage in virtuous activity and interaction. With the second aspect of the assessment in mind, the shedding concern interpreter can argue that Confucius' complaints are an expression of his dismay at the way that the loss or lack of conventional goods *narrows the field of (embodied, enacted) virtue* in his life. Olberding rightly points out that Confucius' complaints are not just targeted at specific losses and that they express a general dissatisfaction or disappointment with his life, but the fan of the shedding concern view can argue that this is because his life in general is shaped by a various conventionally bad things that narrow the amount or kinds of virtuous activities and interactions in

[18] See her reading of 9.12 quoted in the last section.

which he can engage.[19] On this view, conventional failures or losses do not in and of themselves lower one's level of well-being, but they are often the occasion for a narrowed field of virtuous activity and interaction, and that narrowing is bad for you and an appropriate occasion for lament or anger. In other words, the virtuous are not attached to conventional goods per se but they are attached to the scope of their field of virtue and that is often subject to luck and depends on having various conventional goods.

Even if Olberding granted this response and admitted that the shedding concern conception can explain the didactic and dramatic passage, she could argue that the resolute sacrifice conception should be preferred for substantive (not exegetical) reasons. Specifically, she could appeal to her argument that we should prefer the resolute sacrifice conception to the shedding concern one because the former is more in line with the pretheoretical sensibilities of ordinary people or the explanation of the dramatic passages is more accord with those. As mentioned, she claims that the shedding concern view is problematic because it is out of step with ordinary pretheoretic sensibilities, because the virtuous person it depicts, "risks appearing insensate where the sorrows of ordinary lives and ordinary people are concerned." She goes on to develop this worry as follows:

> If the *Analects*' presentation of a good life indeed entails an exquisitely refined species of joy and, moreover, sees this joy as profoundly motivating in living a life of virtue, the good life here appears to stand at a worrisomely far remove from ordinary lives and people. It promises something grand and ambitious, to be sure, but its very grandeur and ambition rather radically defies pretheoretical sensibilities, declaring as more experientially good than most a life, Confucius' life, that transpires in conditions most people would find deplorable and cruelly tragic. Despite all of his life's sorrows, we must believe, Confucius' life is more abundantly joyful than most, he wins all he deeply wants and, by extension, all anyone should deeply want. (432)

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19 As noted earlier, it can *also* picture the virtuous as ruing the reduced amount of good in the world and express virtuous sadness that honors the dead.

The first thing to note about this quote is that it reflects her failure to consider the version of the shedding concern view that I have introduced to explain the dramatic passages. If the shedding concern interpreter adopts my suggested response, then he has an easy response to the last line quoted above, namely that on his view Confucius does not win all that he deeply wants and, by extension, all anyone should deeply want. Even if one assesses one's life only in terms of the virtue in it, one may want to have both good character and to embody that virtue in a wide field of relationships, activities, and situations. Confucius, on this way of thinking, is depicted as experiencing joy and equanimity because he has good character but complaining about his life because conventional failures have narrowed the field in which he can embody virtue and treat others well.

This shows that Olberding's argument is unsound, but I think we can build a new, stronger argument for her conclusion—that if virtue involves shedding concern for conventional goods, then it puts one at a distance from (and might be thought to "radically defy") many people's pretheoretical sensibilities. To begin, imagine a virtuous person who loses her job, all her savings, and her home, and who is barely getting by in conventional terms at a shelter for the homeless. The shedding conventional concerns view of virtue entails that because this woman is virtuous she will simply not care that she is now homeless, jobless, and penniless *unless*, and then because, that narrows her field of virtuous activity. Presumably many people have pretheoretical sensibilities that reflect the assumption that conventional failure or loss is bad for you in and of itself and even if it does not narrow your field of virtue so this conception of virtue will conflict with their sensibilities. But things get even more problematic if we turn from the virtuous person's attitudes towards her own conventional misfortune, to her attitude to the misfortune of others. For example, imagine that instead of the virtuous person falling on hard times, it is the virtuous person's decent-but-far-from-virtuous parent, child, or friend who becomes homeless, jobless, and penniless and is barely getting by living at a homeless shelter.

If it is virtuous to be indifferent to conventional loss and lack in your own case, then it is presumably virtuous to be indifferent to

such loss and lack in other people's case; so, the virtuous person—according to the shedding concern conception—will not feel any sincere sympathy for those who are in bad conventional straights unless that narrows their field of virtue. That kind of attitude is likely to strain or break the bonds of affection, trust, and commitment that the virtuous have with ordinary people, who still care about conventional goods and losses. In fact, it goes against many people's pretheoretical sensibilities to think that a good parent, friend, or son, would feel no sorrow or sympathy for her child, friend, or father who is deeply upset about a conventional harm (for its own sake, so to speak). Imagine that Andy is close friends with Sue and Sue's spouse unexpectedly dies. Andy is there for Sue as she mourns and is glad to also himself pay his respects to his lost friend. But later when Sue is remarried and mentions that she still misses her old spouse Andy responds by saying that she is not actually any worse off now because she has a new spouse and the lack of her old spouse is not stopping her from doing good or being a good person. Sue responds by saying that she feels like her life is missing something just because her old spouse is gone, and not because of how it affects her ability to be a good person. Andy thinks this feeling is unwarranted and that Sue would be better off, and more virtuous, without it. If you are like me, I think that this attitude shows that Andy is not being a good friend to Sue; and if you are like me, it conflicts with your pretheoretical intuitions about what a virtuous person would do. Moreover, my pretheoretical intuitions about this case hold up well when I think about the Confucian golden rule, which I take to represent an important part or measure of Confucian virtue. If I think about how I would want a friend to react if I become upset at the *unlucky loss of conventional goods*, I would want them to feel sincere sympathy for me and to respect my belief that I am worse off even if my field of virtue has not been restricted. If a supposed "virtuous friend" instead argued I should not be upset about the loss (of a spouse or pet or house for example) or that the loss was not bad for me, that would strike me as insensitive and strain our relationship. Presumably similar problems would crop up when the virtuous inhabit various other roles, e.g. being a parent or ruler or

leader of less than virtuous men and women (cf. *Analects* 7.11 and 7.13).

This new argument against the shedding concern conception of virtue follows Olberding in assuming that we should prefer a theory of virtue that fits—or at least does not defy—the pretheoretical sensibilities of "ordinary people." But if we think about Confucius' emphasis on ritual and the importance of good upbringing, we can easily imagine how a shedding concern interpreter might respond: he might raise worries about whether the relevant pretheoretical sensibilities are really the product of theoretically neutral, or ethically benign, cultural forces. For example, he could note that a strong attachment and belief in the prudential value of conventional goods can seem natural, if one is raised in an environment that strongly encourages those attitudes and this cultural environment might explain why some (but not all) human beings have pre-theoretic sensibilities that jibe with the view that conventional success and not just virtue matters when assessing how our lives are going. For example many of us live in cultures that celebrate conventional success and its pursuit, many of us are taught to value our education, career options, and relationships as means to or aspects of conventional success, and many of us know parents who place prime importance on how well, in conventional terms, their children are doing.[20] As mentioned at the outset, in many cultures or sub-cultures, emerging adults who are tempted to make life-shaping choices with an eye to love, art, virtue, or a noble cause instead of conventional success are liable to be told that this is nothing but the naive idealism of youth. It would be no surprise if people raised under these kinds of conditions have pretheoretical sensitivities that clash with the shedding concern view. And perhaps people raised in a very different culture, with different rituals and distributions of rewards and recognition, would have pretheoretical sensibilities that would resonate with that view and conflict with the assumption that it is virtuous to care about conventional goods for their own sakes.

[20] They might express fear or disappointment when a son faces conventional failure or when a daughter in art school rebelliously questions the value or importance of achieving conventional success.

In the absence of empirical investigation, it is hard to know how to fully assess the strength of the argument I have given and the proposed response.[21] The claim that the shedding concern view conflicts with "ordinary" pretheoretical sensibilities will surely resonate with many readers—as I have explained, it resonates with me. But it is very hard to determine how much weight these sensibilities should be given especially when we are talking about how to interpret a philosopher who was explicitly concerned about the bad impact that cultural institutions and education can have on our sensibilities. I think a stronger argument would involve the claim that the shedding concern conception conflicts with claims about how a well-functioning human being would inhabit various natural human relationships (parent, friend, etc.) well, but that would require appeal to a substantive account of human nature and natural relationships—a topic for another paper.[22] With that all said, I will for now simply agree with Olberding that, if possible, it would be best if we can improve on the shedding concern conception of virtue.

4.

Olberding argues that we should reject the shedding concern conception of virtue and adopt the resolute sacrifice conception instead. In this section, I examine the resolute sacrifice conception and argue that it actually has more problems than the shedding concern conception. Specifically, it is unable to ground a unified interpretation of the more didactic and dramatic passages in the *Analects* and it conflicts with pretheoretic assumptions about virtue and how the virtuous inhabit relationships well (just as the shedding concern conception does).

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21 For some empirical evidence that living under modern individualist capitalist conditions leads people to an overvalue conventional goods, see Kasser (2002). For evidence that it generates a bad environment for virtue development, see Narvaez (2016). This issue needs more systematic discussion.

22 For naturalist friendly steps in this direction, see Fowers (2015), Navarez (2016), and Flanagan (2017).

In her essay, Olberding paints an appealing picture of virtue understood as resolute sacrifice.

> Rather than ceasing to care about ordinary, prosaic goods, [the virtuous person] engages in a continuous process of calibrating his desires, resolutely regulating them so that his caring about prosaic goods never trumps or overmasters his desire for the admirable. That is, he resolves never to betray the admirable in pursuit of the desirable, even while he wants both. . . . Insofar as Confucius wins some freedom in this alteration, it is the more modest freedom achieved by a clarity about one's priorities that precludes existentially destabilizing confusion about what to do where one must lose part of what one wants. This achieved existential constancy and resolve does not, however, preclude the pain of those losses. . . . Confucius rues his lack of recognition and position, grieves his losses, and fancifully imagines escape routes from his life, but what he does not rue is what he has done in life. (433)

As mentioned in Section 2, on this view the virtuous person is often ambivalent about choosing the path of virtue, but she is dead set on choosing it. Moreover, her judgements and feelings about how her life as a whole is turning out, about how well or poorly she has lived her life, and about herself also reflect her attachment to conventional factors such as her social standing or rejection, her material wealth or poverty, or her health and sickness.

At first blush, it is hard to see how someone adopting this approach can explain the (didactic) passage in the *Analects* which suggest that the virtuous differ from the rest of us in that they (i) are able to joyfully take the high road and (ii) feel good about themselves because they are virtuous. Olberding admirably addresses this point and offers a strategy for explaining these passages, which seem at first pass to speak in favor of the shedding concern conception. She writes:

> What consistently privileging the admirable has won for Confucius is not clean joy but a clean conscience. . . [his] joy here is not in liberation from challenge but in challenge well met, a joy that comes

> from serially and consistently doing well what is radically difficult to do, loving the way even where it is most difficult to love." (434)
>
> The (didactic) passages rehearse re-assurances that the costs of following the way are worth it, reminding the practitioner, for example, of pleasures his life can afford even in adversity and invoking his admiration for exemplars in whose noble company persistence will place him. They encourage him to seek out subtler species of joy that might, in better conditions, escape notice, alerting him to the profundity of pleasures found in exercising one's own resolve, doing so with beloved companions, meeting the end of life without regret over one's conduct, and so forth. . . . Joy is not refined away from feeling the vicissitudes of fate but is instead found in one's capacity to endure them and locate redemptive satisfactions even while they injure. Experience is here enriched by recognition that while one settles for less than one would wish, one has not compromised one's deepest commitments. In this, we might say that winning the best life one can get comes coupled with a sense that one will feel as well as one can given what fate has offered. (434–435)

Olberding seems to here argue for a version of the resolute sacrifice conception on which the virtuous person is disposed to value and enjoy the, perhaps small and simple, conventional goods that she has even if (in conventional terms) her life is marred by loss or failure. In addition, she argues that the virtuous person can enjoy positive self-regard when reflecting on her strong-willed commitment to virtue and the fact that this trait puts her in the company of noble exemplars. These moves are, I think, plausible and point us towards the best version of the resolute sacrifice conception—which is incidentally the version endorsed by Kant[23]—but even this improved version of the view can only explain some of the didactic passages; it runs into problems in two sorts of cases.

To identify the first set of problem cases, we need to distinguish between three kinds of conventional misfortune that can befall the virtuous.

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[23] See, for example, Baxley (2010b) and Walschots (2017).

Victim of Misfortune: The person suffers an absence a conventional good due to bad luck.

Victim of Vice: The person suffers an absence of a conventional good due to someone else's vicious activities.

Rejection of Vicious Goods: The person foregoes a conventional good either because it is itself ethically bad (e.g. unjust profit or pleasure in an enemy's suffering), because the available means to obtain it involve shameful or vicious activity (e.g. debasing oneself or slandering a competitor in order to win a promotion), or because general conventional attachment to the goods is inimical to virtue (e.g. desiring the power that comes when one is admired by bad but influential people).

In cases of the first two sorts, the resolute sacrifice conception looks quite good, as evidenced by reflection on cases from the *Analects*. First, assuming that Yan Hui died of natural causes his death constitutes a case in which Confucius was a victim of misfortune. The resolute sacrifice conception of virtue holds that it is virtuous to have ordinary attachments to conventional goods and aversions to bads so it can picture the virtuous person in this kind of case being beside himself at his prudential loss, in something like the way that Confucius is pictured at 11.9–10. Normally, when one is a victim of significant misfortune, the virtuous will manifest their attachment to the relevant (absent) conventional goods with negative emotions (e.g. regret, anger, or grief) and behavior (mourning, lamenting, etc.) and by downgrading their overall degree of satisfaction with the way their life is turning out. Second, Confucius' failure to obtain a professional post and influence rulers as he would like to is presumably in good part due to other people's vicious activities so these cases provide examples of being a victim of vice. Here again, the resolute sacrifice conception plausibly affirms that the virtuous will have and manifest attachment to the conventional goods that they have been robbed of by the vicious way of the world. Finally, in all of these cases, Olberding could plausibly add that the virtuous will still take pleasure in the little things and feel good about themselves

because they are resolutely committed to the high road of virtue and that places them in the company of admirable exemplars.

To see that the resolute sacrifice conception gets into trouble in rejected vicious goods cases, we should consider passages such as 4.5 and 7.16:

> The Master said, "Eating plain food and drinking water, having only your bent arm for a pillow—certainly there is joy to be found in this! Wealth and eminence attained improperly concern me no more than the floating clouds."

> The Master said, "Wealth and social eminence are things that all people desire, and yet unless they are acquired in the proper way I will not abide them." Poverty and disgrace are things that all people hate, and yet unless they are avoided in the proper way I will not despise them."

The resolute sacrifice conception can affirm that the virtuous will not choose to keep improperly acquired conventional goods such as wealth and social eminence, and that they can find joy even while being upset to be missing conventional goods such as fine food and a soft pillow, but these passages reflect the further idea that the virtuous, unlike ordinary people, *are not attached to conventional goods that are improperly obtained or avoided.* More generally, the resolute sacrifice conception will not be able to explain passages that suggest that there are ordinary attachments to conventional goods that the virtuous will characteristically lack and not just willfully regulate and choose against.[24]

To identify the second set of problem cases for the resolute conception, we need to recall that ordinary attachments to conventional goods are often reflected in people's self-regarding attitudes and judgments. For example, people are often ashamed and not just dismayed when they fall into poverty or face rejection by the popular and powerful. According to the resolute sacrifice conception

[24] For example, 4.9, 6.11, 7.19, and 15.32.

these sorts of effects need not be undercut or transcended when one becomes virtuous. As mentioned at the outset, on the resolute sacrifice view, the virtuous person's judgements and feelings about how her life as a whole is turning out, about how well or poorly she has lived her life, and *about herself* all reflect ordinary attachments to conventional factors such as her social standing or rejection, her material wealth or poverty, or her health and sickness. Of course, as Olberding suggests, the virtuous person will feel good about herself in virtue of her resolute commitment and will to follow the high road and the fact that this puts her in the company of exemplars such as Confucius. Nonetheless if someone with this sort of moral or ethical self-respect or self-satisfaction is still attached to conventional goods in ordinary ways, she will *also* be liable to feeling pride when she is promoted thanks to the approval of bad people and shame when she has only stained and torn cloths to wear to a fancy dinner or reception after a lecture. Her ordinary conventional attachments will not touch or undermine her feelings about her degree of moral rectitude, but they certainly will still shape how happy she is with her character and herself.

This is a problem for the resolute conception because there are many didactic passages in the *Analects* that suggest that the virtuous person's evaluative sense of self (as manifest in feelings of self-respect, self-esteem, pride, shame, etc.) is staked on her degree of virtue and not affected by her conventional status and fortune. For example, consider *Analects* 4.9 and 4.14:

> The Master said, "A scholar-official who has set his heart upon the Way, but who is still ashamed of having shabby clothing or meager rations, is not worth engaging in discussion.
>
> "Do not be concerned that no one has heard of you, but rather strive to become a person worthy of being known."

In general, I believe that many passages suggest that, on Confucius' view, the virtuous base their sense of self-respect and self-esteem on their degree of virtue (which makes them worthy of being known)

instead of social approbation or the positional goods they do or do not have. And these are passages that the resolute sacrifice conception cannot explain.[25]

At this point it makes sense to pause and sum up the argument so far. In the last section, we saw that the shedding concern conception can explain all the dramatic and didactic passages, but, in this section, we have seen that while the resolute sacrifice conception can explain all of the dramatic passages, it can only explain some of the didactic ones—it runs into the two sorts of problem cases just discussed. So, when it comes to exegetical assessment, the shedding concern conception looks a bit better. Of course, even if the shedding concern conception can explain more passages of the text than the resolute sacrifice conception, we should keep in mind the other negative conclusion that we reached about the shedding concern conception in the last section, namely that it offends ordinary pre-theoretical sensibilities (recall the case of Sue who misses her dead spouse). With that in mind, we might be tempted to think that the resolute sacrifice conception is still better than the shedding concern in one important respect. However, this is a conclusion we should resist; as I will now explain, the resolute sacrifice conception clashes with ordinary pretheoretical sensibilities just as the shedding concern conception does.

To see why the resolute sacrifice view clashes with ordinary pretheoretical sensibilities, note that in a wide variety of cases it is admirable or more virtuous to lack ordinary attachments to conventional goods. In many cases, full virtue requires not just that we *master* or willfully overcome conventional attachments and their psychological effects, but that we *rid ourselves* of those attachments and effects. This is a matter of ordinary intuition and something that is affirmed by ordinary pretheoretical sensibilities, and yet the resolute sacrifice view denies it.

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25 Interestingly, Olberding mentions these passages when first surveying the didactic passages but she does not return to them when arguing that we should adopt her view. See her discussion starting with, "Confucius' lauding of exemplars" (2013, 422–423).

For example, consider Brandon, who is attached to praise and recognition from his boss and therefore greatly affected by his boss's attitudes about gender norms and many other things. Brandon's boss thinks women should stay home and raise their kids and that men should not have to do any housework. He looks down on, and is less likely to favor, men who disagree or whose wives do not conform to these norms. This leads Brandon to *dislike* his wife's quest to find a part time job and *wish* that he could tell her to drop it. It also leads him to resent or at least be more *averse* to doing housework and wish that his wife would do it all. If his boss found out that he was doing his fair share he would feel ashamed in the face of his boss' derision. Next, assume that virtue requires Brandon to support his wife's quest to have a part time job and that it also requires him to do his fair share of the house work. Moreover, imagine that Brandon recognizes this and willfully forces himself to encourage his wife and to grit his teeth and fold the laundry on a regular basis. In this case, Brandon is not a vicious person because of his less-than-virtuous desires for his wife to drop her quest and do all the housework, but those desires nonetheless hold him back from being fully virtuous. They are desires to treat his wife in vicious (objectionably nonvirtuous) ways. We might even imagine Brandon noticing this and wishing that he could be a fully virtuous person and be able to *wholeheartedly* encourage his wife and do his share of the housework. He might recognize that his attachment to his boss' approval, and perhaps to advancing his career, is at odds with virtue because it leads him to have vicious desires that stand in the way of his treating his wife as he would want to be treated if her were in her shoes.

I take it that this is just one of numerous cases in which ordinary pretheoretical sensibilities will conflict with the resolute sacrifice conception. That conception would have us believe that while virtue requires us to have a resolute will to choose the virtuous path, it is also compatible with attachment to the bad or vicious path when that attachment is caused or motivated by an ordinary attachment to some conventional good. It would have us, implausibly, conclude that Brandon is already fully virtuous as long as he overmasters his desire and forces himself to do the right thing. So, it turns out that

both the shedding concern and resolute sacrifice conceptions of virtue conflict with ordinary pretheoretical sensibilities.

5.

We can sum up the results of our discussion so far as follows. The resolute sacrifice conception plausibly insists that the virtuous have a resolute will—a commitment and disposition to effectively choose—to be virtuous even at the price of various conventional goods. Unlike the shedding concern conception, it allows or even requires that the virtuous have attachments to conventional goods just as ordinary people do. However, it errs in holding that the virtuous can or will have *all* the kinds of attachments to conventional goods that ordinary people do and that all virtue requires is a resolute will to "resolutely regulate," these desires so that they never "trump" or "overmaster" our desire for virtue (Olberding 2013, 433). The truth, however, will be found in a middle ground view on which virtue involves the transcendence of some but not all ordinary attachments to conventional goods. In some cases, having an attachment to a conventional good and choosing virtue anyway is not enough for virtue—there are some kinds of ordinary attachments that the virtuous lack so they will not have to exercise will power to regulate them or feel upset later that they did not get the object of the relevant attachment. Meanwhile, in other cases, such as the victim of misfortune and the victim of vice cases, virtue will be compatible with or even require an attachment to the relevant conventional goods. Among other things, such attachment shows that we are human and recognize that conventional goods, which are subject to external fate, are indeed part of the good life.

To develop a third way conception of virtue that we can apply to the *Analects*, I suggest that we return to, and improve on, the idea of self-determining virtue (additions in italics).

> **Wholehearted Internalized Virtue**: *Full* virtue involves (a) improving one's character, interactions with others, and activities,

> (b) *fully* appreciating and valuing virtue in oneself and others, (c) noticing and *fully* disvaluing *the actual or potential* lack of virtue in oneself, and (d) transforming and guiding one's activity in the light of one's apt appreciation of virtue and its absence in oneself and others. For one thing, the self-reflective appreciation of virtue leads the virtuous to choose virtue instead of conventional goods if and when a choice must be made.

Next, I think we should add two more specific claims in order to explicate conditions b-d.

> **Turning Away from Vice**: One notices and fully disvalues the actual or potential lack of virtue in oneself, only if: (i) one has no affective attachment to getting benefits by vicious means and (ii) one *wholeheartedly* chooses to act virtuously when the relevant alternative courses of action are vicious or less than fully virtuous.

> **Appreciating Virtue**: One fully appreciates and values virtue in oneself and others only if one is: (i) disposed to choose the virtuous path even if it requires conventional sacrifice and (ii) one's core affective and cognitive self-assessments—including one's sense of self-respect and self-esteem—are centrally grounded in awareness of one's degree of virtue and vice and not in one's standing in one's local social, cultural, economic, or political order.

Putting these together, I propose that we conceive of virtue as a form of self-determination that involves turning away from vice and appreciating virtue, but that also includes those ordinary attachments to conventional goods that are not uprooted when we turn away from vice and ground our self-assessments in an appreciation of virtue's significance. To be a virtuous human being we need to retain those attachments to conventional goods that are compatible with a wholehearted and internalized appreciation of virtue and its value.

The wholehearted internalization conception of virtue allows that we sometimes suffer a prudential loss—a reduction in our well-being—when we forgo conventional goods, but it sets restrictions on how attached we should be to these losses. For example, Brandon

may well be worse off—have a lower level of well-being—if he encourages his wife, provokes his boss' disapproval, and then fails to get the next promotion. This would make him a victim of vice so he could aptly be upset about not getting the promotion. But in order to be virtuous he would need to more fully turn away from vice: he would need to uproot his affective attachment to gaining a promotion by vicious means and become able to *wholeheartedly* choose to act virtuously. And this would presumably involve coming to care less about his boss' approval and perhaps to care less about his promotion. Becoming virtuous may, as this illustrates, attenuate or discipline our attachments to conventional goods without extinguishing them.

This view does better than the resolute sacrifice conception because it gets results in line with ordinary pretheoretical sensibilities in cases like the Brandon one. By extension, it fits unchosen vicious goods passages from the *Analects*, such as 7.16:

> The Master said, "Eating plain food and drinking water, having only your bent arm for a pillow—certainly there is joy to be found in this! Wealth and eminence attained improperly concern me no more than the floating clouds."

This passage suggests that the virtuous person is unattached to wealth and eminence attained by vicious means, and while the resolute sacrifice conception could not support that claim, the wholehearted internalization conception can. The virtuous person is unattached to such wealth and eminence because she has turned away from vice. In addition, the wholehearted internalization conception is tailored to capture the fact that the virtuous stake their sense of self on virtue and not conventional goods such as the quality or fashionableness of one's clothing or the approval of vicious but powerful people like Brandon's boss. So, this interpretation can easily explain, for example, why it is virtuous of Zilu to feel no shame while being dressed in, "only a shabby quilted gown" (9.27).

Summing up, the wholehearted internalization conception of virtue effectively combines the strengths of the resolute sacrifice and

shedding concern conceptions, but it has further strengths that allow it to avoid the defects that bedevil those other views. It allows us to provide a more unified reading of both the dramatic and didactic passages of the *Analects*. And it ascribes a conception of virtue to Confucius that fits well with our (current) ordinary pretheoretic sensibilities. So, all things considered, it looks like the right one to ascribe to the *Analects*.[26]

6.

Now that we have three conceptions of virtue on the table and have seen that the wholehearted internalization conception seems to best fit ordinary pretheoretic sensibilities and provide a unified interpretation of the *Analects*, we can return to our starting questions about how virtue transforms or transcends ordinary assumptions about the importance of conventional goods and conventional success. All three of our conceptions entail that the virtuous will choose the virtuous path instead of the conventional one if and when they conflict. Therefore, to that extent any advocate of virtue will no doubt run afoul of parents and politicians who want kids and citizens to think and act as if conventional success was the most important thing in life. The shedding concern view goes much further and would have us believe that the virtuous completely cease to care about conventional goods and success. However as I have argued, that would put a strain on the relationships or bonds that the virtuous can have with more ordinary people. The resolute sacrifice conception does better on that score but it provides us with an unsatisfying picture of virtue because it fails to account for the way that the virtuous are able to wholeheartedly repudiate vice and maintain a stable sense of self-respect and esteem, based on virtue, in the face of social pressure, disapproval, or disdain. We might say that while

[26] Tiwald (2018) discusses issues that would be relevant to thinking about which conception of virtue fits other texts and figures in the Confucian and Neo-Confucian tradition.

the shedding concern conception pictures the virtuous as slightly inhuman, the resolute conception pictures them as all too human and insufficiently inspiring.

The wholehearted internalization conception of virtue hits the mean between the extremes and helps us see that some, but only some, attachments to conventional goods and success are uprooted by virtue and that virtue grounds an admirable and perhaps enviable sort of self-respect and self-esteem. Perhaps this points to one of the things that allows philosophers to seduce the young away from conventional success. Perhaps the young can see that it is not good to have one's self-evaluations tethered to conventional goods such as social approval and the accumulation and display of positional material goods. That makes not only one's well-being but even one's sense of self-respect and esteem hostage to external fortune. The path of virtue is appealing in this context because it offers us a way to secure an inner basis for self-respect and self-esteem that will contribute to our well-being regardless of whether we achieve conventional success or not.

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An Analytic Approach to Contemporary Confucian Revivalism(s)

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Abstract

There are different variants of contemporary Confucianism. This paper offers an analytical tool that allows their comparison as well as differentiation while respecting each's philosophical tenets: a 2×2 matrix. This matrix—a technique usually applied in social sciences—is constructed here from a philosophical perspective. It focuses on two axes of differentiation, each representing a spectrum: The first locates a particular set of ideas and its relationship to Confucianism. This is the axis of inclusion. This axis of the matrix is about the philosophical argument on how a variant counts itself as Confucian. The second axis relates to the role of Confucianism in the public sphere, as advocated by a specific variant. This second axis of the matrix is the axis of intention. This paper applies the matrix on two variants of contemporary Confucianism revivalism, namely those proposed by Fang Keli and Fan Ruiping.

Keywords: contemporary Confucianism, public Confucianism, People's Republic of China, philosophy and social science

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** The idea for this paper came out of a talk in 2014. Philip Ivanhoe invited me to the City University of Hong Kong where I had the possibility to expose some of my early ideas. Yongsun Back, Songmoon Kim and Eirik Harris helped me in shaping the philosophical contents of what later became this paper. Al Martinich discussed with me some of the arguments. Philip Ivanhoe provided important input in a final version.

In China, since the early 2000s and even before, there has been a revival of Confucianism.[1] Rather, there are different movements claiming to stand in the tradition of Master Kong's teachings (Fan 2011).[2] These two claims alone offer enough material for a complete research program. This paper, however, will address a specific question that can be posed in different ways: What makes these revivalisms "Confucian"? When or how can the adjective "Confucian" be claimed by or applied to certain forms of revivalisms? Or, how do the different variants of contemporary Confucianism argue their inclusion into that philosophical tradition? Furthermore, since Confucianism understands itself as a moral force within a community with an organization that can be called public, or "political,"[3] there is the aspect of how philosophy and society interact. If there is a Confucian revivalism—in many forms and shades—what it is supposed to do in contemporary Chinese society and in the public, or political realm?[4] There are, therefore, two dimensions for comparing contemporary Confucianisms. First, their self-description as, or in-

1 See, for example, Hammond and Richey (2014) and Ai (2009).

2 It is doubtful whether China had a philosophical concept of Confucianism as a fully-formed and homogenous school of thought. Rather, there were different philosophies claiming some standing in a tradition of the teachings of Master Kong. On the other hand, the term "Confucianism" became more used in China since the 1980s and is now commonly used as a denominator for a kind of philosophy (Ai 2008).

3 This sentence is intentionally convoluted. It seems anachronistic to apply terms such as "society" or "political organization" to Confucianism, at least in its original form as developed by Kong and his immediate disciples. Even if the Spring and Autumn Period of Chinese history is sometimes described using contemporary terms of political science and philosophy, it isn't clear at all if these terms help or hinder the analysis of social and political interaction. This paper opts for terms with less epistemic commitment; for example, instead of the term "social society," the expression "community" will be used, and the expression "public organization" will be used instead of "state." This loosely follows Tönnies (1957) and Fairbank and Goldman (2006).

4 Note that this question does not involve any claim on state-consequentialism. Rather, it goes back to Kong's teachings. They were meant to reform the community and the organization of public matters via cultivating the virtues of the people for them to perform their roles virtuously. As Confucianism as such had a role to play as it first entered the scene, it has a role to play today as it is revived (or gains more attention) today. This statement itself can be made of any re-impulsion of Confucianism, which happened—several times—throughout Chinese history.

clusion into, the Confucian tradition; and second, the public role each respectively assigns to Confucianism.

Borrowing a method common to social sciences, this paper analyses these two dimensions using a 2×2 matrix. A matrix sorts phenotypes—here: types of Confucian revival—along—here: two—axes. Each axis is a spectrum identifying differences by degree. A matrix categorizes phenotypes in the space formed by the relative position of the phenotypes to the two axes chosen, i.e. the axes are the independent variables and the phenotypes the dependent variables. The categories stipulated by a matrix are relational and based on family resemblances and not on quantitative or qualitative metrics (Ryan 2006). The 2×2 matrix offered here is an analytical framework for understanding different types of contemporary Confucianism(s) along the logic of family resemblance (and therefore, of family differences) while maintaining the fuzzy ends of each phenotype being compared.

In the matrix offered here, the first axis—the axis of inclusion—explains how specific variants of philosophy argue for being Confucian. The spectrum goes from "persuasive definition" to "proposition." The second axis—the axis of intention—explains the role Confucianism should play in the public sphere according to the different variants of contemporary Confucianisms; it goes from "state religion" to "civic education." The matrix will be further discussed in section two. The comparison and analysis made possible by the matrix can be used in comparing different variants of contemporary Confucianism. As two examples, the matrix will be tested on the thinking of Fang Keli and Fan Ruiping. This occurs in section three. Section four concludes the essay.

The approach offered here has different advantages: First, it allows an overview over the inner-differentiation of contemporary Confucian revivalism(s). Second, it allows for a quick comparison in relation as to how each of its variants argues its being Confucian and imagines the public role of Confucianism in contemporary China. And third, by operating along the logic of family resemblance, the matrix is not exclusive, i.e. it accepts that there are other criteria for comparison while focusing on two of the many. In other words, the

matrix is practical and nonexhaustive. It gives an overview while not excluding further research.

In summary, the aim of this paper is to offer a matrix for comparing contemporary Confucianism(s) in relation as to what makes them Confucian and which role they suppose Confucianism should play in the public sphere in contemporary China. In a first section, a brief overview on the matter of contemporary Confucianism(s) and Confucian revivalism(s) will be given. In a second, the matrix will be developed. The third section applies the matrix to two specific forms of contemporary Confucianism(s), exemplifying how it can be used as a tool to better understand the contemporary revivalism(s) generally and its specific forms. These forms are the thinking of Fang Keli and Fan Ruiping. The fourth and last section concludes this paper.

1. Contemporary Confucianism(s)

This first section gives a nonexhaustive overview on different ways of thinking of contemporary Confucianism(s). It shows that there is no homogenous way of thinking about Confucianism today and that there are different possibilities for conceptualizing as well as articulating it.

The first problem, however, is: there is no Confucian Orthodoxy. Soon after the death of Master Kong, his disciples formed different schools and the inner-Confucian differentiation developed ever since. Just a few centuries after Master Kong's activities around 480 BCE, Hanfei (c. 280–233 BCE), one of his chief rivals, states (50.1):

> In the present age, the celebrities for learning are the Literati and the Mohists. The highest figure of the Literati was K'ung Chiu [Confucius]; the highest figure of the Mohists was Mo Ti. Since the death of Confucius, there have appeared the School of Tzu-chang, the School of Tzu-ssu, the School of the Yen Clan, the School of the Meng Clan, the School of the Chi-tiao Clan, the School of the Chung Liang Clan, the School of the Sun Clan, and the School of the Yo-cheng Clan. Since the death of Mo Tzu, there have appeared the

> Mohists of the Hsiang-li Clan, the Mohists of the Hsiang-fu Clan, and the Mohists of Teng Ling's School. Thus, after Confucius and Mo Tzu, the Literati have divided into eight schools and the Mohists into three. In what they accept and what they reject they are contrary to and different from one another but each claims to be orthodox Confucian or Mohist. Now that Confucius and Mo Tzu cannot come to life again, who can determine the orthodoxy of learned men?

The differentiation continues: about Neo-Confucianism—the name commonly applied to the revival of the various strands of Confucian philosophy and political culture from the ninth to the twelfth century —Berthrong (2017) disclaims:

> [T]he use of the term "Neo-Confucian" is confusing and needs some careful revision. By Song times, there are some perfectly good Chinese terms that can be used to define the work of these later Confucian masters. There are a number of terms in use after the Song such as *ru* or classical scholar, *daoxue* or learning of the way, *lixue* or the teaching of principle, *xingxue* or teaching of the mind-heart, or *hanxue* or Han learning just to name a few. All of these schools fit into the Western definition of Confucianism, but the use of a single name for all of them obscures the critical differences that East Asian scholars believe are stipulated by the diverse Chinese nomenclature. While Confucians did almost always recognize each other across sectarian divides, they were passionately concerned to differentiate between good and bad versions of the Confucian Way.[5]

As a result, contemporary Confucianism also comes in many forms. For example, in an edited volume, Fan (2011) showcases the inner differentiation of contemporary Confucianism(s) and gives way to thinking about it in three different sociological categories. The first would be the philosophical school of Confucianism. This one focuses on the examination of virtues and roles as well as to the metaphysical inquiries developed by the Neo-Confucians. Then, there is the scholastic tradition of Confucianism. Its focus is on the literary classics, on

[5] A further and in-depth examination of the diversity of Neo-Confucianism occurs in Angle and Tiwald (2017).

rhetoric and aesthetics as well as on the lives of scholars that produce resources for the community/society and the public body/politics. Lastly, there is the religious aspect of Confucianism, which focuses on private and public rituals as well as ancestry.

There are several criticisms of this categorization; Fan clearly voices them.[6] For example, for Confucianism, even if it has a religious component, it is never just that. It is always also about moral self-cultivation and the correct way to perform roles in the public and private spheres. Similarly, scholarly research cannot be conceived as instrumental for other goals. It can produce resources that are used in different tasks, for example, the steering of the public, or political body. But if it does so, it is because these resources are valuable per se and not because it brings consequentialist values about. Also, even the continuation of Confucian philosophy does not separate it from its application, since Confucianism always also has a pragmatic side.

These criticisms show that it is difficult to separate different veins of Confucianism from the purely sociological perspective, because this view does injustice to many philosophical claims of Confucianism. It separates what belongs together and creates artificial differences. Also, this view leaves many questions that are crucial for the self-understanding of Confucianism open. A different path, then, is clustering Confucianism(s) according to intentions relevant to Confucianism(s)' role in the public realm. Many or most of the actual Confucian tendencies are also concerned with a public role for Confucianism. From this point of view, a different set of three groups can be sorted out—loosely based on Ai (2008, 2009).

"Confucians" would be the first group. They would like to (re-)turn China to (their understanding of) Confucian philosophical-moral-cosmological conceptions. Philosophers belonging to this group could be Jiong Qing, Kang Xiaoguang, Luo Yijun, Bai Tongdong, or Fan Ruiping. The second group could then be called "Liberal Confucians." They combine Confucian moral philosophy with elements such as care for the destitute, popular participation—sometimes even

6 Fan (2011) criticizes this categorization, because, according to him, there is a Confucian orthodoxy and any separation of Confucianism(s) does not do justice to the orthodoxy.

democracy—or communitarian reform. Philosophers belonging to this group could be Feng Youlan, Tu Weiming, Zhu Bohun, Stephen Angle, or Daniel Bell. Finally, there is a group that can be labeled as "Confucianists." Philosophers such as Fang Keli, Li Jinquan, Qian Xun could be seen as belonging to this group. They generally stress some Confucian tenets like stability, obedience, order, harmony, and (or, but) develop a state-consequentialist program or even want to Sinicize Communism/Marxism by incorporating elements of Confucianism to it.[7] With a grain of salt: While Confucians pursue a restorative program placing Confucianism at the top of ideology, Confucianists use Confucian elements for a state-consequentialist program, and the Liberal Confucians try to solve actual social-political issues through the combination of Confucianism and other ways of social philosophy.

In this framework, these three groups still face the opposition of Communists/Marxists of different nuance. Communists/Marxists uphold class struggle and scientism, as well as the leadership of a party that selects its cadre on the basis of commitment and office. That means that these Communists/Marxists cannot accommodate Confucian principles such as the Way (*dao* 道) because it is transcendent, roles (as an ethical concept) because it undermines class-struggle, virtues because they are based on "princely behavior," or rites since they have at least a transcendent connotation and are a tool for molding virtues. While it is true that Communism/Marxism in China has been able to accommodate inner differentiation and reforms, it is also the case that the Communist Party is and remains a revolutionary party. Revolution also means disagreement with Confucianism.

In 2010, Bell writes, "Communism has lost its capacity to inspire the Chinese. But what will replace it? And what should replace it? Clearly, there is a need for a new moral foundation for political rule in China, and the government has moved closer to an official embrace of Confucianism" (2010, 92). Wu (2014), in analyzing 228 articles in

7 Two caveats apply here: First, this list is highly abbreviated and selective and is here just for example's sake. Second, Chinese surnames are written before given names and "western" given names are written before surnames.

the *China Daily* between 2000 and 2009, concludes that the Communist leadership uses Confucian ideas, values, and language either for their own ends or for strengthening the communist case. So, perhaps, there is room for an arrangement between Communism/Marxism and Confucianism.[8]

There are plenty of examples for the communist leadership employing Confucianism at large. President Hu's eight honors and shames (*barong bachi* 八榮八恥) in 2006, President Xi's eight musts (*bagebixu* 八個必須) in 2015, or the posters spread along China's big cities recalling the eight virtues of civility; they are not Confucian per se, but they intentionally borrow Confucian concepts and language. Also, in the opening ceremony of the 2008 Olympiad in Beijing, passages from the *Analects* were read out loud. And even the XXIV World Congress of Philosophy, which took place in 2018 in Beijing, has "Learning to be Human" as a theme. There are equally plenty of examples for philosophers who consider themselves as standing in the Confucian tradition, using official and party platforms to propagate their message.[9]

This sketch of contemporary Confucianism(s) is instructive in at least three ways: First, it shows that there is a diversity of discourses about contemporary forms of Confucianism; this discourse is diverse in at least two ways, one, what specific variants of Confucianism argue for, and two, which role specific variants of Confucianism want Confucianism to play in the public, or political, organization of China. Second, there is potential for a pragmatic arrangement between (some variants of) Confucianism and the Communist Party. Third, within contemporary Confucianism itself, there is enough dynamics and differentiation to accommodate this arrangement.

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8 This paragraph doesn't claim that this arrangement is new; it only claims that it exists.

9 There are many examples more that cannot be discussed here. Yan and Bramwell (2008) examine how Confucian rituals, for example in Qufu, are being refitted to yield to a Communist ideal, especially to cater to domestic tourism in China. Wallace (2016) and Louie (2011) examine the use of Confucianism as a strategy in external relations and business. And finally, there are plenty of examples today of how schools are re-reading Confucian texts, people and institutions are inventing Confucian rituals such as weddings, ancestral worship ceremonies, and the like explained in the vast works of Billioud, for instance in Billioud and Thoraval (2015).

And then again, the categories mentioned above—"Confucian," "Liberal Confucian," "Confucianist"—do not do justice at all to this inner dynamics and differentiation. Some philosophers may be at ease with their inclusion in one group—Bell (2010) labeled his Confucianism "left" and Angle (2012) "progressive"—and others would strongly object. Tu doesn't see his approach as a "liberal" variant of Confucianism but as "orthodox" (for example, 1985). Similarly, Fang claims not to be just using Confucianism in today's China, but he, too, understands his approach as a bona fide variant of Confucianism. What is the result of this discussion? As this section was introduced, it claimed to give a brief overview of contemporary Confucianism(s). This overview served the purpose of showing that the inner-Confucian differentiation is real, dynamic, and ongoing in contemporary China. Then, this section showed that contemporary Confucianism(s) in China often faces an arrangement with the Communist Party. Lastly and more important for the goal of this paper, this section also showed that it seems difficult to find any common core to all of these ways of understanding Confucianism.

The next section offers an analytical tool that helps assess the different variants within the Confucian family.[10]

2. A Tool for Analyzing Contemporary Confucianism(s)

This section develops a 2×2 matrix that explains, first, how different variants of contemporary Confucianism make their argument for them being Confucian, and second, which role a specific variant claims Confucianism ought to play in the public sphere.

A matrix is a tool commonly used in social sciences. It compares family resemblances and differences of phenotypes by placing them in a space formed by two (or three) axes. Depending on where

10 Some—for example, Ivanhoe—would claim that Confucianism cannot be state-consequentialist; however, some of the contemporary Confucians seem to endorse this. They, however, don't do it directly or causally, they just point out that if actions have good consequences for the general good, this might be a sign that they are virtuous, too (Billioud and Thoraval 2015).

the phenotypes are located in this space—relative to the axes and relative to other phenotypes—family resemblances and differences between them become apparent. The matrix does not (necessarily) metricize the differentiation; it compares in virtue of the relative place of the phenotype in the matrix and towards others therein. One reason is that the matrix accepts that any phenotype has fuzzy ends. Instead, it focuses on providing an overview that itself can initiate further research. Also, a matrix does not claim exclusivity: the phenotypes, as dependent variables, are being analyzed in the light of chosen independent variables. A matrix has no inherent way of stating which set of independent variables work best; it allows for the same phenotypes to be analyzed with different sets of independent variables (Ryan 2006).[11]

The matrix offered in this paper is constructed from a philosophical perspective. Its axes frame the spectra of differences in contemporary Confucianism mentioned above: One axis defines the spectrum of how a variant of Confucianism constructs, or argues for, its own belonging to Confucianism. This is the axis of inclusion. The second axis relates to the role of Confucianism in the public sphere, as advocated by a specific variant. This second axis of the matrix is the axis of intention. Each axis of the matrix is conceived as a spectrum allowing for a difference of degree on its spectrum. The next two subsections will each develop one axis of the matrix. The use of the matrix as an analytical tool will be applied to two examples in Section 3.

2.1. The Axis of Inclusion

This axis explains how a variant argues for its being Confucian, even if it holds specific contents that are new, unusual, or contradictory

[11] Take the BCG portfolio analysis for example—probably the most widely-used matrix. On the one axis, it shows the growth rate of a market and, on the other, the market share of an enterprise. In this space formed by both axes, the matrix analyzes where a firm's products stand relative to growth and market share. Of course, it is not the only way of analyzing products, and the matrix does not deny that profits, innovation, environment impact, and so on are important dimensions of the portfolio of a firm. But it reduces the analysis of the products to the two axes mentioned. The intention is to provide a practical overview.

to the usual Confucian tradition. The two "typical" positions on this spectrum are "persuasive definition" and "proposition." Both denote how the (self-)ascribing of a specific variant to Confucianism occurs.

The term "persuasive definition" was introduced by Stevenson (1938) as part of his emotive theory of meaning. It is a form of stipulative definition, which purports to describe the "true" or "commonly accepted" meaning of a term, while in reality stipulating an uncommon or altered use, usually to support an argument for some view or to create or alter meanings.[12] The terms thus defined will often involve emotionally charged notions that allow for some degree of interpretation (Bunnin and Yu 2004). A typical example of "persuasive definition" is calling an angry person "frank" or "open."[13]

A different, Confucian-inspired example for persuasive definition is: A Confucian father asks his equally Confucian son to go and buy him a pack of cigarettes. Based on the virtue of "filial piety" (*xiao* 孝), the son should do as told. What if the son refuses the father's wish?[14] The father could confront him and say, "You are not being filial." But then, the son could answer, "What you call filial means being reckless, what I call filial means doing what is in your best interest. If I buy cigarettes and you smoke, you can die of cancer and that is not in your best interest. Refraining from smoking is in your best interest; and me not buying your cigarettes helps you in refraining from smoking and pursuing your best interest. Caring for you. That is what I call being filial." In this example, the son uses "persuasive definition" twice. First, in showing that the father's understanding of filial piety is wrong and, second, explaining what he understands as being filial. Note that there is no intention to deceive each other. Both

[12] Often, the term is also used in discovering definist fallacies. An example of such is calling a Legalist a person that hasn't yet realized the many mistakes of Hanfei. In this paper, the term "persuasive definition" is being used without any negative connotation and without the aim of exposing fallacies, but as the valid construction of an argument.

[13] Indeed, it could be argued that this is part of the very foundation of Confucianism. Consider Kongzi's claim in the *Analects* 7.1, "I transmit rather than innovate. I trust in and love the old ways."

[14] This example goes back to Carine Defoort.

accept filial piety, and both are moved by it. It is the exact content of filial piety in this situation that is being discussed when using "persuasive definition."

There are two components of "persuasive definition" that are relevant here. First, it can only be used if the term to be defined has an emotive value, i.e. puts a description into motion. Confucianism is the case for many reasons. The philosophy that goes back to Master Kong is geared towards moving people in the direction of moral self-cultivation, virtues, and roles. Also, many people have many (mostly positive) feelings towards Confucianism. Generally, it is regarded as an important (moral) achievement of Chinese culture. Second, because of the diversity, inner differentiation, and dynamics explained in Section 1, the exact meaning of the term "Confucianism" allows for some degree of interpretation. As such, Confucianism fulfills the two conditions for being used by "persuasive definition."

In this case, some contemporary variant of Confucianism can self-ascribe itself to Master Kong's teachings by stipulating how its tenets follow the sage's. For example, an actual version of revivalism could claim that what rulers were to Master Kong is now the Chinese Communist Party or that Master Kong's preference for virtues does not entail a necessary demise of laws. "Persuasive definition" even leaves enough room for the reconciliation of some Communist/Marxist thoughts with Confucianism, for example regarding equality, the value-theory of work, or harmony as social synthesis. On the other hand, "persuasive definition" is not a free pass for masking any single thought as Confucian. While the technique allows for wide interpretation, it still maintains the core of the definition. So, it is impossible to count Hanfei as a Confucian or to claim that the Cultural Revolution was based on Confucian beliefs. Even those tenets of Confucianism using "persuasive definition" have to find a way of arguing their standing towards role, rites, virtues, self-cultivation, and education.

The second "typical" point on the axis of inclusion is "proposition." In contemporary philosophy, there are many uses of the concept of "proposition." Unsurprisingly, there are many criticisms of it, too. It can refer to the primary bearers of truth-value, the objects of belief

and other "propositional attitudes" (i.e., what is believed, doubted, etc.), the referents of that-clauses, or the meanings of sentences. Under "proposition" this paper understands sharable objects of the attitudes and the primary bearers of truth and falsity (Soames 2010). In this sense, this definition can even adjust to Quine's (1970) criticism and subscribe to his preference for a "sentence" as a unit of meaning without free variables, i.e. a statement that must be either true or false.

On the other hand, this paper does not operate with the predicates "true" or "false" but with "Confucian" and "not Confucian." A "proposition," here, means that some specific variant positions itself as Confucian. It becomes then a matter for the discourse about that proposition to establish whether it really can be considered Confucian. A "proposition" does not allow a variant to reinterpret an idea as Confucian, rather it puts the variant in the place to demonstrate why its ideas belong to Confucianism. As such, it is much stricter in allowing variants to count as Confucian, and, even more, it stipulates a burden of proof; namely the proof of belonging to some Confucian "orthodoxy."

Yet, how does on prove that a variant belongs to some sort of Confucian orthodoxy if section 1 makes the case that there is no such thing? There are two ways of responding to this objection. The first is pointing out to the necessary bilateral relationship of a proposition, as understood here. Since it is not about re-interpreting Confucianism but stating a variant as Confucian, this statement still needs approval of the discourse about this variant. It is the discourse at large that vouches for the predication of the "proposition." Second, even if there is no orthodoxy, there are some core concepts of Confucianism. Yet, another potential way of doing this would be to point not to core concepts of Confucianism but to core texts, or particular past interpretations (be it Zhu Xi, the Gongyang Commentary, and so on). In its rigid sense, "proposition" means sticking to this core.

Returning to the example given before: the son, in claiming that he thinks that filial piety means doing what is in the best interest of the father, even if it is not apparent to the father himself, might be faced with such an answer: "No, what you are doing, son, is mixing concepts thus violating names. Filial piety involves you doing as told.

If you disagree and deem your disagreement sufficiently important to be voiced, do so politely and I explain my reasons to you. Maybe you can convince me and maybe I can convince you, but should our disagreement persist, you should still do as told. That is the nature of filial piety." Here, the father is just saying that he does not accept the son's "proposition." Under "persuasive definition" it is possible to accept the son's argument; under "proposition," it is not.

The axis of inclusions, as any axis in a matrix, is a spectrum that allows for gradualism. At the one end, there is the most rigid notion of "proposition," or "sentence." At the other end, there is the most permissive notion of "persuasive definition." And most variants in the analysis of contemporary Confucianism are in between these ends.

2.2. The Axis of Intention

The second axis of the matrix addresses the intention of the specific variants of contemporary Confucianism. Intention, here, denotes what role the specific variant is supposed to play in the public body. Master Kong can be seen as a teacher, a philosopher, but also as a social reformer. His intention was to restore the order of the Way, and he developed (or systematized) a series of concepts, relationships, and techniques for this. Depending on how to assess Confucius' teachings, his intention was to develop the virtues of the people in order for them to play their roles, to specify the role-obligations, to make it clear how rituals define lives, or all of those. But generally speaking, Master Kong was not about only those elements. He believed that, through this way, there will be a comprehensive betterment of the community and the public body (Tu 1998). Applied to contemporary China, Confucian revival(s) share the same aim, making Chinese society and politics better. The "typical" positions in this axis, defining the spectrum between them, are "state religion" and "civic education."

In this paper, the expression "state religion" has been chosen, because it is at the same time both overarching and permissive. It is overarching in mobilizing emotions and symbols (in this case: for Confucianism), it is overarching in aligning the whole of the state with the Confucian claim, and, finally, it is overarching by institutionally

merging the official China with Confucianism. This term is also permissive to allow inner differentiation, for example, accepting that Communism/Marxism still has a role to play (subordinate or equal to Confucianism), by allowing for private views differing from the officials and by allowing non-Confucian systems of belief and morality to exist, if only under Confucian protection.[15]

The idea of "state religion" does not imply an exclusivity of Confucianism in China, but, as it is adapted to this paper, it entails that some variants of contemporary Confucianism argue for a ritual, moral, factual, or otherwise stipulated priority of Confucianism over other teachings. Some argue for exclusivity.

These variants of Confucianism will usually call for state symbols and rites to be reshaped or adapted to Confucian elements, but some will even go farther and demand the state itself to subscribe to Confucian thoughts. Also, these "state religion" variants of Confucianism do not stop short of stipulating how the organization and governance of—possible new—institutions of the state in adhering to the Confucian "state religion" are. In short, "state religion" takes a top-down view of the role Confucianism should play; it should encompass all of the state.

The other "typical" point of this axis is "civic education." Civics can be understood as the study of good citizenship and proper membership in a community (Heater 2004). Master Kong's *Analects* can be read as a guide in such studies. After all, his emphasis on virtues and how a person should perform certain roles in a community are exactly what the definition entails. Moral self-cultivation can be

15 Note that "state religion," here, does not relate to "civil religion," as coined by Bellah (1967). He understands "civil religion" as the implicit religious values of a nation, as expressed through public rituals, symbols (such as the national flag), and ceremonies on sacred days and at sacred places (such as monuments, battlefields, or national cemeteries). But Bellah would not use the term applied to any formal or institutional entity. In the genesis of the term, symbols like the tomb of Chairman Mao, statues of Master Kong, or rendering flowers in the Day of Ancestors could be part of the implicit religious values of a nation, when coming "bottom up" and not engineered by the state. Yang (2016) modifies Bellah's (1967) idea to allow for a formalization of "civil religion" and explores how Confucianism became or becomes the dominating idea of a society.

understood as a continuous study in good citizenship and virtuous interaction in the community.

Guan et al. (2015) formulate how Confucianism aims at educating the person with a bottom-up approach. It is through the constant civic education of people that the people perform their roles in a community and the political body emerges from the interconnectedness of these roles and exchanges. This is also the idea of "civic education" used in here. Therefore, variants of Confucianism sharing "civic education" stress the educational value of Master Kong's teachings and aim to use the bottom-up approach first with the person, then with the family, and, finally, with smaller networks. For sure, these variants are aware of the public dimension of their project and aim at influencing the public body. But their key point is the civil education of the people, the families, and the small-scale networks. In "civic education," it is through the aggregation of these circles of self-cultivation that Confucianism influences the public body.

The variants of Confucianism that share "civic education" will usually emphasize aspects of how to cultivate virtues, which virtues are important in today's environment, which roles can be discerned and played by the citizens, what is the role of institutions, and how to act conforming to the rites in the contemporary day-to-day. These variants of Confucianism also are also concerned about the role party cadres—and eventually other leaders of society and politics—should play and how they should be prepared for their roles.

Also, the variants of Confucianism sharing "civic education" might further emphasize the schooling of children, the (academic) learning of Confucian and classic texts, and especially the role of rituals in society. Rituals, as they are integral to Confucianism, are a particular source for forming the civil person—and not only as a display of official, state, or power. "Civic education" variants also tend to focus on the personal and small-scale types of ritual.

Again, this axis, as any axis of a matrix, is to be understood as a spectrum. On the one end is the most extreme possible form of "state religion," which merges Confucianism and the People's Republic of China in a Confucian political body. On the other end, there is the narrow focus on personal moral self-cultivation with limited inter-

action in family and community. In between, there is enough room for nuance of the specific variants of Confucianism.

With this, the 2×2 matrix is fully developed. It consists of two axes, each explaining one of the philosophically fundamental questions about contemporary Confucianism. The one axis explains how a specific variant constructs its argument in order to count as Confucian. It can use "persuasive definition" to keep the emotional force of Confucianism while redefining some of its aspects. Alternatively, it can make use of a "proposition" claiming to be Confucian and awaiting feedback from the general discourse if it is accepted as such. The other axis shows which intention a specific variant of Confucianism has with respect to the role Confucianism should play. It can aim at an overarching, comprehensive program converting all of China to Confucianism as a form of "state religion." Or it can aim at the moral self-cultivation of the person, as a form of "civic education." The matrix differentiates different types of contemporary Confucianism in relation to where they can be positioned in the space formed by these two axes. As such, the matrix provides an overview that is at the same time practical and can point to further research. The next section tests the matrix using two contemporary Confucian thinkers.

3. The Matrix at Work

As the previous section developed the matrix, this section applies the matrix to two different contemporary thinkers. These are Fang Keli and Fan Ruiping. They have been chosen not because they are well known and representative contemporary Confucians in China. With a certain level of abstraction, the matrix is going to be applied to their oeuvre in order to understand what type of Confucian project they pursue. The aim of this section is to show how the matrix can be employed.

3.1. Fang Keli[16]

It seems odd to use Fang Keli 方克立, a self-declared Marxist and critic of (new-) Confucianism, as an example here. But after all, the Dean of Graduate Studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and member of the Office of Academic Degrees Committee of the State Council, lead two Confucian research projects from 1986 to 1990 and from 1990 to 1995, resulting in the publication of over 400 papers and numerous other works. These projects were funded party by the state and partly by the Communist Party of China. Moreover, Fang spoke variously on the compatibility of Confucianism and modernity.

Fang's variant believes that studying Confucianism functions to serve the political authority of the Chinese Communist Party. While Fang severely criticizes "traditional" Confucianism, he thinks that a modified Confucianism that supports the Communist/Marxist political ideology of China can be a valuable resource for the country's future (1989). Fang argues for cultural nationalism to strengthen spirit and legitimacy of the political system, preserving the authority of the Chinese Communist Party.

Fang (2007) particularly values some of Confucianism's cultural inheritance, including its moral values, human ideals, and concept of a harmonious society,[17] because it was directly related to the creation of Marxism with Chinese characteristics. He even considers Confucianism the only gateway to Communism/Marxism in China or that Communism/Marxism is the only alien ideology to flourish, because it is attuned to Chinese cultural concepts, namely to Confucianism (1988). But he cautions that although the study of tradition is important, tradition has to be approached critically in order to identify and absorb the best elements fit for a modern society with a modern culture and reject "feudalist dregs."

True to his belief that Marxism is a strong and politically superior ideology and the only one that was capable of fundamentally trans-

16 The outline of this sub-section as well as the data are from Makeham (2008).

17 Interestingly, whereas the concepts of harmony and harmonious society predate Master Kong, they are relatively new to Confucian philosophy (Solé-Farràs 2008).

forming Chinese society, Fang Keli insists that the relation between Marxism and Confucianism is that between mainstream ideology and supporting ideology. Research and study of Confucianism cannot be divorced from Marxism and should be approached only from the Marxist point of view of class-society and class struggle, because Confucianism was born in a society that was marked by class struggle. Confucianism must be placed and studied in relation with the ideological struggle existing in contemporary Chinese society.

Which tenets of Confucianism seem especially important to Fang? On the one hand, he stresses the idea of social harmony, humbleness, selflessness. On the other hand, he re-interprets most of the Confucian claims about the family and roles as obligations towards the larger family, i.e. society and the state, and roles not as an ethical category but as a role—more like a job—assigned to the person by the state (1988, 1989). Fang also re-reads Confucian virtues as laws. His interpretation is that virtues neither tell people what to do nor are dependent on context and roles. Rather, they inform the state and its cadres about how to formulate good laws and rules (2007). Lastly, Fang is not interested in adapting the structure of the Chinese state or of the Communist Party to cater to some Confucian desiderata. He maintains that the actual structure works well and that it is this actual structure that can incorporate Confucianism and be used to strengthen its legitimacy and discipline the people (2007). How can the matrix be applied to analyze Fang's variant of Confucianism?

Regarding the axis of inclusion, Fang makes it clear that he is not a Confucian. Still, he also claims to use Confucian thought in his philosophical analysis. As seen above, Fang holds to different basic tenets of Confucianism, but he also re-interprets some. Taking such a fundamental concept as the family and expanding it to incorporate society and the state is as such a wide-ranging change of Kong's teachings. Additionally, claiming that the basic relationship of father and son can be read nowadays as one of the magistrates to the people is an exercise in "persuasive definition."

Many other interpretations of Confucianism Fang offer make use of "persuasive definition." For example, when he states that the institutions of the Chinese state and the Communist Party are fit to

incorporate and foment Confucianism, he is at the same time re-defining these structures as Confucian and making the claim that Confucianism necessarily means statist structures. Of course, this is well in line with his program, but it is also relying on the emotive use of different concepts—Confucianism, structures, cultivation—and reshaping them to fit a very specific understanding; one that has not been there before.

The question of structures leads to the second axis of the matrix. Of course, Fang is trying to motivate and mobilize Chinese people. He is also putting a special emphasis on how to educate them in order to make them good citizens of the People's Republic. At a first glance, this seems to tilt Fang toward "civic education." But on the other hand, all the roles his variant of Confucianism should play are carefully engineered and steered by the state and its structures. Fang wants to incorporate some Confucian tenets in order to make the state stronger and increase its legitimacy as a structure but also as a cultural achievement of China. In this case, it is best to understand his approach as "state religion."

"State religion" means that the variant is geared towards an official, top-down approach, i.e. it is the state's task to define what Confucianism is, to foment it, and to pass on Confucian values to itself and to the people. According to "state religion," the state will also use Confucianism in a symbolic and ritualistic way in order to create an emotional bond between its structures and the people and itself, thus increasing legitimacy. These are the roles Fang foresees for his variant of Confucianism, although he places more emphasis on the state-led education of the people and less on the symbolic and emotive use of rites. Also, for Fang it is very clear that it is the Communist/Marxist state that employs Confucianism. Confucianism, here, becomes a "state cult."

In summary, Fang uses Confucian thought in a statist approach. Since he often re-defines or re-interprets Confucian ideas and, at the same time, wants the state to engineer and steer Confucianism in China, Fang's variant can be localized in the quadrant formed by "persuasive definition" and "state religion." However, his relative position within this quadrant shows some proximity to the next one

formed by "persuasive definition" and "civic education," since his state maintains its actual structure and main ideology and uses Confucianism to educate the people.

3.2. Fan Ruiping

Fan Ruiping 范瑞平, a current professor of philosophy at the City University of Hong Kong and an alumnus of the Graduate School of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing, began his professional training in medicine and switched to philosophy later. His affinity with the healthcare sector at-large is apparent in his many publications on bioethics, medical ethics, and parental care. Fan also self-identifies as a Confucian, having published two important books on contemporary Confucianism: "The Renaissance of Confucianism in Contemporary China" (2011, as editor) and "Reconstructionist Confucianism" (2010). As a token for his variant of Confucianism, Fan states in the introduction of his second book (2010, xi-xiii).[18]

The term Reconstructionist Confucianism identifies the project of reclaiming and articulating moral resources from the Confucian tradition so as to meet contemporary moral and public policy challenges. The reader will find that the problems facing the West will look different when seen from a Confucian perspective. This is the case because Confucian thought invites one to step outside of the individualistic moral discourse of the West with its accent on individual rights, equality, autonomy, and social justice, and instead to approach moral challenges within a moral vision that gives accent to a life of virtue, the autonomy of the family, and the cardinal role of rituals, the social rites that define and sustain social interactions. The Confucian moral paradigm is not that of the contemporary liberal individualist West.

As it was done in the previous sub-section, the matrix is going to be applied for gaining a better understanding of Fan's argument for inclusion (the first axis) and intention (the second axis). On the level of inclusion, the quoted passage makes it very clear that Fan is searching

18 For simplicity's sake, the Chinese passages in this quote are omitted.

for Confucian core concepts in their undiluted or unenriched forms. He makes it clear that Neo-Confucianism erred, that many variants of Confucianism are too lenient in incorporating alien, i.e. Western,[19] elements. He even claims that Confucianism has been colonized by the West and disrupted by Communism/Marxism. Instead, Fan turns to the Confucian core concepts, virtues, ritual, role, education, as well as self-cultivation. But he is not only ready to go back to the core concepts. Many more have to be re-instituted according to him.

Examples of the Confucian concepts and institutions Fan wants to re-establish are the family with its typical role partition—father and son, husband and wife, older brother and younger brother—role based-communitarianism with its typical moral and ritual obligations, as well as the idea of the *junzi* 君子 as a leader. The *junzi* is a person that knows how to behave in society, i.e. knows what roles to play, how to play them and decides, which course of action to take in the function of the roles involved in the making of a decision and the effects the decision has. Furthermore, the *junzi* nurtures those feelings and virtues that make it more possible for him to play the roles he plays in society. Because the *junzi* not only sees beyond her or his self-interest but primarily focuses on roles in society. The *junzi* is exemplary, educated, self-cultivated, and, because of it, able to lead.

This approach is best described as a "proposition." And since proposition warrants for the response of the discourse in order to be confirmed, the academic critique of Fan's approach very often disagrees with him and the path he chose to take. But there is no criticism so far denying the Confucianism of his approach. On the contrary, he often faces criticism for being too "orthodox."[20]

On the level of intention, the quoted passage makes it evident that Fan's variant of Confucianism aims at the person and especially the family. Family is the key point in Fan's intention. Confucianism works its way with a bottom-up approach into the community and

[19] It is doubtful if there is anything that corresponds to the notion of the "West"; as it is doubtful if there is anything that might describe with enough precision "Western" concepts, "Western" thinking, or "Western" philosophy. Nonetheless, Fan uses the term.

[20] See, for example, Angle (2010) or Minzner (2013).

society, and it influences the public body through these networks. Fan explicitly mentions the Confucian civil society being based on the family. Similarly, in the remainder of his book (2010), he offers Confucian solutions to larger-scale issues like business ethics, environmental care, or bioethics by going back to the level of Confucian values in the family. As mentioned earlier, the Confucian family is a hierarchical body defined by roles, rites, and virtues. In the family, every member has a place and obligations related to the place they occupy in the hierarchy. Following this, if everyone knows his or her place in family, they automatically know their places in society, the economy, the government, and so on. Fan is indirectly referring to an older Confucian theory about what the public body—in Fan's words: civil society—is. This theory imagines it as the sum of three concentric circles, the family, community, and nation; whereby the family stands at the core of the circle. It is that core that marks or determines one's role in society, and it is the family that educates people in their respective roles.

Fan's variant of Confucianism can therefore be counted to the area of "civic education," since it stresses the person and the family, letting the rest of society and the public realm being influenced by that basic unit. Being a good, civic citizen is, for Fan, the constant self-cultivation in virtues and rituals while performing roles, most importantly, in the relationship of the family.

Overall, Fan's variant can be placed in the quadrant formed by "proposition" and "civic education." Its relative position within the quadrant is tilted to the end of each axis. This is because of his "purism" in formulating what Confucianism is and his strong orientation towards the family in formulating the intention of how Confucianism acts and influences society.

3.3. The Matrix at Work

The matrix developed here is a tool for better understanding different variants of contemporary Confucianism, their similarities and difference in the light of how they argue for their own being Confucian and which public role they assign to Confucianism. The matrix compares

focusing on two important elements of the contemporary discussion: how is Confucianism articulated and which public role ought it to play. Primarily, the matrix describes, sorts out, and compares. However, by focusing on the two philosophical questions, the matrix goes beyond "mere" comparison. In order to arrange the phenotypes in it, the matrix requires a philosophical analysis of the phenotypes themselves. The matrix being applied here to just two variants of contemporary Confucianism focusses the discussion of these variants on two philosophically relevant questions; this is its main advantage. This advantage has at least three specific features:

First, it offers a non-reductionist analytic framework for philosophical comparison, it differentiates the main—but not all—tenets of these variants: Without understanding, for example, how Fan Ruiping sees himself as a Confucian, it is not possible to pinpoint his relative location on the axis of intention; without analyzing the arguments of Fang Keli for Confucianism as a state-cult, it is difficult to discern whether he aims at civic education or state religion.

Second, by arranging these variants or phenotypes within the space formed by its axis, the matrix is able to show the relative distance in the philosophical arguments of each tenet. Here, Fang Keli and Fan Ruiping show maximum distance on the axis of inclusion—the first being an example of "persuasive definition" and the second one of "proposition"—but a certain proximity on the axis of intention—the first being a proponent of Confucianism as a state cult, which is less strong than "state religion" but not yet in the field of "civic education," where the second is clearly positioned.

Third, the comparative and explanatory power of the matrix grow with the number of different variants of contemporary Confucianism with are included into its framework. The inclusion of many phenotypes allows a philosophical discussion of their respective inclusion and intention; by arranging them within the fields formed by the matrix, their relative distance to each other, i.e. their similarities and differences become the result of the matrix. This, on its own, can again focus further research on how the distance can be explained. Analyzing a sufficiently large number of variants using this matrix is, however, work that remains to be done.

4. Conclusions

Revivalism is truly Confucian, because it looks back at the past. Furthermore, it regards history as a source of wisdom and authority, especially moral authority. Revivalisms are Confucian, because they don't only look back at the past but try to emulate (parts of) it. But what is specifically "Confucian" about Confucian revivalism? In many ways, contemporary Confucianism(s) and Confucian revivalism(s) are a re-discovery of Master Kong, the tradition that goes back to him, the dialogue between core concepts and their application to today's problems—inequality, moral crisis, legitimization of the political structure in China, nationalism, among others—and a negotiation with the Chinese state and the Communist Party.

The overall conclusion of this paper is that contemporary Confucianism(s) and Confucian revivalism(s) come in different shapes and forms—but that this diversity can be assessed by family resemblances. The matrix developed here is a tool for better understanding them, their similarities and difference in the light of how they argue for their own being Confucian and which public role they assign to Confucianism. The matrix itself is an analytical tool with the goal of providing an overview on family resemblances and differences.

The approach offered here has different advantages. First, it allows for an overview of the inner differentiation of contemporary Confucian revivalism(s). Second, it allows for a quick comparison in relation to how each of its variants argues its being Confucian and imagines the public role of Confucianism in contemporary China. And third, by operating along the logic of family resemblance, the matrix is not exclusive, i.e. it accepts that there are other criteria for comparison while focusing on two of the many. In other words, the matrix is practical and non-exhaustive. It gives an overview while not excluding further research.

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Ambivalence of Family and Disunity of Virtues in Mencius' Political Philosophy

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Abstract

This essay argues that although family plays an important role in Mencius' moral philosophy, its place in his *political* philosophy and the relationship between the familial and the political are much more complicated and ambiguous than commonly assumed. We examine two related assumptions about Mencius' philosophy, one concerning the role of family and the other the unity of virtues, by revisiting the "two-sources" (or "two-roots") problem identified by David Nivison, offering a different interpretation and reaching a different conclusion. We argue that there are indeed two roots in Mencius' philosophy, the family root and the general sympathy root. These two are sometimes in conflict within his framework, exposing a deep tension therein. To make the case, we distinguish two distinct strands in Mencius' thought, the "extensionist," which has been regarded as normative, and the "sacrificialist," which is more radical and less appreciated. While the extensionist Mencius operates on the assumption of congruity between the personal, the familial, and the political domains, the sacrificialist Mencius recognizes the ultimate incommensurability between the familial and the political and embraces the necessity for self-sacrifice in order to protect the familial. The hero of the sacrificialist Mencius is none other than the legendary sage-king, Shun 舜.

Keywords: Mencius, family, two-sources, extensionist/sacrificialist, Shun

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Few thinkers in history can rival the impact on Confucian and East Asian thought than Mencius. As Philip J. Ivanhoe remarks (2016, 2) inspired by Alfred North Whitehead's famous observation about the place of Plato in the history of European philosophy, "The safest general characterization of the Confucian philosophical tradition is that it consists of a series of footnotes to Mengzi (Mencius)." However, our contemporary understanding of Mencius' thought is inevitably shaped by what has become the orthodox Confucian ideology, precisely due to the prominence of Mencius in the construction of that orthodoxy. As a result, it is quite a challenge to shake off many of the interpretative assumptions that are widely shared among scholars of Chinese philosophy when engaging Mencius' thought through the text that bears his name.

In this article, we will look into two particular assumptions about Mencius' moral-political philosophy that are widely shared among scholars and the two are related. One of them concerns the role of family in his moral-political philosophy and the other has to do with the unity of virtues in the Mencian moral universe. First, there is a broad consensus among interpreters of Mencius that family is central to his political philosophy. However, if we sift through the *Mencius* without that assumption in mind, we find that family describes a rather problematic area of human life for Mencius. More specifically, in a significant portion of the *Mencius*, Mencius actually devotes much of his effort to insulating family from the political domain, instead of treating family as a crucial node in the Confucian project that links personhood, family, and the state as depicted in the accepted orthodox Confucian account. Second, scholars have generally adopted a tacit, though seldom explicitly argued, position when interpreting Mencius' thought, namely the unity of virtues in Mencius' moral philosophy. This essay challenges such an assumption by offering a new perspective into the complex relationship among different virtues in the Mencian moral universe.[1] In so doing, we will reexamine the "two-sources" (or "two-roots") problem in Mencius' thought identified

[1] An anonymous reviewer criticizes my approach as one that pushes those virtues to their extreme only to support my argument. As should become clear in the essay, it is precisely those so-called "extreme" cases that provide us with invaluable clues to the fault lines in the moral universes occupied by Mencius and others. Mencius' philosophy, like any philosophical system, must handle extreme cases as well as easy ones and it is often when exploring the former that philosophical reasoning becomes most interesting.

by David S. Nivison but offer a different interpretation and reach a different conclusion about the problem as a result of the discussion. We will see that, despite Mencius' criticism of the Mohists for harboring a two-roots view on morality, there are indeed two roots in Mencius' own moral-political philosophy. However, instead of one being formal, public, and "outside" with the other being "inside" ourselves as Nivison (1996, 102) puts it, I will argue that both roots in Mencius' thought can more fruitfully be understood as referring to aspects within ourselves: the family root and the general sympathy root. Furthermore, these two sources of morality are not so easily reconciled in Mencius' thought. As I hope to demonstrate in this essay, instead of diminishing the power of Mencius' thought as some have argued, the two-roots problem actually makes his philosophy more compelling.

In order to make my case, I will present what can be discerned as two distinct strands in Mencian thought, namely, what I shall call the "extensionist" strand, which has been treated as normative, and the "sacrificialist" strand, which is much more radical and whose radical nature has not been investigated or appreciated in relation to the normative, extensionist strand. Based on this observation, I will argue that while the extensionist Mencius operates on the assumption, normative within Confucianism, of congruity between the personal, the familial, and the political domains, the sacrificialist Mencius recognizes the ultimate incommensurability between the familial and the political. Furthermore, the sacrificialist Mencius radically separates the familial from the political and ultimately prioritizes the former over the latter, by embracing the necessity for sacrifice as a way that, at times, is required to save the familial. These two strands of thought are at times, though not always by any means, in conflict within Mencian moral-political philosophy, demonstrating a deep tension at the heart of the Mencian system. In this respect, we will see that although family plays an important role in Mencius' moral philosophy, its place in Mencius' political philosophy and the relationship between the familial and the political in his thought are much more complicated and ambiguous than have been commonly assumed. The hero of the sacrificialist Mencius is none other than the legendary sage king, Shun 舜. Let us start with the normative, extensionist, Mencius.

1. Normative Mencius: the Extensionist

1.1. The Extensionist Interpretation of Mencius

As is well known, the normative Confucian moral-political paradigm envisions a smooth transition from the personal, to the familial, to the political. Much of Mencian thought embraces this vision, as evidenced in the following passage:

> Mengzi said, "People have a common saying: 'The world, the state, the family.' The root of the world lies in the state; the root of the state lies in the family; the root of the family lies in oneself." (*Mengzi* 4A5)[2]

Such a view can be found throughout the *Mencius*. The most famous elaboration of this vision can be found in the *Great Learning*:

> When things are investigated, knowledge is reached; when knowledge is reached, the intention is fulfilled; when the intention is fulfilled, the heartmind[3] is aligned; when the heartmind is aligned, the person is cultivated; when the person is cultivated, the family is regulated; when the family is regulated, the state is put in order; and when the state is put in order, there is peace under the Heaven. (author's translation)

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2 Unless noted otherwise, all translations adopted in this article are from Bryan van Norden's (2008).

3 I will translate the Chinese word *xin* 心 in the classical texts as heartmind, instead of heart, mind, heart-and-mind or heart-mind as adopted by other translators. Heartmind is obviously not an English word, but a neologism trying to capture the widely-shared scholarly consensus that ancient Chinese do not differentiate between heart and mind the way they are used in contemporary English since we are dealing with classical Chinese texts that are translated into contemporary English for contemporary Western readership in this context. For me, the attraction of heartmind as a single term is precisely its ambiguity, much like *xin* in different texts and contexts. It runs the gamut of the emotive, cognitive, evaluative, calculative, voluntary and whatever other functions *xin* performs, with different texts leaning toward different aspects. In other words, the fact that pre-modern Chinese thinkers allow *xin* to perform such a wide range of roles (without feeling the need to clarify which one) suggests the underlying assumption of the singularity of heartmind. Heartmind has the advantage of being both familiar and strange, not unlike *xin* in all its complexity and ambiguity in various Chinese texts through the ages.

> This is the cultivation-regulation-governance-pacification *(xiu-qizhiping* 修齊治平, hereafter *XQZP*) model of Confucian moral cultivation, familial regulation, political governance, and bringing peace and justice to all in the world. The *Great Learning* is generally considered a text in the Mencian "School." In this respect, Mencius echoes other early Confucians who see a natural progression of ethical transformation from the personal, the familial, to the political, so that everybody can live in a harmonious, just, and ethically fulfilling world. This is an extraordinary accomplishment that results from a moral agent's transformation of the domains of the personal, the familial, and the political by extending the fruits of moral cultivation from oneself to ultimately encompassing the entire world. It posits a seamless transition among these domains in that personal virtues can bring about a harmonious family, which in turn can lead to a well-governed state, and eventually bring about a peaceful and just world. This is a clear example of what I call the extensionist vision, long celebrated and enshrined as normative in classical Confucian moral-political philosophy.

One of the most famous and celebrated passages in the *Mencius* (1A7) has the master using the example of a king's pity toward an ox on its way to being sacrificed to show that if the king is capable of benevolence toward an ox he is certainly able to extend that benevolence (*tui en* 推恩) toward the people under his rule. David S. Nivison connects the use of *tui* in the *Mencius* to Mohist sources:

> The expression *tui en*, literally "pushing out compassion," has a limited use among later Confucians, but the word *tui* 推 alone is an important technical term for the later Mohist dialecticians, and there can be little doubt that Mencius here is consciously appropriating that use. It is defined in chapter 45 of the *Mozi*: Extending (*tui*) is getting someone to grant what that person has not accepted when it is the same as something that that person does accept. (Nivison 1996, 96)

Within normative Confucian political philosophy, family has almost always been treated as a necessary domain in the concentric[4] circle of extension, from the self, to the family, to the state, and eventually to the entire world. The *Mencius* contains many other passages that adopt such an approach. Mencius advocates the idea that the familial virtues of reverence toward one's parents and elders cultivated at home can be developed into the political virtues of *ren* 仁 and *yi* 義 by extending the familial virtues to encompassing all in the world. In the commentary on *Mengzi* 7A15 accompanying his translation, Bryan Van Norden observes:

> This is Mengzi's philosophy of ethical cultivation in a nutshell. We are born with incipient tendencies toward benevolence and righteousness, which we must "extend" so that they reach all other relevantly similar cases. That is, we must feel compassion not only for our own parents but also for the parents of others. We must revere not only the elders of our family but also the elders of others. (Van Norden 2008, 175)

Indeed, this has been the dominant interpretation of the Mencian, and the broader Confucian, moral-political project which connects Mencius' ideas of human nature, family relationships, and political governance grounded in the ruler's benevolence (*renzheng* 仁政).

However, Mencius's thought is a lot more complex–some might say more strained–than what Confucian orthodoxy has portrayed. More specifically, according to the Confucian *XQZP* ideal, the familial domain constitutes the necessary link between the personal and the political domains; but if this were indeed the case, it is rather curious that Mencius rarely appeals to the familial virtues of filial piety and brotherly deference in his conversations with various kings in his effort to promote the idea of benevolent governance. Rather, what is being extended to the world is the sympathy shown

4 Interestingly, as Ivanhoe points out to me in our correspondence, "While widely invoked there is no example of 'concentric circles' in the early Confucian tradition (though one does find this metaphor in ancient Greece)," even though the metaphor of concentric circles does seem to fit the Chinese case.

to an animal about to be sacrificed or an unknown child in danger, *without* necessarily going through the familial route, in his celebrated discussions on human nature with several rulers. In other words, the seed of benevolence in Mencius' thought is most prominently represented by the king's sympathy toward a sacrificial ox or our instinctive sense of compassion toward a vulnerable child who is a stranger to us (*burenzhixin* 不忍之心), instead of our familial sentiments toward parents and siblings (*xiaoti* 孝悌).

If so, this means that the role of familial virtues in Mencian political philosophy is rather ambiguous in that it does not necessarily occupy a central role in it as has been almost universally assumed. Chad Hansen might be onto something when he points out that

> Mencius. . . does give lip service to filial piety. He shows his awareness that filial piety is a core virtue in the *dao* of the sage-kings. Still, filial piety plays no central theoretical role for Mencius. (Hansen 1992, 169)

Indeed, the role of familial virtues in Mencius' thought is not quite as straightforward as portrayed in the Confucian orthodoxy. This explains Hansen's dismissiveness of a central theoretical role filial piety plays in Mencius' thought. However, such dismissiveness does not do justice to the theoretical agony Mencius finds himself in. Hansen is right to problematize the role of filial piety in Mencius' thought against the prevailing scholarly interpretations, but I do not agree with his conclusion. What Hansen should have concluded from his observation is that filial piety does not play a central role in Mencius' *political* thought, but it does not necessarily mean that filial piety plays no central role in Mencius' overall moral project. As we will see in the following, despite his own denial, Mengzi's philosophy does operate on the premise of two roots when it comes to the source of moral perfection, but this two-roots problem in Mencius' thought is different from Nivison's analysis. The two roots are family-based virtues and natural sympathy.

1.2. Two Moral Roots: Buren 不忍, Qin 親 *and Their Relationships with* Ren 仁

In his famous article, "Motivation and Moral Action in Mencius," Nivison presents a highly nuanced analysis of Mencius' philosophy concerning the source(s) of morality.[5] In this paper, Nivison approaches the problem of the source(s) of morality from the perspective of moral motivation in Mencius' philosophy. He sets out to answer this question: "Is the theory of extending basic dispositions compatible with any moral code that anyone may think up?" (Nivison 1996, 101). In other words, "how is the moral 'deep structure' of self-revealing affections and motivations articulated into the 'surface structure' of developed morality" (1996, 101)? To address the tension between the two domains, Nivison argues that "we would have to think of morality as having two sources, one formal and public, set out in words and doctrines, which one would have to learn; and the other motivational but relatively amorphous, 'inside' ourselves so to speak, or we might say in our 'hearts'" (1996, 102). Even though Nivison takes very seriously Mencius' own rejection of two-roots view he accuses the Mohists of harboring, Nivison seems unconvinced Mencius' single-root position can be defended.[6] In the following, I will offer a somewhat different interpretation of the two-roots problem which can hopefully better capture the theoretical conundrum Mencius is in. However, unlike Nivison I will not approach this problem from the perspective of moral motivation. Rather, my focus will be on the very structure of Mencius' moral-political philosophy, specifically the relationship between the familial and the political.

Mencius is known to draw a hard line separating what is morally required within the family from what is morally required outside of

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[5] Nivison's article "Two Roots or One," initially delivered as the Presidential Address before the 54th Annual Pacific Meeting of the American Philosophical Association in San Francisco, California, on March 28, 1980, does not quite address the problem in a way that is relevant to this article, despite its title.

[6] See Nivison (1996, 295n26). Kim (2018) critiques Nivison's perceived defense of Mencius' one-source position, although I think Nivison's position is more nuanced than characterized by Kim.

it. When he talks about the familial, more often than not, his focus seems to be on its limitations rather than its universalizability. Mencius devotes a great deal of effort to defending familial sentiments and virtues precisely because of their limited nature, not in spite of it. This is especially noteworthy in 3A5 where Mencius criticizes a Mohist, Yi Zhi 夷之, who makes lavish funeral arrangements for his own parents despite the Mohist teaching of impartial care as well as its teaching against lavish burial practices. Yi Zhi tries to defend what he did by appealing to a Confucian teaching:

> Yi Zhi said, "According to the Way of the Confucians, the ancients treated the people 'like caring for a baby.' What does this saying mean? I take it to mean that love is without differentiations, but it is bestowed beginning with one's parents." (*Mengzi* 3A5)

Mencius calls him out on a blatant inconsistency in Yi Zhi's behavior and his interpretation of Mohist teachings. That is, when it comes to the treatment of his own family, Yi Zhi appeals to the Confucian teaching despite his Mohist commitment. For Mencius, the Mohists posit a moral ideal they themselves cannot practically commit to. Furthermore, as Mencius muses, "Does Yi Zhi truly hold that one's affection for one's own nephew is like one's affection for a neighbor's baby?" (*Mengzi* 3A5). Here Mencius seems rather incredulous that anybody can seriously commit to a position that blurs the boundary between the familial and the nonfamilial. He is drawing a sharp line separating the two domains, implying that what the Mohists advocate is inhuman as it crosses that very line.

Mencius 3A5 has been commented on by many contemporary scholars, due to the fact that it is one of few cases we can find a direct (or almost direct) engagement between Mencius and a Mohist wherein the line between Confucianism and Mohism is sharply drawn, by a Confucian in this case. However, there has also been a good deal of ambiguity as to what exactly transpires in this engagement, especially pertaining to the discussion about moral roots in the following key sentence: "Heaven, in giving birth to things, causes them to have one source, but Yi Zhi gives them two sources" (天之生物也, 使之一本, 而夷子

二本故也. *Mengzi* 3A5). The prevailing interpretation, represented by Nivison, argues that Mencius is making a case for the one source of love that can be extended to encompassing others, with natural gradations of intensity of love,[7] although Nivison is also ambivalent about this as we have seen previously. In the following, I will sketch out a somewhat different interpretation of the two-roots problem, making the case that Mencius' operative position can be understood to be more two-rooted than he himself might have realized, if the roots can be understood in light of the familial and political domains within which moral sentiments are expressed.

As Mencius sees it, what distinguishes the familial from the non-familial is their different underlying sentiments. In this connection, Mencius differentiates two kinds of sentiments, namely *buren* 不忍 and *qin* 親, and connects both with the virtue of *ren* 仁 in intriguingly

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[7] Kwong-loi Shun's interpretation of Mencius is also premised on this one-root assumption (Shun 1997, 129). Jeffrey Riegel (2015) challenges such an interpretation by examining the language and structure of the passage. He observes:

> The grammar of the sentence is such that *yiben* 一本 and *erben* 二本 must be understood as verbal predicates with the pivotal pronoun *zhi* 之 and the proper name Yizi 夷子 (Master Yi) as their respective subjects. One cannot, as is often done, ignore the grammatical parallelism of the two phrases *zhiyiben*, "they are single-rooted," and *zhiyiben,* "Master Yi is dual-rooted," and render *erben* as some sort of transitive verb; or insert other verbs into the text in an effort to make Heaven and Yizi parallel subjects and, as a result, render *yiben* and *erben*, translated as "one root" and "two roots," or something similar, as if they were the objects of those verbs. (Riegel 2015, 47)

Riegel's conclusion is the following:

> Being "dual-rooted" means dividing this love in two, providing care equally to one's parents and the parents of others. It further means that Yi Zhi has made "dual" by dividing in two something that in its original, innate, or "Heavenly" form is undivided—i.e., we should understand *yiben* "single-rooted" not to refer to a root that is unique, or one root as opposed to two, but rather a root that is "whole" and "entire." Also involved in Mengzi's conception of this root that is undivided is the idea that it, unlike Yi Zhi's divided root, consists of a love that is extended, amplified in stages or grades, to reach others who are ever more distant from the self and hence occupy a lower status and lesser importance vis-à-vis the self than those to whom one is closely related. (Riegel 2015, 48–49)

This conclusion does not really change the parameters of the philosophical discussions surrounding *Mengzi* 3A5 among contemporary scholars.

different ways. *Buren*, translated as "cannot bear," is a universal sentiment celebrated in the *Mencius* that is directed indiscriminately toward any person or even an animal that is in imminent danger or is suffering. There are two famous instances of *buren* in the text: one appears when Mencius describes a king's sympathetic response to an ox that is about to be sacrificed (1A7) and the other has to do with our spontaneous response to a baby who is on the verge of falling into a well (2A6). Both are connected with Mencius' discussion of moral inclinations, or moral sprouts (*duan* 端), that are constitutive of human nature (*xing* 性). In such cases, Mencius connects the sprout of *buren* with the virtue of benevolence, *ren*, regarding the latter as the result of extending the former to encompassing all (*Mencius* 1A7, 2B6, 7B31, etc.).

On the other hand, benevolence also has a distinctly familial dimension, *qin*. *Qin* usually means parents (as in *shiqin* 事親) or filiality toward parents (as in *qinqin* 親親) in the *Mencius*, but it also refers to familial affection on several occasions. In fact, Mencius considers treating one's parents as parents as a case of benevolence (親親, 仁也. *Mengzi* 7A15). In another passage, Mencius says:

> The core of benevolence is serving one's parents. The core of righteousness is obeying one's elder brother. The core of wisdom is knowing these two and not abandoning them. The core of ritual propriety is the adornment of these two. The core of music is to delight in these two. (*Mengzi* 4A27)

What is especially interesting about 4A27 is that the foundational Mencian virtues of benevolence, righteousness, ritual propriety, and wisdom (with the appreciation of music added to the list) are addressed entirely within the familial context, which is different from the universalist perspective discussed earlier. In fact, here the familial dimension is treated as the core of the virtue of benevolence and others. This means that Mencius sees two dimensions in the manifestation of cardinal virtues of benevolence, righteousness, ritual propriety, and wisdom, namely the universal and the familial. For example, *ren* can be understood in terms of both the extension of

the universalist *buren* to all (人皆有所不忍, 達之於其所忍, 仁也. *Mengzi* 7B31) and of serving one's parents (仁之實, 事親是也. *Mengzi* 4A27; 親親, 仁也. *Mengzi* 7A15). However, 7A15 actually presents some exegetical problem for our purpose here in a way that might not be immediately obvious:

> Treating one's parents as parents is benevolence (*ren*). Revering one's elders is righteousness. There is nothing else to do but extend these to the world. (*Mengzi* 7A15)

On its face, Mencius seems to be saying that a sage-king should extend the practice of treating parents as parents and treating elders as elders to all under the Heaven, but it is unclear what is exactly being extended. Many within the Confucian tradition treat filial piety and political loyalty as transferrable, making family the training/nurturing ground for political virtues. We can see this interpretation very clearly in Zhu Xi's commentary on *Mengzi* 4A19:

> If one serves one's parents with filiality, then one's devotion can be transferred to one's ruler, and one's agreeableness can be transferred to one's elders. If one's self is correct, then one's family will be ordered, one's state will be well-ruled, and the world will be at peace. (Van Norden 2008, 98-99)

However, Mencius is actually conflicted about the connection between the familial virtue of filial piety and the political virtue of benevolence. In the text, Mencius often uses the term *qin* 親 to demarcate the familial domain from the rest of the social world. As the following passage clearly demonstrates, *qin* is reserved for kin, it is not appropriate to express *qin* to anyone else:

> Mengzi said, "Gentlemen, in relation to animals, are sparing (*ai*) of them, but are not benevolent (*ren*) toward them. In relation to the people, they are benevolent toward them, but do not treat them as kin (*qin*). They treat their kin as kin, and then are benevolent toward the people. They are benevolent toward the people, and then are sparing of animals." (*Mengzi* 7A45)

Here Mencius is drawing a line between benevolence (*ren*) and familial/kinship affection (*qin*). If we juxtapose 7A45 with 7A15, we can make a case that the extension in 7A15 should refer to promotion of the universal practice of filiality (treating one's parents as parents, treating one's elders as elders), rather than the sage-king or the gentleman treating everybody as family members. In other words, the practice and promotion of filiality is itself benevolence.

To recap, Mencius' moral philosophy operates on the premise of two distinct but related domains: the familial and the political. This is uncontroversial. However, what might be controversial is that the relationship between the two is a lot more complicated and strained than what has been commonly assumed. On the one hand, every human being has a heartmind that cannot bear the suffering of others. *Buren* is a universal moral sentiment that all humans are born with, even though we risk losing it with repeated violations of our humanity, as implied in the famous ox mountain allegory (*Mengzi* 6A8). *Buren* is the sprout of the virtue of benevolence (*ren*) in Mencius' thought. On the other hand, however, Mencius posits another source for *ren*, namely the familial source. In the following passage we find Mencius saying, "Among babes in arms there are none that do not know to love their parents (*aiqiqin* 愛其親)" (*Mengzi* 7A15). This seems to suggest that filial sentiment is an inborn quality of all human beings. In the same passage, Mencius says, "treating one's parents as parents (*qinqin* 親親) is benevolence (*ren*)" (*Mengzi* 7A15). That is, Mencius is pointing out that loving parents is an inborn quality whereas properly serving parents is a developed quality of a cultivated human person. The relationship between those two is actually similar in structure to that between *buren* 不忍 and *ren* 仁. Interestingly, in 7A15 Mencius seems to equate filiality (*qinqin*) with *ren*, meaning that *ren* has a distinct familial dimension, in addition to its political dimension. This suggests that the political and the familial are *co-equal dimensions* in constituting the virtue of benevolence.

Importantly, *ren* should never be allowed to eclipse and transcend our filial attachment. In 1A1, Mencius says, "Never have the benevolent left their parents behind" (未有仁而遺其親者也). Given the

familial dimension in *ren* just observed, Mencius' sentiment here is not surprising. However, since *ren* also has a strong political dimension, the ability of a person of *ren* to navigate the relationship between the familial and the political is much trickier. Even though the cited passage in 1A1 can simply mean that a benevolent person will always be filial—especially when there is no conflict between the two, e.g., if one is blessed with a great family such that a politically benevolent person can also be filial without having to sacrifice major principles in either domain—when there is conflict between the political and the familial, a decision has to be made whether to sacrifice the political or the familial. In this regard, Mencius is clearly on the side of sacrificing the political in order to save the familial.

For Mencius the familial domain is a special category in and of itself that cannot be subsumed under the political. This interpretation is in line with Mencius' vigorous, and at times strenuous, attempt to draw a line between the familial and the nonfamilial domains. Indeed, we find the *Mencius* devoting a significant amount of effort to defending the special treatment of family members, usually framed as a critique of the Mohists who famously advocate impartial care for all without privileging family members.

In this connection it is rather curious that Mencius does not treat *qin* as one of the moral sprouts in the way *buren* is treated. Moreover, neither filial piety (*xiao*) nor brotherly deference (*ti*) is included in the four cardinal virtues of benevolence (*ren*), righteousness (*yi*), ritual propriety (*li*) and wisdom (*zhi*) (hereafter *RYLZ*) that grow out of those four moral sprouts. If *RYLZ* and their respective sprouts indeed represent the foundation of the Mencian moral-political project as it often has been taken to be, where does that leave familial virtues like *xiao*, *ti*, and *qin* within such a picture?

In the following I will offer an alternative framework that can better accommodate these competing elements in Mencian thought between the familial and the political domains in order to have a more nuanced understanding of the Mencian project. The view I will defend argues that Mencius regards the familial and the political as two distinct domains, or two roots, such that virtues in one domain do not *necessarily* translate into the other. I will do this through a

close examination of the Shun narrative in the *Mencius*. The story of Shun presents the most illuminating example in the text for revealing the theoretical struggle Mencius is in, especially the problematic status of the familial domain in his political thought. In fact, nowhere is the tension between the familial and the political more poignantly portrayed than in Mencius' depiction of Shun, due to the prominent but deeply problematic role family plays in this narrative. We will see that the Shun narrative holds an important inflection point in the Mencian moral-political project.

2. The Case of Shun

Shun is one of the ancient sage-kings revered in the Confucian tradition and serves as a paradigmatic figure in the *Mencius*. If Confucius finds his kindred spirits in King Wen and the Duke of Zhou among the ancient sages, Mencius feels more connected with Yao and Shun, especially Shun evidenced in the prominence of the narratives about Shun featured in the text (e.g., 5A1-4). However, the narrative about Shun presents some major interpretative difficulties for Mencius. One difficulty is this: on the one hand, Shun is considered the embodiment of moral perfection in the Mencian moral-political universe, with impeccable personal virtues and supreme political accomplishments; on the other hand, Shun's struggle with his family members presents many challenges for the Mencian political project, given the centrality of Shun's dysfunctional family in his narrative and the foundational role given to familial relationships and filial virtues in the normative Confucian paradigm. A closer examination of this tension in the Shun narrative will offer a unique, perhaps underappreciated, window into the Mencian view on the role of family in his political philosophy.

The *Mencius* gives an elaborate account of the story of Shun, including his difficult relationships with his father and half-brother as well as his benevolent rule. Historical legend[8] has it that Shun's

[8] For a more detailed account of the Shun stories, see Sima Qian, *Shiji*, "Basic Annals" 1, in Ssu-ma Ch'ien, *The Grand Scribe's Records*, vol. 1, 8–16.

father had only one eye (nicknamed "blind man"), his stepmother mistreated him and favored her own son, Xiang 象. In the *Mencius*, Shun is depicted as a filial son despite being mistreated by his parents and half-brother who even schemed to kill him by setting the barn on fire while he was working on the roof and trying to bury him in a well he was helping to dig. Shun allegedly craved love from his parents, despite his marriage to the daughters of the sage-king Yao 堯 and Yao's abdicating the throne to him. Shun demonstrated his love for his half-brother Xiang by enfeoffing him (while forbidding him from managing the affairs of his domain by installing capable officials around him) despite the latter's cruelty toward him. Furthermore, when presented with a hypothetical case in which Shun's father murdered somebody and Shun, as the ruler, has to decide whether to prosecute his father or not, Mencius suggests that Shun would give up his throne and carry his father to a faraway place and hide with him there, with no hesitation or regret whatsoever about losing the empire.

The tension between one's filial piety and political obligations/loyalty, echoing the dilemma in Upright Gong story in *Analects* 13.18, presents a serious challenge to the normative Confucian ideal of *XQZP*. Both Confucius and Mencius have to confront this challenge. In the case of Confucius, he tries to smooth over the tension between the two by making the familial virtue of filial piety and brotherly love the foundation of the political virtue of *ren*, and this represents the Confucian norm codified as the *XQZP* paradigm. But as the Upright Gong story exhibits, ultimately Confucius fails to reconcile the conflict between filial piety and political obligations. Nevertheless, the tension between the two in the *Analects* is not featured nearly as prominently and dramatically as the one in the *Mencius* since such a tension occurred in the person of an ideal Confucian sage-king in the *Mencius*, instead of a virtually unknown figure in the *Analects*. This suggests that the tension is much more central to Mencius' project than to Confucius'. Due to the way family is framed differently between Confucius' and Mencius' thought, Mencius' deliberations of the issue deserve being treated separately, instead of being subsumed under the assumed normative Confucian paradigm.

Much of the traditional commentary and contemporary scholarship have focused on Shun's demonstration of supreme filial piety in order to shield his father from being prosecuted by giving up his throne and escaping with his father to a faraway land with no regret or the skillful nature of Shun's action in harmonizing various moral demands.[9] However, we should note that when Mencius talks about the familial, his focus often appears to be on its limits rather than its universalizability. The familial in the *Mencius* is the critical domain wherein our moral sprouts can be cultivated into virtues, but it can also be disruptive when a moral agent is engaged in a political project. This is the case with Shun. Mencius seems to believe that Shun was eventually able to transform his father, *after* he took the throne:

> Mengzi said, "Only Shun could have the world delight in and turn toward him yet look upon this as if it were straw. When he could not please his parents, he considered himself a failure as a human. When he could not get along with his parents, he considered himself a failure as a son. Shun fathomed the Way of serving one's parents, and his father, the 'Blind Man,' became pleased. The Blind Man was pleased, and the world was transformed. The Blind Man was pleased, and in the world the roles of father and son were settled. This is what is called great filiality." (*Mengzi* 4A28)

Interestingly, such an ending is not recorded in the *Shiji* 史記. Even if we were to accept Mencius' version of the Shun legend regarding the eventual transformation of his father, however implausible it might be, this would at least imply that it was not *just* Shun's virtues that transform his father but that Shun's position as the ruler of the world might have helped as well.

In this regard, Mencius is rather unique among the classical moral thinkers in that he confronts, instead of glossing over, a hard and intractable philosophical problem that is central to the Confucian moral-political project and shared by many other philosophical and

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9 Erin Cline's comment on this aspect of the Shun narrative in her *Families of Virtue: Confucian and Western Views on Childhood Development*, represents the most recent effort in this line of interpretation (Cline 2015, 28-30).

religious traditions in the world, namely the negotiation of conflicts between the personal, the familial, and the political. The fact that Shun's struggle with his birth family is featured so prominently in the text suggests that Mencius takes the tension between the familial and the political much more seriously than other early Confucians.

There is a fascinating debate recently among contemporary scholars in China about how to properly interpret Mencius' Shun narrative pertaining to the Confucian ideals of filial piety and benevolent politics.[10] Among the parties of the debate, Liu Qingping represents a view that is critical of Mencius whereas Guo Qiyong a view more defensive of Mencius. In his article, "Confucianism and Corruption: An Analysis of Shun's Two Actions Described by *Mencius*," Liu argues that there is a distinct spirit of Confucianism, what he calls the "consanguineous affection" (*xueqin qingli* 血親情理) (2007, 3). He lists two essential elements in this spirit:

> First, . . . Confucianism always puts special emphasis on the primary importance of kinship bonds, such as filial piety and brotherly respect, as the ultimate foundation of human life. . . . Second, in order to stress the significance of consanguineous affection as the ultimate foundation, Confucius and Mencius further consider it to be the highest value of human life. They always place filial piety and brotherly duty above any other principles of human behavior, including such principal Confucian virtues as humaneness, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and truthfulness; they even demand that one should abandon anything else for the sake of consolidating kinship love in cases of conflict. (Liu 2007, 3)

Guo, in his article, "Is Confucian Ethics a 'Consanguinism'?" counters Liu's characterization of the Confucian-Mencian moral project as "consanguinism" by appealing to Mencius' theory of human nature that begins with four moral sprouts (2007, 21–22). Guo invokes Men-

[10] Many of the important articles in that debate are collected in a volume edited by Guo (2005). *Dao* runs several special issues covering the debate, using Liu and Guo as its key representatives with various Western scholars weighing in on that debate. My summary of the debate is based on the coverage in *Dao*.

cius' position against two-roots as a way to reject Liu's characterization of Mencius as embracing another source of morality, namely the familial source, as opposed to the widely-accepted Mencian position about the universal source of human nature and the single moral heartmind that starts with the four sprouts (23). In so doing, Guo discounts the supreme importance of familial virtues accorded in Liu's reading of Mencius (24) and instead considers "humanity, not 'blood affection,' as the fundamental basis for all moral behavior" (26).

My approach to Mencius in this article should make it clear that I am more sympathetic to Liu's interpretation of Mencius' thought, although he still underappreciates the tension between the political and the familial in Mencius' framework. Guo's defense of Mencius, on the other hand, significantly downplays the tension in the Mencian philosophy as he seems to dismiss the existence of such a tension. An interesting solution to the tension is offered by Stephen Angle. In his short essay commenting on the Liu-Guo debate, "No Supreme Principle: Confucianism's Harmonization of Multiple Values," which is based on a broader discussion in his book *Sagehood: The Contemporary Significance of Neo-Confucian Philosophy* (Oxford 2009), Angle appeals to the Confucian ideal of harmony, especially in the way Neo-Confucians like Zhu Xi formulate it, in order to reconcile the competing demands of moral ideals. However, as seductive as his solution might appear, Angle (and the Neo-Confucians) might be too optimistic about the possibility of a harmonious solution to all problematic situations.

Values do not harmonize themselves. The Confucian appeal to a sage-king's harmonization of different values in navigating a given situation is clearly indicative of potential tensions among core values such that the embracing of one might require the sacrifice of another. Indeed, such tensions will be the focus of the next section. In the following, we will examine what I call the sacrificialist strand of Mencian thought by exploring its more radical thread that foregrounds the incommensurability between the familial and the political in a way that does not fit neatly into the normative extensionist interpretations of Mencius.

3. Radical Mencius: The Sacrificialist

3.1. Incommensurability of Desirable Goods

Among classical thinkers, Mencius is probably the one with the keenest sense of tension among values and their incommensurability (不可得兼).[11] One of the most famous and celebrated passages in the Mencius clearly lays this out:

> Fish is something I desire; bear's paw is also something I desire. If I cannot have both, I will forsake fish and select bear's paw. Life is something I desire; righteousness is also something I desire. If I cannot have both, I will forsake life and select righteousness. Life is something I desire, but there is something I desire more than life. Hence, I will not do just anything to obtain it. Death is something I hate, but there is something I hate more than death. Hence, there are calamities I do not avoid. (*Mengzi* 6A10)

In traditional Chinese cuisine, bear's paw is a delicacy of greater value than fish. Hence faced with a choice, one would be expected to choose the more valuable one. However, for Mencius, righteousness is of a higher value than life. Therefore, when there is a conflict between life and righteousness, a cultivated moral agent would choose righteousness over life. Such a sentiment is grounded in Mencius' observation of an interesting phenomenon that some people are willing to give up their lives in order to defend their personal dignity, e.g., at a moment of outrage when humiliated (*Mengzi* 6A10). While some might see such a moment as a destructive outburst of anger, Mencius sees in it a nobler impulse of righteousness. It is rather significant that Mencius sets up a binary between righteousness and life in the above passage. This points to the particular way righteousness is used in the text.

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[11] As Ivanhoe points out to me in our private correspondence, "Only when it is a choice between moral and nonmoral values. There are no quandary cases or tragic choices." This article is trying to make the case that when there is a conflict between the political and the familial, one's choice is no longer between moral and nonmoral values, but between competing moral values. Those cases are the quandary ones and can indeed be understood as tragic choices.

Another important occurrence of righteousness appears at the very beginning of the *Mencius* (1A1). There we find Mencius forcefully arguing that a ruler should be concerned with righteousness, instead of benefits (*li* 利), in governing the state. In so doing, Mencius sets up righteousness as one of the cardinal principles in his political philosophy. He rebuts the Mohists who supposedly prioritize benefits over virtues in their moral-political thinking. For Mencius, a benefits-based governing philosophy would lead to people doing what benefits themselves and their own families the most over others, inadvertently compromising the interest of the ruler and threatening the ruler's survival.

Righteousness is actually a key moral principle in Mohist political thought as well. The Mohists do not see any problem in maintaining both righteousness and material benefits in politics whereas Mencius seems to regard the two as polar opposite here (even though Mencius is *not* against profit *per se* as we will see shortly). However, we should note a rather curious point that Mencius would consider material benefits so antithetical to righteousness (*yi*), especially considering the fact that he regards desires for sex, wealth, and music as commensurable with benevolent (*ren*) governance (*Mengzi* 1B1-5). I would make the case that the peculiar nature of righteousness in the *Mencius* reveals, in addition to being an ideological swipe at the Mohists, an important tension within the Mencian moral-political philosophy. This has to do with the relationship between benevolence (*ren*) and righteousness (*yi*).

The relationship between *ren* and *yi* in Mencius' thought is rather intriguing. Tellingly, in 1A1 Mencius is not invoking *ren* to repudiate the concern for benefits in politics. Rather it is *yi* that is invoked as the opposite of benefits. This is rather surprising, given the centrality of *ren* in his ideal of benevolent governance (*renzheng*). Since *Mencius* clearly does not reject benefits *per se*, as evidenced in his discussion of the politics of *ren*, he seems to be drawing a distinction between *ren* and *yi*.[12]

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[12] One anonymous reviewer helpfully points out, "*Yi* is much more self-regarding compared to other-regarding *ren*," echoing a similar observation made famous by Kwong-loi Shun (1997, 63). However, this characterization does not quite explain the way *yi* is used in 1A1 when *yi* is set up as the polar opposite of profit (*li*). This suggests that the prevailing approach to understanding the relationship between *ren* and *yi* in

Indeed, as I will argue here, this is the *yi*-based radical Mencius that is often in tension with the *ren*-based extensionist Mencius. This radical Mencius demands sacrifice in service to moral ideals, in contrast with the extensionist Mencius who maintains that all desirable goods and values can be accommodated through extension and sharing. Let us call this more radical strand of Mencius' thought the sacrificialist Mencius, in contrast with the extensionist Mencius.

3.2. Yi *and the Imperative of Sacrifice in Mencius' Thought*

The sacrificialist Mencius is captured in the following passage wherein he articulates the ideal of choosing moral commitments over one's life in 7A42: "孟子曰, '天下有道, 以道殉身; 天下無道, 以身殉道. 未聞以道殉乎人者也.'" Translations of this passage vary rather widely.[13] Such differences in the translations echo the divisions within the traditional commentaries. The key division is how to translate the word *xun* 殉. The origi-

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Mencius' thought is not necessarily the only way to interpret their relationship. My article offers an alternative framework.

[13] For example, Irene Bloom translates the passage as follows:

> Mencius said, "When the Way exists in the world, the Way must follow one's person. When the Way does not exist in the world, one's person must follow the Way. I have never heard of the Way following other people."

But it is unclear what it means by "the Way must follow one's person" when the Way exists in the world.

D.C. Lau translates *xun* in a familiar fashion:

> Mencius said, "When the Way prevails in the Empire, it goes where one's person goes; when the Way is eclipsed, one's person goes where the Way has gone. I have never heard of making the Way go where other people are going." In this translation, the locale of the Way is clearly in a cultivated moral agent. This echoes the sentiment expressed in the *Analects* 15.29 wherein Confucius famously says, "Human beings can broaden the Way—it is not the Way that broadens human beings."

Van Norden translates it in this way,

> Mengzi said, "When the world has the Way, the Way stays with you to the grave. When the world lacks the Way, you stay with the Way to the grave. But I have never heard of the Way staying with you while you follow others."

This translation brings out the element of being buried with the dead in the original meaning of *xun* by rendering it as "stay with something to the grave," but Van Norden does not provide the reason for rendering 以道殉乎人 as "the Way staying with you while you follow others."

nal meaning of *xun* is the practice of burying living humans to accompany the dead in the tomb.[14] It comes to mean sacrifice more broadly. However, many translators have followed Eastern Han commentator Zhao Qi's 赵岐 (which is the basis of Qing 清 commentator Jiao Xun's 焦循 *Mengzi Zhengyi* 孟子正義) glossing *xun* 殉 as "to follow" (*cong* 從).[15] *Mengzi Zhengyi* also cites an interpretation in the *Annotations of Chu Ci* (*Shi Wen* 釋文) that glosses *xun* as to sacrifice oneself in order to follow something (殺身從之曰殉) (Jiao 1987, 946). Zhu Xi (1983, 362) glosses *xun* as being buried with the dead, referring to objects that accompany the dead (殉, 如殉葬之殉, 以死隨物之名也). Zhu Xi extends such a gloss to mean that one should follow the Way unto death and not depart from it when the Way is corrupted in the world (道屈則身在必退, 以死相從而不離也). Part of the challenge here has to do with the three occurrences of *xun* in the passage with somewhat different semantic range such that if we are to insist on using the same word, either "to follow" or "to sacrifice," to translate the word, various parts of the sentence becomes incomprehensible. Therefore, I will translate *xun* as "to follow" or "to accompany" in the first instance and "to follow to the grave" or simply "to sacrifice" in the latter two cases:

> Mencius said, "When the Way prevails in the world, the Way accompanies the gentleman (in all of his conducts). When the Way does not prevail in the world, the gentleman follows the Way to the grave (or sacrifices himself for the Way). But I have never heard of the Way following other people to the grave (or sacrificing the Way for other people)." (*Mencius* 7A42, author's translation)

The ideal Mencian gentleman portrayed here is someone who is morally uncompromising and willing to sacrifice his life in order to follow the Way. This echoes a similar sentiment in the *Analects*:

> No scholar-officials with noble vocations or persons of *ren* would harm *ren* when trying to preserve their lives, but they could very

14 《康熙字典》: 《玉篇》用人送死也.

15 《康熙字典》: 又凡以身從物皆曰殉. 《莊子·駢拇篇》小人則以身殉利, 士則以身殉名, 天下盡殉也. 彼所殉仁義也, 則俗謂之君子. 所殉貨財也, 則俗謂之小人.

> well sacrifice themselves in accomplishing the ideal of *ren*. (*Analects* 15.9, author's translation)

This is the sacrificialist Mencius speaking. Whereas Confucius connects sacrifice with *ren* (humaneness), Mencius associates sacrifice with *yi* (righteousness), which points to the evolution of the meanings of *ren* and *yi* between Confucius and Mencius. Indeed, the distinction between the two can even be framed in terms of the tension between the two cardinal virtues of *ren* (benevolence) and *yi* (righteousness) in the Mencian moral universe. *Ren* emphasizes the continuity between various domains such that moral sentiments cultivated from one domain can be extended to another, from the close-by to the far-away, which is the basic premise of benevolent politics, whereas *yi* highlights discontinuity between domains which is clearly at play in Mencius' juxtaposition of righteousness against profit/benefit or even life.

So, what is *yi*? Van Norden cites *Zhong Yong*'s 中庸 parsing of *yi* 義 as appropriateness (*yi* 宜) (2002, 48) as its baseline meaning (or "thin definition" in Van Norden's words). Like *ren*, *yi*, commonly translated as righteousness, has two dimensions in the *Mencius*: familial and political. In the familial domain, it is considered the equivalent of *ti*, deference to elder brother (義之實, 從兄是也, 4A27) or one's elders (敬長, 義也, 7A15); in the political arena, it refers to the virtue of a minister to be fiercely loyal to his lord (未有義而後其君者也, 1A1).[16] A. C. Graham synthesizes these references of *yi* into a more general explanation when he defines the term as "the conduct fitting to one's role or status, for example as father or son, ruler or minister" (Graham 1989, 11).

In the famous four-sprouts passage (2A6), Mencius regards the heartmind of shame as the sprout of *yi* (羞惡之心, 義之端也). We can see an elaboration of the sprout of righteousness in the *Mencius* 6A10:

> A basket of food and a bowl of soup—if one gets them, then one will live; if one doesn't get them, then one will die. But if they're given with contempt, then even a homeless person will not accept

[16] In 4A4, *yi* is listed as the ethical norm that specifically governs the relationship between lord and his ministers: "between ruler and ministers there is righteousness" (君臣有義).

> them. If they're trampled upon, then even a beggar won't take them. However, when it comes to a salary of ten thousand bushels of grain, then one doesn't notice propriety and righteousness and accepts them. (*Mengzi* 6A10)

According to Van Norden,

> Mencius makes the psychological claim that no human would allow himself or herself to be disgraced, even if that were necessary for survival. If this is true, then it follows that all humans have the sprout of righteousness, since the disposition that drives us to avoid disgrace, even at the cost of our lives, is precisely this sprout. . . . For the purposes of demonstrating that there is a sprout of righteousness, Mencius only needs one claim to be true: for every human there are some things that he or she avoids doing because he or she believes they are shameful. (Van Norden 2002, 49)

Indeed, this is exactly what Mencius appears to be doing in 7B31 wherein *yi* is characterized as nontransgression, the violation of which brings about shame to oneself:

> People all have things that they will not do. To extend this reaction to that which they will do is righteousness (*yi*). . . . If people can fill out the heart that will not trespass, their righteousness (*yi*) will be inexhaustible." (*Mengzi* 7B31)

The relationship between *ren* and *yi* in the text is characterized as such that *ren* is a moral agent's abode whereas *yi* is the path toward such a state. For example, in 7A33, Mencius elaborates on the virtues of an ideal moral agent:

> Where does he dwell? Benevolence. Where is his path? Righteousness. If he dwells in benevolence and follows righteousness, the task of a great person is complete. (*Mengzi* 7A33)[17]

[17] In 4A10, the relationship between *ren* and *yi* is put simply as the following: "Benevolence is people's peaceful abode. Righteousness is people's proper path." (*Mengzi* 4A10)

In Kwong-loi Shun's interpretation, Mencius means that "while *ren* has to do with one's affective concern for others, *yi* has to do with the propriety of one's conduct" (Shun 2015, 185). Shun glosses *yi* as self-commitment:

> *yi* involves an element of reflectivity in that it presupposes one's having a conception of certain ethical standards to which one's way of life should conform. Furthermore, one is motivated by that conception, and is firmly committed not to allow oneself to fall below such standards. (Shun 2015, 185)

Shun's observation here echoes Peter Boodberg's comment about the virtue of *yi*, comparing it to the Latin *proprius*, "covering the connotations 'not common with others' (that is, *our* own), 'personal,' 'characteristic,' 'appropriate,' 'constant'" (Boodberg 1953, 331). Indeed, *yi* as a virtue with sacrificial import carries a strong sense of personal integrity and an uncompromisingly clear boundary about what is right that can come into conflict with other virtues.[18]

What is unique about the sacrificialist Mencius is that this Mencius is acutely aware of the incommensurability between different desirable goods, i.e., fish and bear paws, life and righteousness, and between different domains, i.e., the familial versus the political. In fact, a significant portion of Mencius' moral philosophy is built on such incommensurability. This Mencius highlights two kinds of conflicts: the conflict among desirable goods (e.g., life vs. righteousness) and that between the familial and the political (e.g., *xiao* vs. *ren*). When confronted with such a dilemma, this radical Mencius does *not* try to reconcile the intractable conflict between desirable goods and domains. Rather, he chooses righteousness over life, familial attachment over political obligation. In this connection, two kinds of sacrifices are highlighted in the text: one is to sacrifice one's life in order to uphold what is right (*shesheng quyi* 舍生取義 or *yishen xundao* 以身殉道) as we have discussed above, and the other is to give up one's

[18] Shun insightfully discerns a problematic redirection of one's attention toward oneself in an ethical context as "ethical self-indulgence." (2015, 191ff)

personal ambition ("to give up the world" *qitianxia* 棄天下) to save family, prominently featured in the hypothetical case of Shun, when there is a conflict between the familial and the political obligations.

4. Mencius: the Extensionist vs. the Sacrificialist

The extensionist and the sacrificialist strands of the Mencian thought are often at variance with each other. The extensionist focuses on the cultivation of one's moral inclinations and the extension of such moral sentiments to encompassing all in the world. It highlights a process and organic view of moral cultivation, with ubiquitous agricultural metaphors, and emphasizes the intrinsic connection between a moral agent and those around them. The extensionist Mencius promotes two methods of cultivation, namely extension and sharing: a person cultivates one's virtues by extending one's heartmind that cannot bear the suffering of others to the benevolent care of others and by sharing what one enjoys with others.

Importantly, the extensionist Mencius sees congruity between the familial and the political through the practices of extension and sharing, on the assumption of harmony among desirable goods. Indeed, this Mencius believes that all the desirable goods can be retained and shared without any loss. He maintains a compatibilist position when it comes to desirable goods, material as well as moral. The extensionist Mencius does not foreground conflicts among moral goods and seems to take those moral goods to be a harmonious and organic whole. The famous Mencian expression of oneness with the world (2A2)—an almost mystical experience of being carried over by the flood-like moral energy—and knowing Heaven through one's heartmind within that oneness (7A1) is the ultimate expression of the extensionist Mencius that is all-encompassing.

This extensionist Mencius is in line with the normative Confucian paradigm that sees a smooth transition from the personal, the familial, to the political famously laid out in the *Great Learning* as we have seen earlier. This paradigm assumes a seamless transition among these domains in that personal virtues can bring about a harmonious

family, which in turn can lead to a well-governed state, and eventually a peaceful and just world. Such a paradigm is operative in Mencius' message to various kings. That is, even though the rulers are not yet sage-kings their naturally-endowed moral sentiments can still allow them to govern benevolently.

However, the Shun narrative in the text challenges the assumption of contiguity and continuum among the personal, the familial, and the political domains. The tension between the two Mencius is most palpable in the hypothetical case of Shun's handling of his father's crime. This is where the tension between the familial virtue of filial piety and the political virtue of benevolence is on most dramatic display. The two kinds of virtues are clearly not aligned in such a way that both can be retained in an ideal course of action. In Mencius' mind, when faced with the scenario that his father commits a crime, Shun would not use his power as a ruler to obstruct the prosecution of his father. Nor would he simply surrender his father to the authority. Instead, Shun would choose to abdicate his throne and take his father to a faraway place in order to save the latter from being prosecuted. That is, the radical Mencius embraces the necessity for sacrifice rather than arguing for the retention of all the goods as his conversations with various rulers demonstrate.[19]

In so doing, Mencius seems to suggest that there is no automatic transferability of virtues between the personal, the familial, and the political in that one's personal virtue does not necessarily lead to a harmonious family relationship and that the familial disharmony of the ruler does not have to translate into political chaos. Rather, what is required when there is a rupture between those domains is sacrifice, personal and/or political. This is very much contrary to the *XQZP* paradigm which enshrines a compatibilist optimism among desirable goods and values.

In light of our discussion of the two Menciuses, we can see more clearly that the Mencian critique of the Mohist view is conducted

[19] As Ivanhoe and an anonymous reviewer point out to me, Shun's abdication in order to save his father is only a hypothetical case, not a real one. However, the role it plays in Mencius' thought is not much different from a "real" case.

from the perspective of the radical Mencius. From such a perspective, the familial virtue of filial piety and the political virtue of impartial care are ultimately incommensurable when there is a conflict of obligations to the family and to the state. It is from this perspective that Mencius criticizes the Mohists who do not adequately acknowledge the tension between the familial and the political. In fact, the Mohist might not even recognize the private-public distinction so cherished by Mencius in the latter's effort to shield the familial from the encroachment of the political.

The extensionist Mencius is primarily the one who carries out conversations with various rulers in order to convince them to adopt the ideal of benevolent governance.[20] The emphasis in those conversations is that the king already has what it takes to be a benevolent ruler *without having to make any sacrifice.* Given his audience, i.e., the king himself, the extensionist approach makes perfect sense. This has been treated as the normative Mencius. By contrast, the sacrificialist Mencius is aiming at the ideal of moral perfection when conflicts arise between moral goods. His audience in the second case is committed Confucian followers who devote their lives to the cause of righteousness through self-sacrifice if necessary.

5. The Ambivalence of the Familial in the Mencian Political Thought

One way to look at Mencius' struggle is to point out that he is never really able to reconcile the conflict between the familial and the political when push comes to shove and that this renders his project hopelessly incoherent due to the apparent tension involved.[21] However, I would like present what I consider a more charitable and accommodating interpretation Mencius' moral-political philosophy concerning

[20] The notable exception is *Mencius* 1A1 wherein Mencius warns the king of the dire consequences of obsessing over benefit or profit in governing a state and argues that the king should reorient himself to the perspective of what is right.

[21] Hansen is a famous representative of such a stance.

the tension between the familial and the political. My argument is this: first, the familial virtues should not be regarded only as the means to the cultivation of political virtues, and as such, the familial domain is not just the link between the personal and the political in Mencius' thought. Rather, the familial domain is an end in itself that parallels, or can even eclipse, the political. Second, in order to deal with the often irreconcilable tension between the two, Mencius, in significant parts–but not all–of his thought, decides to insulate the familial domain from the *political* discourse while trying to preserve a special space for the familial in his moral discourse. This means that Mencius has a rather clear-eyed view of the complicated role family plays in our moral and political lives. Unlike Confucius who thinks that the familial is itself political when he famously claims that "in being a filial son and good brother one is already participating in government" (*Analects* 2.21), Mencius sees a profound dis-analogy, or even incommensurability, between the two domains.

5.1. Dis-analogy between the Familial and the Political

If the Mencian project is indeed grounded in his articulation of human nature, as has been the scholarly consensus, it is worth pointing out that human nature encompasses the familial and the political dimensions but that the relationship between the two aspects are rather complicated in Mencius' thought. Mencius is not willing to give up either dimension, which would be tantamount to losing our humanity, conflicted as it is. This means that Mencius regards both the familial and the political as ends in themselves, following their own norms and dynamics, instead of treating the former only as a training ground for the latter. For Mencius, the relationship between the familial virtues and the political virtues is not a matter of simply extending the former to accomplish the latter. That is, in Mencius' mind, the familial is at least as much, quite often more, of an end in one's moral cultivation than the political. Consequently, one's filial sentiment can never be fully extended to other people's kin and we would, and should, never treat other people's children the same way we treat our own.

The special status of the father, distinct from the monarch, is clearly demonstrated in the different ways Mencius addresses the abuse by the father versus that by the ruler. Mencius would never tolerate the killing of one's father, however abusive the father might be toward his own children, evident in the narrative about Shun. This is in sharp contrast with his discussion about the killing of a tyrannical ruler (1B8). That is, Mencius allows the killing of a tyrannical king by dismissing the king as unworthy of the title king, but he would never entertain a similar justification in the killing of one's father. This means that there is fundamental dis-analogy between the familial and the political domains, unlike Confucius for whom a father is not a father if he does not provide for his children and educate them. Shun's story demonstrates that for Mencius a father is always a father no matter how abusive he is. Apparently, rectification of names only applies to the political domain, not to the familial domain, in Mencian thought, unlike in the *Analects*. For Mencius, filial piety is absolute whereas the political obligation to one's ruler is conditional such that the killing of a tyrant can be justified in a way the killing of a father can never be. The Shun narrative is key to the Mencian absolutist position on filial piety.

Significantly, Mencius elevates familial virtues as the potential rival of political virtues with the former playing a potentially disruptive role in the demonstration of the latter within the Mencian project. For Mencius, the familial domain is where the seed of humanity is nurtured and expressed, but its political relevance and impact are rather ambivalent and should be carefully managed. Therefore, Mencius insists that one's familial attachment is never and should never be outgrown as it defines us as humans and preserves our very humanity while, on the other hand, one's familial relationship is not necessarily indicative of the state of affairs of a polity under one's rule. Both aspects are clearly demonstrated in the case of Shun. That is, according to Mencius, familial attachment is one of the core expressions that define us as humans; on the other hand, the universalist sentiments that transcend familial boundary, like the heartmind that cannot bear the suffering of others, etc., also define us as humans. Although these two kinds of sentiment often align with each

other, they can also come into conflict as the Shun narrative powerfully demonstrates.

5.2. Conflict among Virtues

Therefore, contrary to our established understanding of Mencius, the picture of what is a virtuous human being portrayed by Mencius is actually a conflicted one. In his attempt to solve, or at least alleviate, the tension involved, Mencius seeks to reserve a space for the familial realm in the political discourse, sometimes at the expense of the political. This is the price Mencius is willing to pay for maintaining our humanity, conflicted as it is. This means that, for Mencius, at the core of our humanity there is an irreconcilable conflict between familial attachments and universal justice. Familial attachment, however problematic under certain circumstances, should never been abandoned or transcended, or we would lose an essential part of being human.

Being human for Mencius is irreducibly familial *and* political at the same time. Familial sentiments can never be explained away or substituted in understanding what constitutes the human. The virtue that is required when the political and the familial virtues are in conflict is personal sacrifice. The imperative of personal sacrifice points to the fissure between the familial and the political domains, in sharp contrast with the smooth transition between them painted in the *XQZP* ideal.

Mencius reserves a special place for the familial domain in his political project by making familial sentiments categorically different from political virtues. That is, family is not just the medium between the personal and the political in Mencius' thought, but rather an end in itself. This means that for Mencius the familial is self-justifying and self-justified, and that its value in defining us as humans does not lie in its relevance to the political. This also suggests that if we allow the political to overwhelm the familial, we run the risk of losing our humanity, as Mencius' accusation of the Mohist ideal of impartial care as unfilial points to. Indeed, Mencius' criticism of Mohists being unfilial can be more fruitfully interpreted as Mencius' rejection of the

latter's *judgement call*, not their arguments with which Mencius actually agrees. What lies at the heart of the Mencian judgement, distinct from the Mohist and Yangist ones, is that Mencius has a keen sense of the *limit* of *universalist* arguments, a conflict he is not keen to resolve.

In *this* respect, Mencius might even be understood as joining the Mohists and the Yangists in questioning the relevance of the familial, to the political discourse, even though the familial is featured much more prominently in Mencius' thought than in the other two. The Mohist, Yangist, and Mencian debate can be summarized in terms of their respective defenses of the realms of the personal, the familial, and the political, with the Mohists exclusively for the political, the Yangists exclusively for the personal, and the Mencians trying to accommodate all three. However, for Mencius the familial and the political are categorically different and neither can subsume the other under it. The insight of Mencian thought is precisely his willingness to dwell in that ambiguity of universalism and partiality, neither of which he is willing to give up in his moral deliberations on what is human. In his political project, Mencius is determined to accommodate both sets of sentiments, regarding them as equally valuable if ultimately incommensurable.

This keen sense of a deep conflict at the root of what it means to be human is in sharp contrast with the Mohists and the Yangists whose positions might be more conceptually coherent but both fail to accommodate the complexity of the human condition, at least from a Mencian perspective. Seen this way, the tension in Mencius' thought in this particular aspect is actually a feature, rather than a flaw, in the Mencian moral-political project.

6. Conclusion: a Mencian Question

In this article, I provide an alternative framework to make better sense of conflicting elements in Mencius' philosophy, especially the tension between the familial and the political virtues. I argue that there are two strands operative in Mencius' philosophy, the extensionist and the sacrificalist. The extensionist Mencius operates on the assumption of congruity among desirable goods, whether mate-

rial or moral, whereas the sacrificalist Mencius is much more clear-eyed about the tension involved among desirable goods as well as that between the familial and the political domains. The article is an attempt to draw our attention to the more radical strand of the Mencian thought that is premised upon sacrificialist virtue of *yi*, as opposed to the extensionist virtue of *ren*. My conclusion is that Mencius considers the familial and the political as connected but ultimately separate and at times incommensurable ends in themselves, revealing a deep-rooted conflict at the seat of humanity Mencius is not willing to explain away. In so doing, Mencius, the sacrificialist, subtly diverges from the Confucian orthodoxy that takes for granted a congruent relationship between familial and political virtues, implying that extending kinship-based sentiments to the political realm can be much more challenging, and often impossible, than normally assumed within the Confucian tradition.

We can now see that at the core of Mencius' project is the following implicit question: if we can abandon even the most sacred and intimate relationship in our lives, i.e., the relationship with our parents, what can possibly constrain us from becoming monsters? This is a Mencian question that defies an easy answer. Mencius's answer is clearly no. If we find it unsatisfying, we need to find other sources within an essentially sentimentalist framework such that it allows for the care of particular humans (or sentient beings more broadly) without falling into the trap of banal universality.

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Shared Ends: *Kant and Dai Zhen on the Ethical Value of Mutually Fulfilling Relationships*

Justin Tiwald*

Abstract

This paper offers an account of an important type of human relationship: relationships based on shared ends. These are an indispensable part of most ethically worthy or valuable lives, and our successes or failures at participating in these relationships constitute a great number of our moral successes or failures overall. While many philosophers agree about their importance, few provide us with well-developed accounts of the nature and value of good shared-end relationships. This paper begins to develop a positive account of such relationships. In the interest of highlighting some strengths and weaknesses of competing approaches, it contrasts the theories that are proposed by the Confucian philosopher Dai Zhen 戴震 (1724–1777) and the influential moral philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724–1804). Both philosophers share many of the same core ethical commitments, but as the author shows, Dai Zhen's approach to thinking about the nature and value of good shared-end relationships is superior to Kant's because it highlights the fact that such relationships must be motivated by ethically-shaped forms of other-concern and self-interest, whereas Kant does not picture self-interest as an important source of morality or ethically valuable relationships. The author considers clarifications and revisions to Kant's theory that seem to make more room for the mixture of motives required for good shared-end relationships, but concludes that these ad hoc modifications do not succeed at providing a recognizably Kantian theory that can account for them as well as Dai Zhen's.

Keywords: Dai Zhen, Kant, relationships, ethics, motives

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1. Introduction

I start from an assumption that most people (in most times and places) will share, which is that ethics is substantially concerned with relationships between particular individuals. To give a full accounting of our day-to-day successes and failures as ethical agents, we would need to talk about how and in what respects we meet and fall short of ethical norms that arise in part because of our obligations to be good parents, children, siblings, friends, neighbors, supervisors, or colleagues. Furthermore, I assume that some of the distinctive goods that we realize through these relationships require what I will call shared ends. Roughly, these are outcomes or states of affairs that two or more ethical agents value noninstrumentally, goals that they both (or all) regard as valuable independently of whether or not they promote some further good or valuable state. Moreover, sharing ends with people is part of what it means to be in certain kinds of relationship with them. If I do not have some common interests with my would-be close friends, if their welfare and important projects did not have some final value for me, then there is a sense in which they're not really my close friends. Something similar is true for relationships between family members, and perhaps even work colleagues and neighbors or members of the same club or community.

Many moral philosophers would agree that it is good for us to develop and enjoy shared-end relationships and that doing so may be ethically valuable, insofar as we must develop good shared-end relationships in order to be good parents, friends, colleagues, and so forth. However, few Western moral philosophers provide us with well-developed accounts of the nature and value of good shared-end relationships, and it is unclear whether they have the right conceptual apparatus to do so. With those issues in mind, this paper begins to develop a positive account of good shared-end relationships and their value. In the interest of highlighting some strengths and weaknesses of competing approaches, I contrast the accounts that are suggested by the Confucian philosopher Dai Zhen 戴震 (1724–1777) and the influential moral philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724–1804).

My basic thesis is that Dai Zhen's approach to thinking about the nature and value of good shared-end relationships is superior to Kant's because it highlights the fact that good shared-end relationships must be motivated by ethically-shaped forms of other-concern and self-interest. As we will see, this view contrasts with Kant's approach in part because Kant does not picture self-interest as an important source of morality or ethically valuable relationships. Of course, it is possible to revise Kant's theory so as to better accommodate such motives. Nonetheless, Kant's writings are so systematically devoted to clearly distinguishing natural inclination and self-love from what he regards as the proper source of moral motivation that such changes come at considerable cost to the integrity and core commitments of his moral philosophy. By contrast, Dai quite arguably built his entire ethical theory around what I will call good relationships of mutual fulfillment. At the same time, Dai was in certain respects a kindred spirit to Kant: he sought to articulate a system of thought based on the assumption that we should value others as we value ourselves, that treat the interests of others as mattering for their sake (rather than instrumentalizing or subordinating their interests to one's own good or a greater good), and that conceives of moral norms as those which all parties can in principle affirm. Dai thus offers a way to account for good shared-end relationships that many Kantians would be inclined to endorse, or at least more inclined to endorse than, say, straightforward utilitarian or other consequentialist justifications.

This article is organized as follows. Section 2 explains how self-interest factors in among the rich mixture of motives necessary for such relationships. Section 3 describes relationships based on shared ends, called "relationships of mutual fullilllment," and notes some conditions that make some of them (a subset) good ones. Section 4 gives a brief overview of Dai Zhen's ethics, one that aims both to highlight some of the more Kantian features of his framework and to show how it serves to justify the rich mixture of motives necessary for relationships that are mutually fulfilling and good. Section 5 explains why both Kant himself and a promising revision of Kant's ethics cannot account for the comparative ethical value of these relationships.

2. Mutual Fulfillment and Self-Interest

In order to have meaningful relationships in the relevant sense, most of us will need a rich mixture of motives that include some self-interested ones. Consider close friendship again. To be a close friend with Jiaying, I should have some common interests with her. These might be a shared hobby or social cause or intellectual pursuit, but our common interests should also include (1) maintaining our friendship, and (2) one another's well-being and success. Part of what makes me a close friend to Jiaying is that I take her happiness, contentment, and flourishing to have some final value for me, so that I derive gratification, from them. But if pressed to explain what motivates me to support Jiaying and cultivate our friendship, I would answer that it is a complex array of care for Jiaying, shared interests, and self-concern. I am partly motivated by my care for Jiaying for her sake, my love of the friendship as such, and the benefits that friendship has for me. If I am helping her in some ambitious project of hers, I reflect on how her success will strengthen our friendship, how we will someday reminisce about the time that she undertook the project and prevailed with support from friends like me, and this strengthens my resolve and commitment to helping her and enhances the joy that I derive from doing so. If Jiaying is in peril and needs my help to avoid catastrophe, I help her because I cannot bear to see her life fall apart, but it also helps to think (and seems constitutive of a good friendship to think) that she would do the same for me if I were in peril, and that gives me some satisfaction and contentment which figure prominently in the motivational set that helps to sustain our friendship.

Perhaps a saintly person would feel differently—she might care about her friend's success and welfare entirely for the friend's sake, with no thought of its benefits for herself, and care with as much passion and commitment to the friend's success as I have for Jiaying's success. Quite often, in moral philosophy and in public discourse about ethics, we see people praise and prioritize this sort of self-lessness or purity of motive. Whether they are right to prioritize it depends on its exact implications for the sorts of ethical character and behavior we should value and strive to emulate, but in most cases and

for most purposes, it is a mistake to do so. First, vanishingly few of us are saints or potential saints. In almost all cases, we need a rich array of mixed motives in order to have the right sort of commitments to friends and derive the right sort of satisfactions from friendship.[1] And in those overwhelming number of cases, it is better to be a close and deeply invested friend than a distant but altruistic one.

Second, even if sainthood were a live option for us, I doubt that saintly friendships actually qualify as good relationships in the relevant sense. One characteristic of good relationships of many kinds is that they are characteristically and deliberately reciprocal and fair. Perhaps in some special cases the sacrifices can be asymmetrical or one-sided, as when one friend is in an ongoing crisis and in no position to help. But, characteristically, the sacrifices and willingness to sacrifice should be more symmetrical. If my friendship with Jiaying were largely organized around my own success and happiness and only incidentally or occasionally served Jiaying's interests, there is a sense in which we are not really friends at all. Furthermore, imagine that Jiaying did not see the friendship as being good for her, and yet she continued to spend a good deal of her time and energy on maintaining it. If the friendship were to end, she would be sad and see it as a loss for my sake but not for hers. In short, she would not value the friendship for her own sake at all. That indifference to the relationship's contribution to her own welfare is incompatible with good friendship. Even if I were similarly indifferent about my own welfare relative to Jiaying's (so that our willingness to self-sacrifice were symmetrical), that's still a problematic friendship. We would both effectively be regarding

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[1] The psychological investments that most of us have in our relationships with intimates are tremendously strong, deep, and rewarding. Quite likely, most of us rely on a combination of self- and other-directed concern to take advantage of recursive cumulative effects. Because I care about Jiaying (altruistically), advancing her interests is important to me, and so I see her welfare as contributing to my own (self-interestedly), and so it becomes easy to care about her interests even more (altruistically), which become an even more important good for me (self-interestedly), and so on. It is hard to imagine a person who can care as much and as deeply about someone without taking advantage of these effects.

ourselves as instruments, as means to the other's ends, and not as friends. Self-interest helps us guard ourselves from exploitation, and it also positions us as reciprocal partners in a friendship, a friendship that we care about for both of our sakes. In numerous ways, self-interest makes relationships better—closer, more invested in their shared ends, and both fairer to and more inclusive of all parties.

As described above, the rich mixture of motives necessary to sustain mutually fulfilling relationships has at least two places for self-interest. First, there are what we might call relationship-conducive self-interested desires, such as the desire to maintain a friendship because one sees it as having final value for oneself. Second, there are self-interested desires that help ensure fairness and reciprocity in relationships, so that both sides benefit from the relationship in ways that deepen and further cement bonds between them.

For purposes of this paper, I take it as a necessary condition for an ethical theory that it be able to justify a certain sort of moral claim —a claim about what I will call *the comparative ethical value of good shared-end relationships.* Here is a rough version of the claim: in many circumstances and for most people, it is ethically better that people be deeply and mutually invested in shared ends than not, and that type of deep and mutual investment requires self-interested motives. Purely altruistic motives have a certain sort of positive ethical value, and they are often admirable, but having good, mutually fulfilling relationships based on shared ends is a higher ethical priority. An adequate ethical theory should be able to make room for this claim, such that it determines that self-interested desires or inclinations can be ethically good if they play the right role in maintaining mutually fulfilling relationships.

3. Mutual Fulfillment and Shared Ends

Mutually fulfilling relationships come in different kinds, presupposing different sorts of motivation and ways of setting the goals to which they are committed. For purposes of my argument, I am most interested in a subset of these relationships that I characterize as ethically

good ones. Let me say a little bit more about the broader range of possible relationships so as to highlight what is distinctive about the (ethically) good and mutually fulfilling ones in particular. We can think of mutually fulfilling relationships in terms of two different spectra or dimensions. One dimension concerns how much the parties to the relationship share the same ends and are motivated by those shared ends. At one extreme are relationships where the benefits that motivate each party are exclusively instrumental, and none are motivated by any shared ends (call these "transactional" relationships). Market exchanges often exemplify this sort of mutual fulfillment: one person gives up a product that she does not particularly need or want for a product that she does want, and vice versa. Each side gets some benefit, but for both, the other's good is at best a means to her own. Neither derives any final value from realizing the ends valued by the other.[2]

At the other extreme are relationships where one person's motivating end *just is* another person's motivating end, where one-and-the-same outcome has final value for all parties (call these "common causes"). Examples are shared social causes (a group of people in a political club or advocacy group, for example), or the interests of one or more parties in intimate relationships like those between family members or close friends. Family relationships are the most notable sort of example for Confucians like Dai Zhen. For Dai, there's a sense in which a child's survival and development *just is* a good for the parents, insofar as their survival and development is itself the realization of the parents' own interest in procreation, continuing the family line, and reshaping the world and continuing their legacies through their offspring.

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2 In this paper, I will assume that if a particular end has final value for someone then meeting or realizing the end is of some benefit to that person. How accurate this is depending on one's particular conception of well-being, but it is true most of the time on most plausible conceptions. Realizing one's final values is usually satisfying, gratifying, or a relief, and good for oneself for those reasons. On some conceptions of welfare, a person's good just is the realization of states of affairs that they desire or value in a certain way.

I would like to mention a certain in-between state or middle degree of relationship on this first dimension, because this type of relationship is important too. There are some arrangements in which the goods that motivate each party are a mix of instrumental and final ones. An example of this might be relationships between members of the same professional sports team—if the players on the team are at all emotionally invested in the team's success, they will derive some final benefit when the team wins a championship or major tournament. Of course, the team's success will have implications for their careers and salaries, and they care about that too. I find that many of the committees and short-term administrative projects that I do at my university put me in similar relationships with other faculty and staff: we care enough about our university (or college, or department) that our objectives have some final value for us, but we derive some instrumental benefits from setting up new academic programs or finding ways to recruit more students. For lack of a better term, let us call these "collegial relationships."

Instrumental vs. Final Value

1. Transactional relationships (purely instrumental for each party)
2. Collegial projects (some instrumental and some final value for each party)
3. Common causes (final value for each party)

I am most interested in relationships based on shared ends (types 2 and 3), not transactional ones (type 1). Transactional relationships are fine and unavoidable, while the basic orbit of our ethical lives is set by a wide range of relationships which, given our history and circumstances, require that we develop shared commitments to the same ends. These are the deep relationships that provide most of us with indispensable sources of meaning and purpose. They also ask more of us, require that we meet more ethically demanding goals and instantiate virtues worthy of the name.

The second dimension by which to measure relationships of mutual fulfillment is subtler. It has to do with how much one's shared

end is mediated by concern for the other people in the relationship. This concerns not what motivates us to pursue the end, but what motivates us to set the end in the first place. Compare the sense in which two fans of the same sports team (fans who are total strangers to one another) have shared ends, and compare that with how close friends and family members have shared ends. For the two fans—call them Mary and Meihua—their ends just so happen to overlap. Mary does not want the Sharks to win because of any concern for Meihua, nor does Meihua care about the Sharks' success because of any concern for Mary. And yet there is a sense in which they are in a kind of relationship of mutual fulfillment, as they would embrace the spontaneous camaraderie and sense of kinship that they feel if they showed up at the same parade to celebrate a victory. In this case, Mary and Meihua have overlapping ends, but there is no *other-mediation* of those ends. They just happen to overlap.

In contrast, consider how parents and children, spouses, and good friends adopt one another's ends. Sometimes I adopt an end of my parents' or my friends' solely for their sake. They care about a project deeply, so I do too, so that their end comes to have final value for me too. In these cases, for one or more parties, the ends are *purely other-mediated*. Aristotle sometimes speaks of virtue friendships in this way: ". . . in loving their friend they love what is good for themselves; "for when a good person becomes a friend he becomes a good for his friend."[3] Perhaps it also helps to think of a loving parent or spouse who says she just wants her beloved to be happy, to live the life that they find most fulfilling, and nothing more. Often this is meant to indicate a purely other-mediated setting of ends.

As for the first dimension, for this second dimension there is also a middle degree. In what I will call "intertwined relationships," multiple parties share the same end, which are goods that have final value for them all, but the ends are neither entirely other-mediated nor just incidentally overlapping. The setting of the ends is motivated in part by concern for both parties, or by concern for the relationship or the unit to which they belong. Often family interests mark out relationships

[3] Aristotle 2000 (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1157b30).

of this sort: if moving a family to a new and better location with more opportunities is good for the family, each member of the family will probably be motivated by ends that are partially for the sake of the other family members and partially for their own sake. Most of my close friendships are instances of intertwining rather than purely other-mediated adoption of shared ends. I like it when my friends do well and are happy, though that's not purely for their sake. It often seems good for our friendship too, and thus for me, insofar as a good friendship is a final good for me (and it is). Perhaps my emotional investment in my students' success also suggests intertwining ends—it's partially for their sake and partially for my own then I want them to learn and improve themselves.

Self-Mediated vs. Other-Mediated End-Setting

1. Overlapping ends (purely self-mediated)
2. Intertwined ends (both self-mediated and other-mediated)
3. Purely other-mediated ends

There is a tendency to admire and lionize the sorts of relationships that are most extreme in both of the respects I've outlined here—that is, relationships where the setting of an end is entirely other-mediated (adopting them purely for someone else's sake) and one regards those ends as noninstrumentally valuable. Aristotelian virtue friendships are an object of fascination for this reason, both in scholarship and in the classroom. In some ethical scenarios that attract the most public attention in the English-speaking world (in Anglophone news media, films, and stories that capture the imagination and move us to tears) we often find paeans to selfless parenthood. However, it is clear that I am not primarily concerned with the most other-mediated sorts of relationships—with relationships at the selfless extreme. Many people tend to find purely other-mediated end-setting to be quite admirable, and I agree. However, with Dai Zhen, I worry that such relationships also tend to be ethically inadequate, that they lack a certain quality of reciprocity and equality or evenness (*ping* 平) that takes account of all parties in the relationship. Ends should be set in such a way

that each party is empathically or sympathetically taking the other's point of view into account as an equal starting point, or so we believe. To be ethically good relationships of mutual fulfillment, parties to a relationship must at least share some meaningful ends (so they must be relationships of the second or third type in the first dimension), and those ends must be set by some concern for all parties (so they must be of the second, "intertwined" type in the second dimension). This is one way to spell out the difference between relationships based on shared ends in general and the ethically good shared-end relationships that matter most.

Ethically Good Relationships of Mutual Fulfillment

1. Transactional relationships (purely instrumental for each party)

2. Collegial projects (some instrumental and some final value each party)
3. Common causes (final value for each party)

1. Overlapping ends (purely self-mediated)

2. Intertwined ends (partially self-mediated, partially other-mediated)

3. Purely other-mediated ends

As explained in the previous section, the relationships of the relevant sort require a rich mixture of motives, some of which are self-interested and some of which are more altruistic. This typology helps to say with more specificity why we need that rich mixture. One relatively obvious way that self-interest can help deepen a relationship is by giving us stronger attachments to others and more sources of satisfaction in helping them (as when I value a friend's success and my friendship with her because of their contributions to my own interests and well-being). Nonetheless, there are less obvious ways in which self-interest can serve a person. Most notably, it can help us to advocate for a fairer or more reciprocal setting of ends. Motives matter not just because they get us to pursue and derive satisfaction from shared ends. They also matter because they help us to set the shared ends fairly and reciprocally. This also gives us a glimpse of the sophisticated ways in which self-interest might

factor in. It might serve as a higher-order motive that regulates first-order ones: if I perceive that a friendship with someone is becoming too exploitative, too much about the friend and not me, I will become less inclined to do the things that maintain the friendship. It might also determine the character or valence of other motives: if an end that I share with a friend is purely mediated by her and does not take me into account, then any desire I have to pursue it becomes an altruistic one rather than a self-interested or mixed motive. Often, the self-interested motives will be quiet and nonconscious but "standing guard," as it were, to make sure that our sacrifices do not become too onerous or asymmetrical.[4]

I assume that in most ethically good and mutually fulfilling relationships, shared ends are constantly being revised and reconsidered (and sometimes renegotiated). This implies that we would do well to maintain self-interested motives on an ongoing basis. In one of Seneca's more memorable letters on friendship, he seems to suggest that we should select our friends based on their potential to contribute to our own virtue and flourishing. Once we have committed to the friend, however, we should commit completely. That, he seems to suggest, is how we realize that Aristotelian ideal of a purely altruistic friendship based on unconditional trust (Seneca 1969, 35–36).[5] I disagree. For most shared ends, life is too unpredictable to commit once and for all. Our commitments to friendships should be resilient, they should last even through periods where they harm us more than they benefit us, so long as they are organized in such a way that they would characteristically or normally be more reciprocal. However, there are circumstances in which we can and should reevaluate them, and it is better, ethically speaking, that we take some account of our own interests in doing so, rather than permit ourselves to become

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4 Think of buying gifts for a loved one. I can spend an afternoon looking for gifts with nary a thought about what it might cost me, but if I look at the price tag and find that it costs thousands of dollars, I will rediscover my limits and, with them, my self-interested motives.

5 Note that Seneca's proposal for instantiating lifelong unconditional love and trust between friends requires that friends assess and commit to one another in roughly the same ways as potential marriage partners.

exploited or more distant and unfulfilled friends.

Finally, it is worth noting that this analysis suggests at least two ways in which a relationship can become bad in the sense of being exploitative or asymmetrical. First, it might be that relationships are really designed to serve one or more party's interests far more than another's, so that even under normal circumstances, one party is being used or treated as a mere means to the interests of others. This worry is familiar enough as it looms in the background of many of our relationships. Nevertheless, there is a second and subtler sort of exploitation to guard against, and it has to do with fairness in how the shared ends and thus shared interests are set in the first place. I assume that there is a very real sense in which a child's growth or happiness could be a shared end for both the child and her parent, and narrower goals (such as getting a college education or finding a lifelong romantic partner) can come to have some final value for both. Despite this, if the specification of those goals is not "fair"—if it does not give roughly equal weight to both party's points of view, for example—then the end can be exploitative even if it is shared. I would add (looking forward to the discussion of Kant) that it can be exploitative even if both parties consent or agree to the shared end. To assess a relationship for fairness in this sense we need to know not just whose individual interests are served but also how their shared interests are determined.

4. Dai Zhen on Mutually Fulfilling Relationships

Dai Zhen is a Confucian philosopher who has long been the object of a great deal of scholarly fascination. Intellectual historians are interested in him because he was, by most accounts, the most innovative and influential scholar of the Qing dynasty (1644–1912, China's last imperial dynasty), a true polymath who made tremendous contributions to philology, mathematics, geography, and astronomy (Elman 2001; Hu 2015; Wu and Sun 2015). The pivotal intellectuals of China's New Culture Movement in the early twentieth century were

interested in him because he seemed to be the one major philosopher of the indigenous Confucian tradition whose thought was most compatible with the more modern, naturalistic, and egalitarian ideas they sought to embrace (Hu 1996).[6] Those who study the history of Chinese philosophy are interested in him because of his tremendous sophistication as a philosopher, which of all of Dai's intellectual pursuits he regarded as his greatest calling.[7]

If you were to ask a Confucian scholar of Dai's era what was most important and distinctive about his ethical thought, he or she would likely say that it was his robust defense of human desire as a constituent of virtue. By Dai's time, Confucian orthodoxy and even popular morality had been under the spell of a kind of asceticism and self-abnegationism for so long that most moral ideals made little room for many seemingly basic and legitimate desires. As I have tried to show in some of my previous work on Dai, what appears to be a dispute about desires in general turns out to be a dispute about self-interested desires in particular, understood as desires for one's own life-fulfillment or well-being for one's own sake. Confucian orthodoxy and popular morality were perfectly fine with desires so long as they were virtuous ones. The problem that troubled Dai most was that they understood virtuous desires too narrowly as largely selfless ones, such that many desires for one's own life-fulfillment as such (and for one's own sake) would count as vicious. In direct opposition to this, Dai thought that we could not have the right sort of attitude toward others (caring about other people's life-fulfillment for their sake) unless we have well-developed, self-interested desires (caring about our own life-fulfillment for our own sake) (Tiwald 2010a, 2012). We care about others in the right way by replicating and emulating proper self-concern. In Dai's terminology, proper self-concern is "humane love of self" (*renqishen* 仁其身).[8]

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6 Dai was part of the "indigenous" Confucian tradition insofar as he lived and wrote before Confucians started to access and take an interest in non-Chinese and especially Western philosophy.

7 See Ivanhoe (2000, chap. 7; 2016, chap. 3) and Angle and Tiwald (2017, chaps. 3, 5, and 8).

8 See Dai (2009, sec. 21).

A Confucian scholar of Dai's era would also have talked about Dai's aversion to the metaphysical and metaethical views that had been popular in China for at least seven centuries, views that attributed to all people a well-formed moral nature that they sometimes called our "original nature" or "inherent nature" (*benxing* 本性).[9] Dai thought that this view was implausible, that it was an appropriation of the worst parts of Buddhism and Daoism, and that it lent itself to fundamental mistakes about how we justify ethical norms. Dai thought that our nature is good, but not fully developed or well-formed. It has a natural propensity to become good, provided the right nurturance and education.

Other features of Dai's thought stand out more in retrospect than they did in his day. First, as I noted Dai was very concerned with how ethical norms are justified. He ultimately arrived at the following position: for any occasion in which you do something to others or expect something of them, your action or expectation must be one that could win universal approval under certain idealized circumstances. They must appeal to "invariant norms" (*buyizhize* 不易之則) that all "hearts-and-minds would affirm in common" (*xinzhi suotongran* 心之所同然) (Dai 2009, secs. 4–6, 8). He did not provide a lot of examples as to how this process would work in practice, but he seems to have understood it primarily as an exercise in empathetic perspective-taking (imagining how you would think and feel if someone were treating you in some way) with reference to acceptable and unacceptable desires (so as to determine whether the desire that motivates the action or expectation would be universally approved).[10] On my reading, Dai comes to this universalizability criterion for a couple of reasons. First, he wants an ethical foundation that gives due consideration to everyone's interests, meeting a standard of "fairness" or "evenness" (*ping*) that he takes to be fundamental (Dai 2009, secs.

9 See Ivanhoe (2000, chap. 4) and Zhu (2019, 16–24).

10 Dai (2009, sec. 2) and Ivanhoe (2000, chap. 7). Although Dai does not make it entirely explicit, he seems to understand the point of view from which we would affirm the invariant norms to be a common point of view, tracking not just how particular people think and feel but how anyone would think and feel if similarly placed and focusing on certain high-priority ethical feelings and desires.

2, 30). Second, he wants a moral epistemology that allows for people to check or second-guess one another's judgments. As historians have often noted, Dai himself was born to a poor family, one that was bullied by more powerful people who dressed their bullying in ethical language and may even have believed that their bullying was right. Dai thought the source of so much moral mischief in his time was an intransigent form of higher-order moral ignorance: not knowing what is right or good, not knowing that one does not know it, and having no reason in principle to take the criticisms of others into account. By insisting that a powerful person's ethical judgments can in principle be assessed by many others, he puts a check on high-order ethical ignorance that he thought unavailable to others in his time, given their presuppositions (Dai 2009, secs. 4–5).

Dai also had a great deal of interest in the relation between ethical imperatives, or what he called "what's necessarily so" (*biran* 必然) with natural dispositions and inclinations, or what he called "what's naturally so" (*ziran* 自然). Roughly, he thought that we should see ethical imperatives as an improvement upon or perfection of our natural inclinations, not as fundamentally discontinuous with them. When we embody and express the virtues, we are more perfect versions of our natural selves, not some new thing that has jettisoned its nature. Dai thought that this distinguished his view from prevailing moral views, which saw our natural inclinations as fundamentally flawed and appealed directly to transcendent norms and sources of motivation to help us overcome the bad parts of our natural endowment.[11]

I hope that this brief summary is enough to help us see how Dai both is and is not a kindred philosophical spirit with Kant. Like Kant, he thinks that moral actions must in principle be capable of

[11] Dai compared the practice of appealing to nature-transcendent norms to a certain sort of grammatical mistake, one that assumes that the significance of the attributive adjective "sagely" (*sheng* 聖) can be specified without reference to the sage's humanity. In contemporary parlance, "sagely" is an attributive adjective—its significance and specification depend in part on the kind of thing that it is attributed to. Similarly, "morally imperative" is specified with reference to the natural dispositions of the agent for whom it is imperative. Natural dispositions specify what it is to be moral in the same way that the humanity of the sage specifies what it is to be a sage. See Dai (2009, sec. 13).

passing a test of universalizability. Furthermore, also like Kant, he was dissatisfied with metaethical theories that engaged in a lot of handwaving about some transcendent lawgiver or moral source, seemingly more interested in grounding human ethics in human interests broadly construed. As we will see later in this section, I also think that Dai was searching for a stronger sort of pro-attitude toward human beings than mere concern about their welfare, something that might be usefully compared with regarding others as ends in themselves.

However, Dai's philosophical inclinations are also quite different from Kant's in other respects. For reasons that I find understandable but a bit ill-conceived, Kant was adamant that the only source of categorical imperatives should be pure practical reason and was thus reluctant to allow that contingent human desires could determine our unconditional moral demands. He seems to have concluded from this that desires—understood as contingent "inclinations" (*Neigungen*) that arise from our natural constitution—are also a bad or at least less-than-morally-worthy source of moral motivation. When people act morally, they should be acting out of respect for the moral law, not out of the contingent desires that at best only accidentally line up with the moral law (and usually do not).[12] In contrast, Dai Zhen can not conceive of a plausible notion of ethical imperatives that does not take our natural inclinations into account, and is exasperated with the many generations of prior philosophers who seemed to think that such a project is possible. Ethical imperatives are improvements upon our natural inclinations or they are nothing at all. Moreover, he is emphatic that desires play a central and indispensable role in motivating good behavior, even self-interested desires.

At this general level, my description of the differences between Kant and Dai is a bit impressionistic. How much of a tension there really is depends on some details that I do not have the time to delve into here (for example, does it make a difference that Dai only talks about moral imperatives in general and not categorical or unconditional

12 Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, 4:416–420, 440–445. All references to Kant are based primarily on Mary Gregor's translation (Kant 1996).

imperatives more specifically?). Despite this, I hope that these broad brushstrokes will be enough to appreciate the different philosophical agendas and orientations that the two philosophers adopted.

For Dai Zhen, a central notion in ethics is that of "mutual life-fulfillment." It is central in the sense that many other ethical notions are justified and specified in terms of it. For example, Dai thinks that certain core virtues are justified in large part by their ability to realize this value. One of Dai's well-chosen paraphrases for the Confucian Way is "the way of mutual nourishment and growth" (*xiangshengyang zhidao* 相生養之道) (2009, secs. 11, 15). And he characterizes the central virtue of humaneness (*ren* 仁) as "the virtue of mutual life fulfillment" (*shengsheng zhide* 生生之德) (sec. 36). Dai perceives (I think correctly) that most people, left to their own devices, see relationships of mutual fulfillment as central to ethics (he blames Daoists and Buddhists for downplaying these sorts of relationships and thus distorting people's natural sense of the core of ethics). Nonetheless, Dai pays more attention than most to the ethical and psychological structure of these relationships, and to the emotional dispositions and character traits needed to realize them. In this section I will talk about how he understands these relationships and what they require of us.

I take "fulfillment of life" (*suisheng* 遂生) to be Dai's particular conception of well-being. He thinks certain desires are intimately concerned with satisfying needs and interests that help to define us as living beings. Here he uses the Chinese character *sheng* 生, which refers not only to the state of being alive, but also to growth and reproduction. From Dai's view, to fulfill a person's life is to satisfy desires that have the right relation to her interest in survival, development, and procreation. Some desires are intimately connected to these goods (such as the desires for protection from the cold, sustenance, having and raising children). Other desires might seem more peripheral or indirect but still clearly count as life-based because they are sufficiently rooted in survival, growth, or reproduction (such as desires for romantic love and marriage, intellectual development, and teaching the next generation of students). He assumes that most of these desires are naturally flexible and of very wide scope, but they become narrower or more focused on specific outcomes as we

figure out how to adapt them to mutually beneficial relationships. I happen to think that Dai's account of well-being stands up reasonably well to common criticisms of standard theories of well-being in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries (hedonism, desire theories, objective list theories, etc.). It certainly stands up better than simple hedonic theories or desire theories. But for present purposes, not a lot depends on Dai's specific account of well-being. So long as your preferred account allows that people can share ends and benefit directly from realizing shared ends, it will be compatible with much of what Dai says about the ethics of mutual fulfillment.

Let me now say a bit about why Dai thinks that relationships of mutual fulfillment are central to ethics (such that the major virtues are defined and specified in reference to them). If one did not know any better, it might be tempting to think that Dai is focused on these sorts of relationships because they have a kind of quasi-economic efficiency or make a greater contribution to the sum of human interests. Often, when multiple parties have the same ends and value them deeply, they will be better positioned for "win-win" propositions, such that one and the same outcome benefits all sides rather than set up one side to win at the other's expense. The net total of human well-being that we can get is greater when people's ends are shared than when they are different or in competition with one another. This argument appeals to "net benefit" or "net well-being" as a justification for good relationships of mutual fulfillment.

No doubt, Dai (like most of us) thinks it an advantage of these sorts of relationships that they make possible greater total satisfaction of desires, greater fulfillment of important goals, and thus more well-being. However, Dai does not think that welfare *simpliciter* is the central good. His organizing principle is what I call "orderly life-fulfillment." "Life-fulfillment" is indeed a particular conception of well-being, but life-fulfillment must be in good order. "Order" (*tiaoli* 條理) tracks such things as social proximity, social status by virtue of age, merit, or desert and makes provisions for sustainability or continuity of living things. In Dai's account of the virtues, he says that some are more concerned with promoting life-fulfillment, but others—such as ritual propriety (*li* 禮) and righteousness (*yi* 義)—are

more concerned with tracking norms of good order (2009, sec. 36). Promoting life-fulfillment is virtuous so long as it takes some account of proximity, status, merit, and desert, making sure that our loved ones are the top priority, that elders are treated more deferentially than youth, that we are not showering undeserved benefits on people who should be punished (and are not punishing people who did no wrong), etc. Furthermore, Dai believes that social worlds with good, mutually fulfilling relationships are just better than those without, and that people who facilitate such relationships are ethically better than those that merely provide for their own well-being, even if those relationships were to come at some cost to net well-being. It is better for us to live as parents, children, siblings, and friends than as detached strangers. Dai says that we can enhance our admiration of relationships of mutual fulfillment by noticing how the cosmic order ("Heaven and Earth") is also engaged in ongoing mutual life-fulfillment and ongoing creation (sec. 36). In short, Dai is not a welfarist —he does not think that well-being is the sole source of moral norms and values. His central good is orderly life-fulfillment, captured most powerfully in the vision of reciprocal processes that provide for our continuity into future generations.

Let me now turn to one of the most intriguing facets of Dai's moral psychology, which has to do with the self-interested desires which I have mentioned. For Dai, good relationships of mutual fulfillment require a certain kind of self-interest that he calls "humane love of self" (sec. 21).[13] In an oft-quoted passages in his *Evidential Analysis of the Meanings of Terms in the Mengzi*, Dai contends that a certain kind of love of self is continuous with love of those near and dear to oneself, and falls within the territory of humaneness (*renzhishu* 仁之屬), a core Confucian virtue (sec. 21). In another memorable passage Dai argues that a certain amount of interest in one's own life-fulfillment is necessary in order to properly and adequately empathize with others. As he says at one point, "If one lacked desires [to fulfill one's own life], one would look apathetically on even the most destitute and dire of life's circumstances" (sec. 10). There is no way to arrange our

[13] For more on humane love of self, see the second paragraph in this section.

emotional dispositions such that we could care in the correct way for others without caring ourselves (sec. 10). Dai thinks that humane love of others simulates and draws on humane love of self, so that we must continue to humanely love ourselves in order to sustain humane love of others.

In one of my first articles I did a close reading of some passages in Dai's philosophical work to reconstruct what I take to be some notable features of humane love of self and explain why this is necessary to have the right sort of empathy for others (Tiwald 2010b). Briefly, I take it that Dai thinks when we love ourselves humanely, we love ourselves independently of ethically irrelevant properties or relations. Most of us love ourselves (if we do) regardless of whether we are high status or low, healthy or sick, wealthy or poor. Dai likes to note that a certain kind of empathetic concern cuts through such differences of position and fortune, and on my reading, Dai thinks we need to draw on the unconditional love of self to recreate a similar sort of love for others. When we love the self humanely we love the bare particular and not any of its accidental properties or relations (Tiwald 2010b). A second feature of humane love of self is that one loves oneself for one's own sake, not for the sake of someone else or some higher end. We do not care about our own interests just insofar as contributing to them contributes to the prosperity of our employer, family, or society. A third (and important) feature of this love is what properties it does treat as necessary and fundamental to our status as worthy of love. Dai is quite clear that what gives us ethical status and intrinsic considerability is a combination of three things: being a living creature, being a creature that loves its life and fears its death, and having conscious awareness (*jue* 覺) (secs. 21, 30). Therefore, it is not, for example, because we are legislators in the realm of ends or because of a certain power or capacity for autonomy that we are worthy of love. Humane love of self has these three features—it loves the bare particular, for one's own sake, and considers us worthy of love because we are living creatures with awareness and a love of life and fear of death. On my reading of Dai Zhen, these are the very features that we replicate (but sometimes to a lesser degree) in humane love of others, and from which we

construct a common point of view that can be inhabited by many different people with mature capacities for wisdom and empathy.

Let us now see in action how Dai's framework can be used to account for the ethical value of deriving mutual fulfillment from shared ends. Consider the shared end of a child's formal education. Let us say that Jiaying has a daughter, Chen, whom she wants to provide with an education in the interest of promoting Chen's intellectual and ethical development. Both Jiaying and her daughter see her daughter's education as having some final value—having a more mature and spiritually and intellectually well-rounded Chen is in some sense the very goal that both seek to realize. Of course, they also both see her education as having some instrumental benefits as well, insofar as it will expand Chen's career opportunities, give her more or greater sources of gratification and so on. On my understanding, part of what makes Chen's formal education a shared end is that for both her and her mother, getting this education is relatively high on the list of valuable priorities that they care about, such that both are willing to sacrifice other competing interests or goods for its sake. So both think that some of the family's resources and luxuries are worth giving up in order to pay for Chen's tuition, for example, and that they rightly give up time playing games or listening to music in the interest of giving her more time to study or work on school projects. Having her education as a shared end thus has implications for trade-offs that they ought to make at various points in their lives. Some of those trade-offs will be obvious and relatively uncontroversial: clearly, it would be better to pay for Chen's college tuition than to build a new addition to their already spacious home. Other trade-offs will require more wisdom and ethical discernment—whether Jiaying should intervene on Chen's behalf when, for example, she thinks one of Chen's teachers is treating her unfairly.

On Dai's account, each of these decisions will be resolved by adopting a certain empathetic point of view, one that asks them to imagine themselves in the position of various affected parties and tranquilly reflect on whether they could reasonably bear the treatment they are giving them or fulfill the demands that they are making on them (2009, sec. 2). Dai thinks that certain demands will

seem more reasonable to fulfill and certain kinds of treatment will seem more reasonable to endure if they are motivated by and meant to fulfill certain common and widely-shared desires, desires that we as intelligent living beings can all understand and stand behind. It is in these senses that the relevant ethical norms are those which "all hearts-and-minds affirm in common." They are norms that seem warranted from multiple, somewhat idealized, points of view, and they take as their object a state of affairs which reasonably mature people can empathically imagine as satisfying or fulfilling enough to justify the sacrifice of other goods (secs. 2-8).

In order to realize the shared end of Chen's formal education, Jiaying will need certain things—resources, various habits, emotional attachments, powers to ignore impulses or delay gratification, aptitudes of judgment, and so on. Some of these things will be banal or not particularly admirable or notable. However a certain subset of these things will, when working in tandem, exhibit a certain excellence or ethical beauty (*yi* 懿 or *mei* 美) (secs. 3, 36). Those character traits and characteristic behaviors that both exhibit this sort of excellence and play the right sort of supporting role in realizing "orderly life fulfillment" are virtues, and insofar as Jiaying instantiates these virtues, she is much better or more ethical than she would be without them. Dai says that some of these virtues (such as humaneness and righteousness) are themselves constituents of orderly life-fulfillment, and others (such as courage) are just the means by which we bring about orderly life-fulfillment (sec. 36). Either way, so long as they fit together into a system of character traits and characteristic behaviors that constitute or help to sustain the central good, and so long as they exhibit excellence, they make Jiaying a much better person than she would otherwise be.[14]

[14] Given that Dai justifies some virtues (like courage) as means to the central good of orderly life fulfillment, some might be tempted to say that the virtues are instrumentally valuable. However, this does not follow. Often, we see some virtues as virtuous in part for what they accomplish, but nevertheless see the instantiation of those virtues as valuable in their own right. Just as we can value someone's compassion and courage in attempting to save an endangered child even if she does not succeed, so too we can admire Jiaying's compassion and courage in supporting and advocating for her daughter's education even if she is not successful.

5. Kant on Mutually Fulfilling Relationships

On a certain caricature of Kant, he thinks there is really only one kind of motive worth adopting and one kind of behavior worth emulating, which are sometimes jointly characterized as action from duty. This is the sort of thing that we do when we represent the moral law in our minds and act out of respect for that moral law. According to this caricature, action motivated by any desire is always problematic because all desires are contingent things with no built-in capacity to follow the moral law, which makes them at best conditionally and accidentally good. Nature does not guarantee that our desires will do as the moral law requires, only practical reason and the will can do that, insofar as they inspire in us respect for the moral law. Desires respond to the senses and sensible objects, not to *a priori* reason and moral norms—in Kant's term, they are "pathological" (*pathologische*). Moreover, the desires are stubborn things, intransigent and generally difficult to change, and they only treat our own happiness or pleasure as their guiding aim, not morality.[15] For all of these reasons, this story goes, an action has moral value if and only if it is motivated by the good will and not by desires of any kind.

However, this caricature is mistaken. Among other things, it ignores both the content and the prominent aims of his relatively late work, *The Metaphysics of Morals*, which includes considerable discussion of the virtues. There he suggests that natural dispositions can be trained and reshaped, as when he recommends that people visit sick rooms and debtors' prisons in order to fine-tune their sympathetic appreciation of the suffering of others. He also claims that we should secure a moderate amount of happiness for ourselves lest we become so disgruntled that we start transgressing the moral law or ignoring our duties on a regular basis.[16] So Kant clearly endorses a limited pursuit of one's own welfare, and seems to think that pathological emotions and desires can be changed so that they

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[15] See *Critique of Practical Reason* 5: 19–30 for passages that have been taken to suggest this reading.

[16] See *Metaphysics of Morals* 6: 457, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* 4: 399.

better align with morality. What, then, are we to make of his strong claims to the effect that only action from duty (action motivated by will and representations of the moral law) is good?

In late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century Western philosophy, a great deal has been written on the place of virtue and the components of good character in Kant's ethics.[17] I cannot hope to summarize it all, but let me highlight the arguments that are most relevant for my discussion. The first thing to note is that when Kant talks about the distinctive value of action from duty or the good will, he does not say that this motivational structure is necessary for value in general but for "moral worth" in particular.[18] This presumably leaves open the possibility that other sorts of action can instantiate a different and presumably lesser sort of ethical or moral value. Second, defenders of Kant have proposed that Kant intended duty and respect for the moral law not just as the direct impetus to action, but as a kind of background condition or commitment that governs or regulates the more direct springs of human behavior (Marcia Baron calls this background condition a "secondary motive" and the direct impetus a "primary motive"). So a person can still have or express moral worth if, for example, she helps someone from a desire to please, so long as that primary motive is checked or conditioned by an overarching and overriding commitment to morality, and provided that overriding commitment is sufficient to effect dutiful behavior (Baron 1995, 113-114, 188-193). So long as the will stands ready to intervene on behalf of a representation of duty, and so long as it has the power to override primary motives to that end, a person can act from duty even as the direct impetus to action is one or more of our pathological desires, including, presumably, self-interested desires.

These two corrections go a good distance toward addressing the challenge that I have set for Kant. The challenge was to provide an ethical framework that helps to explain why it is ethically better to be the sort of person with mixed motives to participate in and

17 For example, see Baron (1995), Betzler (2007), and Herman (2007).

18 For example, see *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* 4: 398–400.

contribute to good relationships than not, to have the mixed motives that make the good sorts of mutual fulfillment possible. What the two clarifications show is that Kant can in principle explain how someone might be motivated to help a friend partially by self-interest and yet be a person that (or carry out an action that) instantiates or imparts moral worth. Someone can be partially motivated to help a friend by self-interest in the primary sense, and that is just fine so long as there is a potentially overriding will that stands ready to intervene on behalf of the moral law.

Nonetheless, this does not address the challenge completely. First, on Kant's view, moral worth is still solely a function of the duty motive. Kant does not suggest that having additional, self-interested but relationship-conducive motives adds or enhances moral worth. If we take someone who helps a friend purely out of duty but does so grudgingly and compare him with someone who helps a friend wholeheartedly and with great personal interest, by Kant's lights both are equal in moral worth. The challenge was to show how the latter could be ethically better than the former, as most people in fact believe. Second, it does not address another feature of Kant's moral psychology, which is that he sees desires as unresponsive to the sorts of reasoning that tracks the moral law. Being "pathological," desires and emotions only respond to the senses and sensible objects, and at least some passages of Kant's moral writings suggest that our desires and emotions are too intransigent to be meaningfully modified or updated.

These clarifications also raise a more fundamental conceptual issue that we should pause to consider. On this more nuanced picture of Kant's ethical theory, someone with the motivational set that enables her to derive mutual fulfillment from her relationships can have moral worth under those circumstances (or her relationship-conducive actions can have moral worth), but only if there is an overriding secondary motive the ensures compliance with the moral law. If there is no such motive, or if there is such a motive but it is not sufficient to override, she (or her actions) cannot have moral worth. However, that front loads a rather formidable requirement for moral worth from the very start. Do we really want to insist that so

much volitional capacity for moral compliance is necessary for any moral worth at all? One reason that I think the most influential moral theories have done such a poor job accounting for the comparative ethical value of good relationships of mutual fulfillment is because they tend to be constructed around ideal agents or instances of agency. We want to know whether it makes significant ethical difference whether Jiaying is a relatively distant parent who cares about her children for their sake or a deeply engaged and multi-faceted parent who cares about them partially for their sake and partially out of pride, shared projects, and a personal interest in having and raising children. To most of us, it does not seem that it should only make a difference if Jiaying also has a commitment to the moral law that is sufficient to override the relevant desires. Quite possibly, most of us lack that commitment, and yet there is a world of difference between a cold and distant parent and a deeply attached parent who derives mutual fulfillment from parenting. Therefore, it is fundamentally mistaken to insist on the requirement that there be an overriding secondary motive of duty. Having that overriding secondary motive can be a good and productive ideal, something that people should aspire to, but it is too demanding and stringent to insist that it be a necessary condition for all moral worth.

Perhaps Kant would say that the weak-willed parent who derives proper mutual fulfillment from her parenting is ethically better in some sense that does not involve moral worth. I hinted at this sort of solution earlier when I mentioned that there may be values or goods other than moral worth that can help to justify certain impure motivational sets. Maybe Kant recognizes that it's good for people to learn to care about their children in the rich mixture of ways required for mutual fulfillment, but he does not think these should count as moral improvements, or as bases for moral worth. However, they still count as improvements in some sense, and Kant thereby provides us with reasons to pursue love and sympathy.

My objections are difficult to spell out in detail because they depend on how we specify the special status of moral worth relative to other ethical goods or values. Despite this, here is a rough description of the concern: whatever it means for one thing to impart

moral worth and for another thing to be a mere good, Kant's ranking of moral worth above all other values must at least imply that moral worth should have some sort of clear priority. For example, perhaps he thinks that given an opportunity to do something of moral worth or to something that is merely ethically good, one should do something of moral worth. However, if we were to give clear priority to action from duty over the desires necessary for proper mutual fulfillment, this would have implications that most of the world's people (at most times and places) would find counter-intuitive. Surely being a deeply engaged and caring parent who is deeply invested in one's parenthood is of far higher priority than having the strength of will to rein in one's parental desires in the interest of the moral law.

In pursuit of a better defense of Kantian approaches to relationships of mutual fulfillment, we have to set aside the historical Kant and consider a modified version of him, making some revisions to his view that, we can hope, will leave his core ethical commitments intact. Among the most promising revisions are those suggested by a forthcoming article by Kyla Ebels-Duggan, who attempts to clean up problems in Kant's moral psychology by proposing that Kantians jettison the view that desires are pathological. Desires on this revised view can represent values and objects as valuable or choice-worthy, thus giving us a degree of control over them. Having a degree of control over them, they become "attributable to us," so that the actions motivated by those desires can have moral worth. If a desire represents someone as worthy of respect and love, for example, then to act on it is to "act in response to the value of humanity" as surely as the will can so act (Ebels-Duggan, forthcoming). In principle, at least, someone who has the desires to derive mutual fulfillment from her relationships could count as having greater moral worth for that reason. Furthermore, Ebels-Duggan's revisions appear to lower the price of admission for moral worth, for it is no longer necessary that one have the strength of will and commitment to moral law to override a desire in order to count as morally worthy. So long as the desire itself represents someone as worthy of respect and love, the resultant action qualifies.

If Kantian ethics is to be saved from the charge that it cannot explain the comparative ethical value of good relationships of mutual fulfillment, this sort of move offers the best hope for doing so. Kantians need to allow that desires can carry and impart moral worth. Still, even this revisionary picture of Kant's ethics faces formidable challenges. Firstly, depending on what "representing someone as worthy of respect and love" requires, we could still end up with an ethical theory that attributes much higher priority to what are in fact comparatively trivial acts and motives and underestimates the ethical importance of human relationships. The desires of love, for example, seem good candidates for the sorts of desires that Ebels-Duggan has in mind, but it seems likely that love more often than not falls short of this ideal, certainly if representing someone as worthy of respect and love entails representing her as an end in herself and never as means only (as Kant rightly worried, love often instrumentalizes the beloved).

A second problem is this: even though Ebels-Duggan's view about the range of motives that might impart moral worth is more permissive and inclusive, it is not permissive enough to be compatible with widely-shared intuitions about the motives necessary for good relationships of mutual fulfillment. On the view that I find most defensible, there is a wide array of dispositions or character traits that can impart ethical value or worth, whether or not they happen to represent people as worthy of love and respect. Dai Zhen's view on this matter is more promising: he thinks that an ethical virtue is an admirable character trait that cooperates with other admirable character traits to promote or constitute the central good, which for him is orderly life-fulfillment. Some admirable character traits (such as courage) do not characteristically represent people as worthy of love and respect, and they can be virtues nonetheless, just by being admirable in their own right and fitting rightly into the constellation of other virtues. Similarly, there are habits of mind and mental and emotional dispositions in good parenting and teaching that seem good candidates for bearers of ethical worth, things like resourcefulness or capacity to listen thoughtfully and charitably, and yet I doubt that they themselves are constituted of desires that

represent people as worthy of love and respect.

This second problem may be symptomatic of a deeper issue of theoretical orientation that I alluded to earlier. The deeper issue has to do with whether we see certain distinctive features of morality as minimum requirements or as one important factor among others. Imagine that we could reach a consensus about the criteria that a motive must meet in order to qualify as bestowing this important sort of moral value. For example, both Kant and Dai think that there there's a special imperative to recognize all other people as similar to ourselves in certain respects, and to see others as having intrinsic worth, and as having interests that in some important way have equal purchase on the norms of interpersonal interactions. Even if we can reach an agreement about the criteria for this privileged set of norms, however, there is still the question of how those criteria operate. One possibility, which from my view is ubiquitous in both Kant's ethics and much Kantian ethics, is that criteria serve as a necessary condition for any and all moral worth. Only if one represents or conceives of others and one's moral obligations to others in a certain way will the relevant motives qualify as having this special moral status. But another option is that the criteria serve as a special kind of regulative ideal—something to aspire to, such that, *ceteris paribus*, we become better people (or have better character or exhibit better behaviors) the more closely we approximate it. The latter view is closer to Dai Zhen's, and because he treats the special norms governing interpersonal interactions as a regulative, aspirational ideal in this way, he can make allowances for kinds of ethical improvements and trade-offs that Kant cannot. He can say, for example, that it's preferable that a teacher always treat her students as having intrinsic value and as equal end-setters, and to the extent that she fails to do so, she's a nonideal teacher, but he can also allow that there are other sorts of ethical improvement which might, under some circumstances, be of higher priority. For example, it is better for many teachers to take self-interested pride in the success of their students than to be distant or indifferent to their students' success, even if this pride sometimes comes at the expense of regarding students instrumentally or as less-than-equal end-setters.

Finally, there are worries about whether the move to admit some value-regarding desires into the club of morally worthy motives can be integrated into Kant's broader moral framework, one so systematically devoted to clarifying the proper source of morality in pure practical reason and purging morality of impure sources. For example, Kant is correct to think that natural desires often go wrong, inclining us toward courses of action that ride roughshod over the interests of others, instrumentalize others, or treat others unjustly. It seems like any reasonably conscientious Kantian (and Kant himself) would insist that we at least vet our desires so that only those that aptly respond to the value of humanity are trusted and acted upon. Nevertheless, there is little in Kant that will ground a plausible or enlightening story about how the desires can be vetted, since his framework so frequently depends on the intervention of an independent faculty of will acting on the representations of pure practical reason. In stark contrast to this, Dai Zhen provides a realistic and appealing account of the sources of interpersonal ethics, one that builds ethical motives on natural ones and yet makes a compelling case that these improvements make us more aptly responsive to the value of others. And as we have seen, at most every turn his system is concerned with grounding good relationships based on shared ends. If we concede that such relationships are a central or at least an important part of our ethical lives, as I think we must, then Dai's framework seems the better starting point for an adequate theory of ethics.

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"Chinese" Philosophy or "The-Chinese-Language" Philosophy?

Yang Xiao*

Abstract

This paper offers an analytical and critical examination of the on-going discussion since the turn of the twenty-first century in China on *hanyu zhexue* 漢語哲學. Since people engaging in the *hanyu zhexue* discourse are often confused, the paper tries to articulate and differentiate various different theses in the discourse, clarifying conceptual confusions, uncovering hidden presuppositions, and showing which theses are false, which ones are true, and which ones are undetermined. Clarifications and arguments are made based on my previous works done in philosophy of language, pragmatics, comparative philosophy, Chinese philosophy of language, and the study of classics (*jingxue* 經學). This paper sketches out a larger conceptual and historical landscape, in which the *hanyu zhexue* discourse can be located. It also points out places where the battles can be fought, hidden paths found, and arguments and counter-arguments made. It concludes that the term "*zhongguo zhexue* 中國哲學" (Chinese philosophy) should not be jettisoned, and replaced by the term"*hanyu zhexue* 漢語哲學," as it has been proposed by many people.

Keywords: Philosophy of language, pragmatics, Chinese philosophy (*zhongguo zhexue* 中國哲學), the Chinese language (*hanyu* 漢語), *hanyu zhexue* 漢語哲學, the study of classics (*jingxue* 經學), "sociology of knowledge" approach vs. linguistic determinist approach, cultural manifolds, nonindividualist vs. individualist, anti-elitist vs. elitist

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When future historians look back at the study of Chinese philosophy in mainland China around the turn of the century (from the late 1990s to the first two decades of the twenty-first century), they may report that the two most significant events were: (a) the discussion about "the legitimacy of Chinese philosophy" (中國哲學的合法性) in the late 1990s, and (b) the discussion about *hanyu zhexue* 漢語哲學, starting in the early 2010s. The first discussion ended toward the end of the 1990s and produced a large body of literature, the second discussion has been producing a rapidly expanding body of literature, and it is impossible to list them all here. If one randomly picks a well-known scholar working on Chinese philosophy in China today, the chances are that this scholar probably has said something about the "legitimacy of Chinese philosophy." As I am writing in 2018, one cannot yet say the same about *hanyu zhexue*, which is still ongoing. However, I believe that it is safe to predict that one eventually will be able to say the same about it.[1]

It is difficult to summarize these two major discussions in which so many people already have participated. For the purposes of the present paper, it suffices to make three important observations about them. First, what is good about both discussions is that they have brought critical attention and acute self-awareness to the fact that scholars have been using "modern" and "Western" concepts, such as philosophy (哲學), materialism vs. idealism (唯物主義 vs. 唯心主義), logic (邏輯), ontology (本體論), and ethics (倫理學), to study Chinese philosophy since the beginning of the twentieth-century, and we might want to ask the question of whether it is "legitimate" to do so. However, one might question about and object to the terms in which the discussions are formulated. For example, a major flaw of these discussions is that they are not critical and self-conscious enough when it comes to their own meta-concepts in terms of which they conduct the discussions, such

[1] As I was revising this paper in 2018, *Xueshu yuekan* 學術月刊 (Academic Monthly), a major scholarly journal in China, has created a special section on *hanyu zhexue* in their latest issue. One senior editor, who was at the conference on *hanyu zhexue* in September in Hangzhou, told me that they would continue to have a special section on *hanyu zhexue* in future issues. In fact, the paper I wrote in Chinese on *hanyu zhexue* is forthcoming in this journal.

as the concepts of "modern," "Chinese," "Western," "Chinese philosophy," *hanyu* (the Chinese language), and the distinctive features of the Chinese language. What is most troubling is a key assumption, taken for granted by the participants in the discussions, which is that if a given concept or a *keyword x*, which is used to study Chinese philosophy, is a "modern" and "Western" concept, then it necessarily must be illegitimate to use *x* to talk about "Chinese" philosophy. As I have argued elsewhere, this assumption is false.[2]

The second observation about these two discussions is that a significant difference between them is that the participants in the first discussion are mostly scholars who study Chinese philosophy, whereas many participants in the second discussion are people who study "Western philosophy," such as analytic philosophy, philosophy of language, and phenomenology. For example, an active and strong voice in the discussion comes from what we might call "Chinese phenomenologists," and they have been promoting the idea of "*hanyu xianxiangxue* 漢語現象學" (*hanyu* phenomenology) (more on this topic later).

The third observation is that the first discussion (the legitimacy of Chinese philosophy discussion) is a real "debate" among people with diverse views, and the debate ended without a clear answer or consensus. However, the second discussion (the *hanyu zhexue* discussion) has not really been a debate so far. Almost everyone participating in it agrees with one another on some core ideas. It is for this reason that I shall call it the "*hanyu zhexue* discourse," rather than the "*hanyu zhexue* debate." And what is most significant about the discourse is that it has emerged as an answer to the "legitimacy of Chinese philosophy" debate. Of course, this is an on-going discourse, so things might change in the future. I hope this paper might be helpful in turning the discourse into a debate.

In Sections 1-4, I will be primarily articulating and differentiating the key ideas of the *hanyu zhexue* discourse, clarifying conceptual confusions, and uncovering hidden presuppositions in the discourse.

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2 See Xiao (2007, 502-503; 2011; forthcoming). An early version of Xiao (forthcoming) can be found at https://kenyon.academia.edu/yangxiao.

In Section 4, the last section, I argue against the proposal made by people who promote the HYZX thesis that the term "Chinese philosophy" (*zhongguo zhexue* 中國哲學) should be jettisoned, and replaced by the term "*hanyu zhexue* 漢語哲學."

1. The Core Ideas of the *Hanyu Zhexue* Discourse

In order to understand better what is really going on in the *hanyu zhexue* discourse, we might want to state explicitly the key ideas that are at the heart of the discourse. We might break them down into two independent theses, one being the "historicist thesis" and the other being the "*hanyu zhexue* thesis" (the HYZX thesis):

> (The Historicist Thesis): There is such a thing called "Chinese philosophy" with its own uniquely distinctive features that make it "Chinese" philosophy and different from "Western philosophy".
>
> (The HYZX Thesis): Distinctive features of "Chinese philosophy" or "the Chinese way of thinking" (中國特有的思維方式) are determined by distinctive features of the Chinese language (漢語).

I shall also refer to the HYZX thesis as the "particular thesis" of linguistic relativism, or "PT of linguistic relativism."[3] The HYZX thesis or PT can be seen as a particular version of a more general thesis called "linguistic relativism," which is sometimes formulated as follows:

> (GT) Distinctive features of the way of thinking of a community of speakers of a language *L* are determined by distinctive features of *L*.

I shall call it the "general thesis" of linguistic relativism or "GT of linguistic relativism." I shall not deal with GT in this paper. Obviously, PT is a particular version of GT when *L* happens to be the Chinese

[3] If one just looks at the literal meaning of the formulation, it is clear that it is more accurate to call this view "linguistic determinism." However, the view has been widely known as "linguistic relativism." I follow the popular usage here.

language. For practical purposes, we shall say that people who believe in PT belong to the "party of linguistic relativism" or "the party of the HYZX thesis," by which I mean people who believe in the particular version of linguistic relativism, namely PT or the HYZX thesis.

It is important to note that the two key ideas of the *hanyu zhexue* discourse, namely, the historicist thesis and the HYZX thesis, are independent of each other. In fact, the term "*hanyu* 漢語" does not appear in the historicist thesis. That is to say, one can accept the historicist thesis without accepting the HYZX thesis. Hence it is entirely possible for one to hold the view that there are distinctive features of Chinese philosophy but reject the view that they are determined by the distinctive features of the Chinese language (I shall have more to say about this in Section 3). This indicates that the HYZX thesis is the essence of the *hanyu zhexue* discourse. This is the main reason I shall focus on it in this paper.[4]

In the formulation of the HYZX thesis given above, I used the phrase "Chinese philosophy" or "the Chinese way of thinking" (中國特有的思維方式). I did this in order to include a group of people who deny that there is such a thing called "Chinese philosophy" because of certain distinctive features of the Chinese language. I shall call this group of people "the deniers." Fu Sinian 傅斯年 (1896–1950) might have been the first "denier" to have articulated this view. In the deniers' formulation of the thesis, they would use "the Chinese way of thinking," rather than "Chinese philosophy."[5]

As we have mentioned, the *hanyu zhexue* discourse has not been a genuine debate, and there are not many people who have openly stated their objection to the HYZX thesis. However, we can easily imagine that the HYZX thesis would be rejected by those who belong to the party of people who reject linguistic relativism. If we put their position in the form of a thesis, it would be the negation of the HYZX thesis. In other words, if we are to turn the *hanyu zhexue* discourse into a debate, it could take the form of a debate between two parties:

4 For a critique of the historicist thesis, see Xiao (forthcoming).

5 I do not discuss the deniers in this paper. For a detailed discussion of Fu Sinian, see Xiao (forthcoming).

those who accept and those who reject all or parts of the HYZX thesis.

If I am asked to which of the two parties I belong, I must say it is the third party of those people who would say that they do not know what the HYZX thesis is. When they see the formulation of the HYZX thesis given earlier, their response would be that they do not think they know the determinate meaning of the thesis because the keywords and key-concepts in the thesis, such as "*hanyu*" (the Chinese language), or "the distinctive features of *hanyu*," have such a wide range of meanings. Whether the thesis is true, then, depends on how one interprets these keywords and key concepts. For this reason, to conduct the debate on the level of the thesis and its negation would be pointless and fruitless. Here a useful instruction might be: "Don't argue, but look!" or "Don't debate, but look!" Of course, in our current philosophical culture, one is often tempted to first identify oneself in terms of certain "ism" (e.g., as an endorser or a denier of linguistic relativism), and then try to argue for it. One joins a debate by taking a side of the debate. Wittgenstein once said that one of the most difficult things in philosophy is to begin early enough. I think to jump into a debate in this way is to begin too late in philosophy; one should begin earlier. In other words, one should begin with the presuppositions taken for granted by and shared by both parties in the debate.

As I have mentioned before, many people who have participated in the *hanyu zhexue* discourse are scholars who study "Western philosophy," including analytic philosophy and philosophy of language. It is a surprise that none of them has tried to clarify what the HYZX thesis really means, or to articulate the multiple versions of the thesis, corresponding to the multiple meanings of the terms used in the thesis. As many of these people must have been aware, one important achievement, as well as an important methodological lesson, in the early history of analytic philosophy and philosophy of language is that philosophical problems could be solved or dissolved when we clarify vague and ambitious meanings of words in the formulations of these philosophical problems. When linguistic philosophy, which is the project to solve or dissolve philosophical problems by making the "linguistic turn" (by taking language seri-

ously), was in its heydays, some people might have even believed that *all* philosophical problems could be solved or dissolved this way. We now are not so confident anymore. Linguistic philosophy as a project has been abandoned. Nevertheless, I believe that one belief that has survived the demise of linguistic philosophy is that it is always a good thing to articulate and clarify the multiple meanings of the words we use. And when we do that in the case of the HYZX thesis, we will then be able to see that we are actually not dealing with one thesis, but several different theses. In fact, if one can show how many of the specific meanings of the phrase "the distinctive features of *hanyu*" there can be, then one can show how many specific versions of the HYZX thesis there can be, correspondingly. Only once we have narrowed down and sorted out these specific meanings of the phrase, will we be able to see which versions of the HYZX thesis are true, which ones are false, and which ones are still to be settled.[6]

I have mentioned that I belong to a third party of people who do not know what the HYZX thesis is. It might also be helpful if we pay special attention to a group of people who belong to a fourth party: Nathan Sivin, Geoffrey Lloyd, and Randall Collins. They are people who insist that there is no such a thing called *hanyu zhexue*, even if there might be such a thing called "Chinese philosophy." In other words, these are people who acknowledge that there are distinctive features of "Chinese philosophy," and at the same time insist that *none* of them are determined by (explained in terms of) the distinctive features of the Chinese language. I have more to say about this fourth party in the next section.

Without getting into detailed arguments here, let me just state that I eventually want to distance myself from the fourth party. It can be argued that "none" might be too strong a word to use when they claim that *none* of the distinctive features of Chinese philosophy can be explained in terms of the distinctive features of the Chinese language. It seems reasonable to assume that it is possible that *some* of the distinctive features of Chinese philosophy might have

6 For my answers to these questions, see Xiao (2018, forthcoming).

something to do with *some* of the distinctive features of the Chinese language, and it depends on what one means by "the distinctive features of the Chinese language," which is a remarkably vague phrase. At this point, we might just say that we should at least be open-minded about this possibility.[7]

2. Locating the HYZX Thesis in the Conceptual Landscape of Explanation

I have mentioned earlier that the two core ideas of the *hanyu zhexue* discourse, the historicist thesis and the HYZX thesis, are independent of each other, which means that one can accept one and reject the other at the same time. In other words, it is entirely possible for one to hold the view that there are distinctive features of Chinese philosophy (the historicist thesis) but reject the view that these distinctive features are determined by the distinctive features of the Chinese language (the HYZX thesis).

It is worth taking another and closer look at the formulation of the HYZX thesis:

> The HYZX Thesis: Distinctive features of "Chinese philosophy," or "the Chinese way of thinking" (中國特有的思維方式), are determined by distinctive features of the Chinese language (漢語).

It is obvious that this thesis assumes at least two presuppositions: (i) there is *only one* factor that determines the distinctive features of Chinese philosophy, and (ii) this factor is *hanyu* (with its distinctive features). Obviously, both could be challenged: Why *only one* decisive factor? Why *hanyu*? In other words, why should we assume that *hanyu* must be the only decisive factor when we give explanations of the distinctive features of Chinese philosophy?

7 For detailed arguments, see Xiao (2018, forthcoming).

The point here is that what the HYZX thesis (or linguistic relativism) is attempting to do is to explain the distinctive features of Chinese philosophy in terms of linguistic features of *hanyu*. Now, not everyone who rejects linguistic relativism would necessarily reject the possibility that Chinese philosophy might have distinctive features, of which one should offer some explanations. What they reject is that *all* of the distinctive features of Chinese philosophy can *only* be explained in terms of the distinctive features of *hanyu*. There can be so many nonlinguistic factors that can appear in one's explanations of why Chinese philosophy has the distinctive features it does. The burden of proof is on the party of linguistic relativism to rule out these nonlinguistic factors.

In fact, some of the most influential explanations of the distinctive features of Chinese philosophy in the literature do not belong to the party of linguistic relativism. We may first mention two accounts that belong to what might be called the "sociology of knowledge" based accounts. In their comparative study of ancient Greek and Chinese philosophy and sciences, Nathan Sivin and Geoffrey Lloyd have argued that the ways in which philosophy and sciences were done in ancient Greece and China are distinctively different; however, they explain the differences in terms of the institutional differences of how intellectual lives were organized in ancient Greece and China, including, for example, the particular ways in which intellectual discussions, debates, and communications were conducted.[8] To accommodate such a holistic set of explanations, Lloyd and Sivin have coined the term "cultural manifolds" (文化簇) in order to include a wide range of factors in the explanations of the distinctive features of ancient Chinese philosophy and sciences (Lloyd and Sivin 2003; Sivin 2011).

Another example of the "sociology of knowledge" based approach is Randall Collins' book *Sociology of Philosophies* (1998). He spent 25 years studying various schools and movements of philosophy

8 Lloyd and Sivin (2003). Of course, one does not have to agree with the details of their arguments, as I do not. But the very existence of such a nonlinguistic explanation is a serious challenge to the linguistic relativist explanation.

around the world throughout human history (including ancient Greek philosophy, the Stoics, Mohism, Confucianism, the Song Neo-Confucians, the logical positivists, and so on). Like Sivin and Lloyd, Collins (1998) offers explanations not in terms of linguistic features of various languages, but rather in terms of institutional and structural features, such as the complicated social and political networks among philosophers.[9] Collins is one of the first ones who started practicing what has eventually become very popular recently, namely, network analysis.

However, the "sociology of knowledge" based approach is only a small corner of a vast conceptual landscape of possible explanations of the distinctive features of a particular "culture," or a particular "philosophy." In fact, we would be genuinely surprised by the complex and intriguing patterns of the conceptual landscape. Interestingly enough, when we have charted a comprehensive overview of the landscape, we would be able to see that these two approaches: (a) the "sociology of knowledge" based approach (Sivin, Lloyd, and Collins), which puts emphasis on the nonlinguistic institutions, rules, and conventions, and (b) the linguistic relativist approach (the party of linguistic relativists or the *hanyu zhexue* promotors), which puts emphasis on the linguistic institutions, rules, and conventions, share more things in common than most people typically are aware of. The fact that one focuses on nonlinguistic factors and the other on linguistic factor does not matter that much, when one sees that both try to explain the distinctive features of Chinese philosophy in terms of things that are nonindividualistic and impersonal. Both downplay individual creativity. Both are "anti-individualist" and "anti-elitist."

It becomes visible and obvious that they share all of these things in common when we contrast them with what might be called a Herderian, "romanticist" individualistic, and elitist approach in explaining distinctive features of a particular culture or philosophy. If one adopts such an approach to explain the distinctive features of

9 Again, one does not have to agree with the details in Collins' arguments. The very existence of this type of nonlinguistic explanations in itself is a challenge to those who promote linguistic relativist explanation.

Chinese philosophy, it would be like this. There were geniuses in the history of China, who had penetrating insights into the distinctive essence of Chinese culture. They then formulated and expressed these insights in terms of philosophical concepts. The distinctive features of Chinese philosophy are ultimately the expressions of their individual creativity or originality. Or, if we adopt an even more individualistic version, these geniuses "created" or "invented" the distinctive essence of "Chinese philosophy," which did not exist before it was created by them.

In terms of the *zeitgeist* of contemporary academia, it is extremely unfashionable to take an "individualistic" and "elitist" approach. This partly explains why the *hanyu zhexue* discourse, which puts emphasis on "language," something impersonal and nonindividualistic, has proven to be so popular for so many people today. However, fashions come and go. We might have to learn to swim against the current. Furthermore, one can find in Davidson's philosophy of language an "individualistic" but "nonelitist" approach that leaves room for individual creativity for everyone. There seems to be a middle path we can take here. Charles Taylor's nonelitist reformulation of Herder's concept of genius seems to be a perfect description of such a middle path: "Herder put forward the idea that each of us has an original way of being human. Each person has his or her own 'measure' is his way of putting it" (Taylor 1991, 28).

Obviously, I have only sketched out some parts of the conceptual landscape, pointing out places where the battles can be fought, hidden paths found, and arguments and counter-arguments made.[10] More work remains to be done.

3. Why We Should Not Replace "中國哲學" with "漢語哲學"

Long *before* the *hanyu zhexue* 漢語哲學 discussion started in the 2010s, many scholars had articulated the core ideas of the discourse. The following is only a partial list of some of them: Zhang Dongsun

[10] I offer more detailed discussions in Xiao (2006, 2018, and forthcoming).

張東蓀 (1886–1973), Fu Sinian 傅斯年 (1896–1950), Zhou Youguang 周有光 (1906– 2017), Yu Jiyuan 余纪元, A. C. Graham (1919–1991), Alfred Bloom, Henry Rosemont, Roger Ames, David Hall, and Chad Hansen.[11] These scholars anticipated almost everything in the *hanyu zhexue* discourse. It is unfortunate that most of the people participating in the current *hanyu zhexue* discourse have not paid enough attention to the ancestors of their ideas.[12]

However, it should be pointed out that there is one thing that is absolutely new in the *hanyu zhexue* discourse, which is the following proposal made by people who promote the HYZX thesis: In order to highlight the Chinese language's decisive influence on Chinese philosophy, we should refer to *zhongguo zhexue* 中國哲學 (Chinese philosophy) as *hanyu zhexue*. In fact, according to this proposal, the former should be jettisoned, and replaced by the latter.[13] Obviously, this proposal is a logical implication of the HYZX thesis: If it is indeed true that the distinctive features of "Chinese philosophy" are determined by the distinctive features of *hanyu* (the Chinese language), then "Chinese philosophy" and "*hanyu* philosophy" are identical with each other, and it makes sense to use them interchangeably.

As one can imagine, since the HYZX thesis or PT is a particular implication of the general thesis of linguistic relativism, other associated new terms would have to be coined as well. For example, the term "*deguo zhexue* 德國哲學" (German philosophy) should now be replaced by "*deyu zhexue*" (the-German-language philosophy), and

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11 For critique discussions of these figures, please see Xiao (2005–6, 2006, 2018, forthcoming).

12 Liu Liangjian's 劉梁劍 (2015) book is an exception here. It is also the first monograph on *hanyu zhexue*.

13 Similarly, some Chinese Christian theologians have coined the term *hanyu jidujiao shenxue* 漢語基督教神學 (*hanyu* Christian theology) to refer to *zhongguo jidujiao shenxue* 中國基督教神學 (Chinese Christian theology). In the literature, one rarely sees the latter these days. In fact, some Chinese Christian theologians might have started using the term earlier than the *hanyu zhexue* people; it is even possible that the latter have been inspired by the former. I do not know whether what I say here about the *hanyu zhexue* 漢語哲學 discourse is applicable to the *hanyu shenxue* 漢語神學 discourse. I shall not deal with this question here.

this idea has indeed been put into practice.[14] This also means that various sub-fields of Chinese philosophy should also be re-named, and accordingly we should have new terms such as "*hanyu xinling zhexue* 漢語心靈哲學" (*hanyu* philosophy of mind). And this should also include *hanyu yuyan zhexue* 漢語語言哲學 (*hanyu* philosophy of language). As I am writing in 2018, it seems that these new terms are in the process of gradually replacing the old ones.[15]

A main problem with the term *hanyu zhexue* is that it is vague and ambiguous. It has at least two meanings: a weak one and a strong one. For the *hanyu zhexue* promoters, it goes beyond "any philosophy done in *hanyu*" (任何用漢語做的哲學), which is its weak sense; rather, it means "any philosophy done in *hanyu*, whose distinctive features are determined by the distinctive features of *hanyu*" (任何一種用漢語做的, 並且為漢語所決定的哲學), which is its strong sense.

Let me first make it very clear that I have no problem with the term in its weak sense, in and of itself. It is fine as long as one does not claim that it is identical with "*zhongguo zhexue*" (Chinese philosophy) (more on this soon). There are indeed people who use the term in its weak sense. For example, phenomenology has been the most popular style of philosophizing today in China since it was introduced in the early 1980s; there are more people studying phenomenology than people studying any other type of philosophy in China today. As I mentioned earlier, some of these Chinese phenomenologists have coined the term "*hanyu xianxiangxue* 漢語現象學" (Chinese language phenomenology) to refer to "any phenomenology done in Chinese." It is important to point out a significant difference between these people who promote "*hanyu* phenomenology" and those other people who promote "*hanyu* philosophy," and it is the following: Although the *hanyu* phenomenology people have recently started talking about

14 A conference held in Taiwan in 2007, co-organized by universities from mainland China and Taiwan, is called "The Interactions between *hanyu* 漢語 philosophy and *deyu* 德語 philosophy."

15 Long before the *hanyu zhexue* discourse, scholars such as Zhang Dongsun and Chad Hansen (who is influenced by Zhang Dongsun) had already articulated the idea that the early Chinese thinkers' philosophy of mind and philosophy of language are determined by their perception of distinctive features of the Chinese language. For a detailed critique of Zhang and Hansen, see Xiao (2006, 2018).

how *hanyu* phenomenology should have its own distinctive features that make it different from Western phenomenology, and that what they do when they do *hanyu* phenomenology should not be a mere translating or copying of Western phenomenology, they do not claim that these distinctive features of *hanyu* phenomenology are determined by the distinctive characteristics of *hanyu*. In other words, they are not using *hanyu* phenomenology in its strong sense (any phenomenology done in *hanyu* whose distinctive features are determined by the distinctive features of *hanyu*), rather, they are using the term in its weak sense (any phenomenology done in Chinese).

I want to end this paper by presenting arguments about why we should not equate *hanyu* philosophy (in either its weak or strong sense) with Chinese philosophy, and why we should keep the term Chinese philosophy and should not replace it with *hanyu* philosophy.

We may start with the strong sense of the term, which is intimately connected to the HYZX thesis. Now if the thesis turns out to be undetermined or false, then we should not use the term in its strong sense. As I have shown, the HYZX thesis is indeed undetermined or even false (under certain interpretations).[16] And this is reason enough not to use the term "*hanyu zhexue*" in its strong sense.

What about the term "*hanyu* philosophy" in its weak sense? Should we jettison "*zhongguo zhexue*" (Chinese philosophy), and replace it with *hanyu* philosophy in the sense of any philosophy done in *hanyu*? The answer is obviously no. The scope of Chinese philosophy is obviously much larger than the scope of *hanyu* philosophy. There are people who self-identify themselves as Chinese philosophers or as scholars doing Chinese philosophy, characterizing what they do as Chinese philosophy, but not all of them write in Chinese, and some of them write in other languages, such as Tibetan, Korean, Japanese, English, French, and German. In other words, we should keep the term "Chinese philosophy" as a large umbrella term, under which we can include *guhanyu zhexue* 古漢語哲學 (philosophy done in classical Chinese), *xiandai hanyu zhexue* 現代漢語哲學 (philosophy done in modern Chinese), *zangyu zhexue* 藏語哲學 (philosophy done in Tibetan). The canonic Buddhist texts written

[16] See Xiao (2005–6, 2006, 2018, and forthcoming).

in Tibetan, as well as Tibetan scholars' books on Buddhism written in Tibetan today, should be included as part of Chinese philosophy, even though they are not written in Chinese. It seems quite clear that the source of our disagreement with those who equate Chinese philosophy and *hanyu* philosophy has to be located in our different understandings of what it means to be "Chinese." They seem to equate it with being a Chinese-speaker, whereas we do not.

In other words, "Chinese philosophy" can be done in many different languages; it can be Chinese, and it can be Korean, classical Chinese, modern Chinese, English, or any other languages. For example, I have written two papers on the *hanyu zhexue* discourse recently, one in Chinese (Xiao forthcoming) and one in English (the one you are reading now), and there are a lot of overlapping material and ideas between the two. I think everyone would agree that it makes no sense if one paper is, whereas the other paper is not, counted as part of "Chinese philosophy."

Here is another example. Several modern classics in the study of Chinese philosophy in the English-speaking world, such as Herbert Fingarette's *Confucius: The Secular as Sacred*, A. C. Graham's *Disputers of Tao*, and David S. Nivison's *The Ways of Confucianism*, have now all been translated into Chinese. I believe no one would deny that they were already parts of Chinese philosophy *before* they were translated into Chinese. It only makes sense to say that they were not parts of *hanyu* philosophy in the sense of any philosophy done in Chinese until they were translated into Chinese. However, it makes absolutely no sense to claim that they were not parts of Chinese philosophy until they were translated into Chinese. This indicates clearly that we cannot use "Chinese philosophy" and "*hanyu* philosophy" interchangeably.

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Critiquing Heavily Normative Conceptions of Harmony: *Thoughts from the* Han Feizi

Eirik Lang Harris*

Abstract

The idea of harmony is valued in a wide variety of ways by a wide variety of thinkers in early China. It is certainly most prominent in Confucian texts, for which it is a clear and distinctive good both morally and politically. However, texts like the *Laozi* and the *Zhuangzi* also have normative visions that can be conceptualized in terms of harmony. Furthermore, harmony has an important role to play even in much more "realist" texts such as the *Han Feizi*.

This paper will argue that it is possible to think through Han Fei's political system from the perspective of a broader concept of harmony, and that in doing so, several important points may be revealed. First, insofar as harmony has a positive role to play, it must be systematized and turned into an objective standard. Second, this objective standard must be hooked up to the overarching cosmic *dao*, and third, this conception of harmony is necessarily stripped of any moral normativity.

Thinking through harmony in this way may have a range of benefits not only for understanding the concept in its original historical context, but also in thinking through ways in which it may be of value today. It will perhaps force us to realize that there are a range of incompatible conceptions of harmony. As such, there may be a need to evaluate the disputations over these various conceptions of harmony as we try to ascertain what, if anything, from them may profitably be brought into conversation with contemporary political philosophy.

Keywords: harmony, *Han Feizi*, Confucianism, Legalism, political philosophy, political order

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The idea of harmony is valued in a wide variety of ways by a wide variety of thinkers in early China. It is certainly most prominent in Confucian texts, for which it is a clear and distinctive good both morally and politically. However, texts like the *Laozi* 老子 and the *Zhuangzi* 莊子 also have normative visions that can be conceptualized in terms of harmony. Furthermore, as I hope to demonstrate here, harmony has an important role to play even in much more "realist" texts such as the *Han Feizi* 韓非子. Now, it may seem strange to investigate the idea of harmony in the *Han Feizi*, for a variety of reasons. First, the *Han Feizi* is often read as a primarily political text with little concern for moral issues, while the idea of harmony, in early China at least, is often imbued with substantive normative content.[1] Second, discussions of harmony in early China focus on the term *he* 和, but this term occurs quite infrequently in the *Han Feizi*, only appearing 44 times in the entire text. Once we remove the instances where it serves as a surname (12 times) and those where it is used in a military context either to refer to making peace (7 times) or to a rank (8 times), we are left with only a handful of instances of *he* in its meaning of 'harmony' from which to glean its importance to Han Fei. If we expand our search in an attempt to discern a broader "Legalist" understanding of *he*, it is soon evident that we will not get much further, for it only appears three times in the *Shangjunshu* 商君書 (Book of Lord Shang), twice in the remaining fragments attributed to Shen Dao 慎到, and not at all in those attributed to *Shen Buhai* 申不害.[2]

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1 The exact force of this normativity varies substantively, of course. For the Confucians, it is a strong moral normativity. In texts such as the *Laozi* and *Zhuangzi*, however, it tends to be connected more to according with the natural order, though this is something that these texts do think that in some sense we 'ought' to do. And even in the *Han Feizi*, there is an element of normativity, though it is a nonmoral normativity. Although it is not possible to go into it here, it may be possible to think in terms of degrees of normativity, with the Confucian conception of harmony being the most heavily normative and the *Han Feizi*'s notion the least normative. And examining where the Daoists fit on this scale may lead us to better understand why in some respects the *Han Feizi* resonates with certain aspects of Daoist conceptions of harmony.

2 For more on the *Book of Lord Shang*, see Duyvendak (1928) and Pines (2017). For Shen Dao, see Harris (2016), and for Shen Buhai, see Creel (1974).

Given this apparent lack of interest in the term, one could be forgiven for assuming that the idea of harmony simply was not a priority for Han Fei or others of his ilk—and *he* certainly is not a technical term referring to an essential component of his political system in the same way as *dao* 道 (way), *fa* 法 (law), *shi* 勢 (positional power), or *shu* 術 (bureaucratic techniques).

Does it, then, make sense to discuss harmony in the *Han Feizi*? Well, the answer to this depends on what exactly it is that we are interested in and what we hope to ascertain, and there are a range of possibilities here: 1) We could be interested in how Han Fei uses the term *he*; 2) We could be interested more broadly how Han Fei's understanding and usage of *he* compares with the understanding and usage of *he* in a variety of other philosophical texts of the pre-Qin era; or 3) we could be interested in harmony as a *concept*—a concept that is not necessarily tied to a particular Chinese character.[3] While I shall briefly touch on 1) and 2) in the course of this paper, I believe that it is through investigating 3) that the *Han Feizi* may provide us with useful material.

This paper argues that it is possible to think through Han Fei's political system from the perspective of a broader concept of "harmony," and that in doing so, several important points may be revealed. First, insofar as harmony has a positive role to play, it must be systematized and turned into an objective standard. Second, this objective standard must be hooked up to the overarching cosmic *dao*, and third, this conception of harmony is necessarily stripped of any moral normativity.

Thinking through harmony in this way may have a range of benefits not only for understanding the concept in its original historical context, but also in thinking through ways in which it may be of value today. It will perhaps force us to realize that there are a range of incompatible conceptions of harmony (much as there are a range of incompatible conceptions of other important Chinese concepts, such

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[3] This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of the issues related to *he* or "harmony" that might be of philosophic interest; rather it is merely indicative of issues that may draw the interest of philosophers.

as the *dao*, "meritocracy," "virtue," and "order," among many others). As such, there may be a need to evaluate the disputations over these various conceptions of harmony as we try to ascertain what, if anything, from them may profitably be brought into conversation with contemporary political philosophy.

Much of this could, admittedly, be done without conceptualizing early Chinese political philosophy in terms of alternative conceptions of harmony.[4] However, a range of recent research appeals to different particular normative accounts of harmony as a basis of an advocacy of some version of Confucian (inspired) political theory. Often, the standards of harmony advocated in such contexts are quite vague, resulting in a high degree of opaqueness not only with regards to the standards themselves but also to (appropriate) enforcement mechanisms. As such, "harmony" can be (and it can be argued has been) utilized not only as a tool for authoritarianism but also significant degrees of moralism in the political sphere.

This is not to say that it is impossible to defend a Confucian conception of harmony as a political ideal. However, insofar as there are valid concerns with perfectionist political theories and worries about the role that "harmony" may play in constraining the actions of those under its rule, it behooves us to consider not only the value of harmony, but ways in which it can potentially be quite problematic. Once we do this, the moral normativity aspect of many conceptions of harmony may be flagged as bringing in their wake a range of characteristic concerns.

As such, it is worthwhile to contemplate the extent to which the positive values of harmony may be retained in political theories that do not include such thoroughgoing moral normativity. As detailed below, Han Fei's conception of harmony lacks such a deep moral normativity and (perhaps as a consequence of this) offers criteria that are both simpler and clearer and aim at creating and maintaining much more minimal ideals of good order. And, it could be argued,

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4 I thank an anonymous reviewer for pushing me to respond to this concern and I hope that what follows begins to show how we may benefit from an analysis in terms of harmony.

precisely because of this, such an account can leave more room for pursuing a wide range of life projects than would be permitted in a society that enforced a more heavily normative account of harmony.[5] Regardless of our final conclusions as to the appropriate conception of harmony in the political realm, conceptualizing Han Fei's political project in terms of harmony may well allow us to more clearly identify potential problems in alternate conceptions of harmony.

1. *He* in the *Han Feizi*

As noted above, Han Fei rarely uses the term *he* in his writing. Furthermore, his usages of the term indicate that he does not see *he* as having an independent normative value. Rather, there are times when it can be quite useful as well as times that it can be quite detrimental to concerns that Han Fei sees as having more fundamental value.

There are a few times when Han Fei does use the term in a fashion that makes one think he sees it as a positive attribute, such as in Chapter 8:

> And so, the enlightened ruler esteems the solitude that characterizes the [cosmic] *dao*. If the ruler and his ministers do not follow the same *dao*, then subordinates will make proposals of their own. If the ruler holds on to the claims made in these proposals, then the ministers' performance will match their proposals. When performance and proposals have become one, superiors and subordinates will be 'in harmony' (*he*). (Lau and Chen 2000, 8/11/8–9)[6]

However, elsewhere, he makes it clear that *he* can be quite detrimental, such as in Chapter 35, where he tells us:

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[5] My claim here is not that Han Fei is particularly concerned with the life projects of individuals or with providing a protected space within which individuals can develop these life prospects and prosper. However, his conception of harmony would much more readily accommodate itself to homosexual couples, for example, so long as they contribute to the strength, order, and stability of the state.

[6] 是故明君貴獨道之容. 君臣不同道, 下以名禱. 君操其名, 臣效其形, 形名參同, 上下和調也. Chinese text is cited by chapter/page number/line number, based on the relevant volume of the *ICS Ancient Chinese Texts Concordance Series*, edited by Lau and Chen.

> When those forming factions harmonize with one another and ministers and subordinates obtain what they desire, then the ruler is isolated. When all the ministers make proposals for the public good, those below will not be able 'to harmonize' (*he*) with one another, and the ruler will have a clarity of sight. (Lau and Chen 2000, 33/90/21–22)[7]

It seems, then, that Han Fei thinks of *he* more along the lines of working well together to achieve mutually beneficial ends. When this harmony arises between the ruler and subordinates, it may well be desirable. However, harmony among subordinates potentially arises at the expense of the ruler and as such is not to be prized because it poses a threat to the ruler's power and society's good order. However, while Han Fei's ambivalent usage of the term *he* may prevent us from moving forward and ascertaining a *Han Feizian* conception of *he*, there is another potentially more profitable way forward.[8]

2. Harmony through Thick and Thin

Rather than begin by focusing on how Han Fei uses the term *he*, we can begin by examining harmony—not as a particular Chinese term—but as a broader concept, and ascertain how and to what extent Han Fei is concerned with such a concept. In making this move, I rely upon a framework first applied to the Chinese tradition by Bryan W. Van Norden—that of thick and thin accounts. As Van Norden notes:

> We can give a "thin" description, which has little theoretical content, and which can be shared by a broad range of participants in a discussion, who might disagree significantly over many other matters. (Van Norden 2003, 100)[9]

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7 朋黨相和, 臣下得欲, 則人主孤; 群臣公擧, 下不相和, 則人主明.

8 Although I lack the space to delve into it here, searching the text for other terms for harmony (including *mu* 睦, *xie* 諧, *tong* 同, and *yi* 一) yields either their absence or a similarly ambiguous position of their desirability.

9 Van Norden himself attributes the use of this distinction to Gilbert Ryle, Clifford Geertz, Bernard Williams, and Martha Nussbaum. See also Van Norden (2007).

A thin description of the Sun, for example, may be "the large bright thing in the sky during the day that illuminates the Earth when it is not too cloudy."[10] Such a thin description would allow for a wide variety of thicker descriptions of the sun: as a mass of fusing hydrogen and helium—à la contemporary physics, as a god—à la the Aztecs, or as a hot stone—à la Anaxagoras. We could imagine a debate among people holding these various thick accounts of what the Sun is because we can understand the three as sharing a thin description of the Sun—whatever that bright glowing thing up there in the sky is—even though they have very different thick accounts about just what that thing up there consists of.

In much the same way that it makes sense to talk about an overarching thin description of the "Sun" shared by many who have competing and incompatible thick descriptions of the 'Sun,' we can understand people with particular and incompatible thick conceptions of harmony sharing a thinner concept of harmony. And, if our goal is to understand how we might situate Han Fei's ideas within the broader framework of early Chinese conceptions of harmony, we would want a concept that is thin enough to encompass much of what Chinese thinkers thought they were discussing, regardless of the various disagreements that they might have.

As such, I propose to think of a harmonious system in its thin sense as referring a system in which the components of that system are engaged in stable, long-term interactions that avoid debilitating conflict and chaos and allow the various components to thrive and prosper. As Chenyang Li notes:

> When a plant is harmonized with its surroundings, it thrives; when a person is harmonized with his or her environment, that person flourishes; when a society is harmonized, it prospers. . . . The ideal for humanity is not only harmony among its members but also harmony with the rest of the cosmos. (Li 2013, 17–18)

While this quote comes from Li's discussion of the Confucian conception of harmony, it is actually a rather thin concept that could

[10] I borrow these examples from Van Norden as well.

be agreed upon by, among others, Confucians interested in moral cultivation and human flourishing, Daoists interested in living in the most natural way, and Mohists interested in alleviating the harms of human conflict, even though they have thick conceptions of harmony that are mutually incompatible. And, importantly for our task here, we will see that harmony in this thin sense is something that Han Fei is interested in developing.[11]

3. Han Fei and the Harmonious State

Although he is often thought of as an autocratic totalitarian interested primarily in ensuring and enhancing the power of the ruler, as I have argued elsewhere, Han Fei is better thought of as a state consequentialist—someone interested in ensuring the strength, security, and stability of the state (Harris 2013, forthcoming). And, on his account, achieving this end requires the elimination of social and political chaos and the creation of a system in which the various parts work together in harmony so as to achieve this end. This conception of a harmonious state bears similarities to the Mohist conception insofar as it aims at the elimination of conflict among the individuals within the state, it bears similarities to the Confucian conception insofar as it is seen to be in the actual best interests of the people involved and provides them with the best chance of thriving, and it bears similarities to a Daoist conception insofar as it recognizes that none of this is possible without harmonizing not only people with one another but also people with the natural world —with Heaven and Earth, as it were.

However, while these similarities indicate that Han Fei is concerned with the thin concept of harmony as described above, he

[11] Note that there is a worry that by thinning a concept down sufficiently to allow us to say that a particular thinker is actually contributing to a conversation, there is the danger that it has been thinned down so much that it is no longer of any use to us. And perhaps this is the case here. However, I do not believe that such a determination can be made a priori. Rather, the usefulness of proposing a concept of harmony thin enough for Han Fei to join the conversation can only be determined by examining what falls out—in short, by doing the work of this paper.

fleshes out and develops what we might think of as a thick conception of harmony that is at odds with the various thick conceptions of harmony espoused by his contemporaries. In what follows, then, I lay out what I take would be Han Fei's response were we to ask him the question, "What is a harmonious society and how is it to be achieved?" where harmony is understood in terms of Li's description above.

Han Fei would argue, I believe, that a harmonious society is the result of the implementation of a social-scientific system that ensures that human beings do not come into conflict with one another. This system is a mechanistic system—a leviathan in which each individual, from the farmer up to the ruler plays the role of a cog in the machine. This system, which takes as its primary goal ensuring the strength, stability, and thriving of the state will, as a side effect, provide the greatest chance for individual survival and thriving, doing so in part because it eliminates chaos, replacing it with a political order that can be understood as a type of harmony. The way this harmony is to be achieved and maintained, however, differs substantially from the majority of his contemporaries.

In order to ensure a well ordered, harmonious state, it is necessary, Han Fei believes, to develop the above-mentioned mechanistic leviathan by relying upon an understanding of the regular, patterned features of the natural world—the cosmic *Dao*, as it were. This cosmic *Dao* placed a range of restrictions on how the socio-political leviathan could successfully be constructed, in much the same way that we today recognize that the various laws of nature place restrictions on the types of human endeavors that can be successful. We cannot, for example, plant tomatoes in the fall and hope for a nice winter harvest (unless, perhaps, we live in Singapore!), nor can we jump off of a sheer 100-meter cliff and expect to survive. Any successful system that is to bring about harmony needs to understand this and not expect the natural world to make concessions based on human desires.

In addition to understanding the natural world around us and the limitations it places upon what can be achieved, it is also necessary to understand the restrictions placed on social systems by the dispositions and natures of human beings themselves. In short, Han Fei's conception of human nature is that we are born with a relatively

stable set of interests that do not change in any significant fashion throughout our lives and, as such, are not amenable to cultivation, moral or otherwise (Flanagan and Hu 2011; Harris 2011; Bárcenas 2012; Sato 2013). Furthermore, this interest set contains, for the vast majority of individuals, primarily self-regarding interests.

Han Fei never claims that human beings are completely self-serving egoists with no concern for others. Indeed, he never denies that we have other-regarding feelings or that these feelings sometimes give rise to actions. However, he is very skeptical of the strength of other-regarding feelings in relation to our self-regarding ones. In short, on his account, which he develops on the basis of his interpretation of the empirical evidence at his disposal, the vast majority of people will act in ways that they perceive to be in their own best interest.[12]

While holding such a conception of human nature does not require that one also hold the view that dis-harmony and conflict is the inevitable result of individuals each pursuing their own interests, given a range of contingent circumstances that obtained during Han Fei's time (and, indeed all subsequent times)—namely a population whose desire for resources outstripped the availability of such resources, social harmony cannot be achieved naturally; conflict is inevitable without some system of restraint.[13] From Han Fei's perspective, this conflict was problematic because it lead to a chaotic state—and a state in internal chaos is one that at best will be less strong and stable than it otherwise could be, and at worst is in danger of being destroyed.

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12 Han Fei does discuss a range of individuals whose natures were extremely benevolent as well as those whose natures were extremely violent. However, he makes two points about such people. First, they are very rare, and second, their natures are still fairly stable. It is not that the extremely benevolent became that way through any process. Rather, they were always that way. As such, it makes no sense to try to change others so that they have a comparable level of benevolence.

13 While Xunzi seems to believe that original human nature is such that we inevitably fall into conflict if we follow along with this nature, Han Fei acknowledges there were times in the past when, due to a lack of people and a surplus of natural resources, people lived together in harmony without need of coercive restraints.

How, then, are we to create social harmony when circumstances are such that individual pursuit of interests gives rise to conflict and chaos? One answer would be that of Xunzi, who argued that social harmony could be achieved by means of a long process of moral cultivation that changed in important ways the things that people valued and the ways that they pursued them (Hutton 2016). Han Fei, however, thought that such a method was doomed to fail, for, even if it is not the case that moral cultivation is theoretically impossible, it is at best extremely difficult to achieve and as such can play no actual substantive role in social organization.

What are we left with, then? Well, if it is impossible to achieve social harmony by changing human dispositions, then the only other alternative is to work with the dispositions that human beings already have. This means developing a system that uses the fact that people act on their perceived self-interest and thus ensuring that what they perceive to be in their self-interest will be those things that lead to social harmony. Such a social harmony will not be a moral harmony, but rather a harmony of action, and there will be many ways in which it differs from Daoist, Mohist, and Confucian conceptions of harmony. If achievable, however, it will be a social harmony nonetheless, and one that, from a political perspective at least, has a range of benefits unmatched by any alternative in part because it is actually achievable.

This system takes as its basis a set of fixed standards that can be clearly observed, identified, and measured. Influenced, perhaps by the Mohists who had earlier critiqued Confucians for lacking clear, fixed standards (and who provided their own standards relating to the wealth, order, and population of the state), Han Fei wishes to provide not only clear and unambiguous standards by which the ruler can assess the actions of state employees but also standards by the which all public actions by all within the state can be assessed—by themselves as well as by others.[14]

14 Unfortunately, little work has been done examining the ways in which Han Fei was influenced by Mozi. For one such piece, see Ivanhoe (2011).

It is here that the laws that play a central role in Han Fei's system make their appearance, along with their attendant rewards and punishments. Social harmony requires that individuals restrain themselves in a variety of ways that they will not necessarily perceive to be in their own interests. If we wish to motivate individuals to restrain themselves in this way and we cannot do so by modifying the set of things that they desire or approve of, then we are left with using the desires that individuals already have to get them to act in ways that they are not initially inclined to act.

Laws against theft, for example work, Han Fei would argue, not because when we see a law against theft, we somehow come to an understanding that stealing is wrong or otherwise decide that we should not steal. Rather, laws against stealing work insofar as they change what would otherwise be in our interest to do. We can perhaps see this by looking at an example. Anyone who knows me knows that I have a great fondness for Snickers candy bars and an equally great fondness for not spending money. Therefore, all things being equal, I would prefer to walk into the nearest 7–11, grab a few Snickers bars, and walk out without paying. This satisfies two very important interests I have while not harming any other of my interests. If, however, I can go around stealing Snickers bars whenever I want, and, more seriously, if everyone in society engaged in similar actions to gain the objects of their desires, then society would quickly fall into something quite similar to a Hobbesian state of nature where life would be nasty, brutish, and short—and far from any conception of harmony.

What solutions are available to us? Well, on Han Fei's account, the most effective solution for eradicating such chaos is to work with the other interests that I have and create conditions that make it no longer in my overall interest to steal Snickers bars. This can be done by instituting a penalty or punishment on those who steal. If, for example, the penalty for stealing is getting one's hand chopped off, and if I believe that there is a very good chance that I would be caught if I tried to steal a Snickers bar, then I would no longer steal Snickers bars. I would not do this because I no longer desire Snickers bars, nor would I do it because I no longer desire

to keep my money, nor would I do it because I have developed a robust desire to avoid the moral wrong of theft. Rather I would do it because another component of my interest set—my desire to keep my hand attached to my body—has been activated and this desire to keep my hand is greater than my desire to both have candy bars and retain my money.

Now, the punishment for stealing need not be corporal punishment of this sort. What is necessary, however, is that the punishment attached to stealing is significant enough—and the punishment certain enough—that individuals perceive that it is in their self-interest to refrain from stealing. If this is the case, then theft within society will cease and to that extent society will be less chaotic and more harmonious. Moreover, if laws with their attached punishments and rewards proliferate such that they prevent a wide range of activities that would otherwise bring individuals into conflict, then the society can be thought of as a harmonious one. A society so structured is one in which the various individuals are harmonized with their social and natural environment and thus one in which the society is able to prosper.

Such a conception of harmony, of course, would not satisfy thinkers such as Kongzi 孔子 (Confucius), who proffered a strident criticism of just such a position, arguing that:

> If you guide them by means of regulations and keep them in line by means of punishments, then the people will be evasive and lack a sense of shame. If you guide them by means of virtue and keep them in line by means of ritual, then they will have a sense of shame and moreover will rectify themselves. (Lau and Chen 1995, 2.3/2/29–30)[15]

This indicates, not an aversion to the use of the law on Kongzi's part, but rather an understanding that if the only reason that someone refrains from some action is due to fear of punishment for engaging in that action, then any time that the fear of punishment is removed, there is no longer a reason to refrain from the action. As such, in any

15 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."

and all situations where an individual calculates that the chances of punishment are slight and the risk worth taking, they will engage in the undesired action, the result of which will be a decrease in harmony and an increase in social chaos. On Kongzi's account, it is only if individuals come to truly understand that an action is wrong and that they should not engage in this action and truly internalize this understanding, that they will reliably refrain from that action. As such, social harmony is both more expansive and more stable to the extent that moral cultivation is achieved.

At a certain level, there is nothing here with which Han Fei would disagree. He would accept that if it were possible to change my interest set such that I no longer desire to steal Snickers bars, or no longer approve of stealing them, this would be a more effective means of ensuring that I no longer steal Snickers bars. Further, if it were possible to change my interest set so that I no longer had an overriding motivation to steal in any situation, to this extent society would be more harmonious. More importantly, if it were possible to do this for everyone within a society (or even for substantive parts of the population), then Han Fei would not deny the potential of such a society to achieve a higher degree of harmony than could be wrought by fear of punishment or desire for reward. After all, Han Fei would acknowledge, if the only reason someone has for not breaking the law is fear of punishment, then if they have reason to believe that they will not be punished, or if they figure out some way to engage in the action they desire without violating the letter of the law, they have no incentive not to do so, and, indeed, every incentive to do just that.

There is just one slight problem. While Kongzi has identified a weakness in Han Fei's theory, his proposed solution could only work if moral cultivation were actually possible. Indeed, mere possibility is insufficient. Rather, what is required is that moral cultivation be practically efficacious across broad swaths of society. In addition, unfortunately, Han Fei would argue, human nature is such that moral cultivation cannot be broadly efficacious in this way.

Of course, it is possible to disagree with Han Fei about the practicability of moral cultivation. However, this is not merely an unsubstantiated claim that Han Fei makes. He defends it in various places

and notes that even Kongzi, the greatest sage the world has ever seen, was only able to attract some 70 followers, and among the group, only Kongzi himself truly possessed benevolence and a sense of righteousness (Lau and Chen 2000, 49/146/27ff). If even Kongzi was only able to gain 70 followers and none of these were truly virtuous, then, Han Fei believes, we can clearly conclude that most people's nature is such that they do not have the necessary potential to actually become virtuous.[16]

Han Fei's fundamental response to Kongzi's worry would look something like this:

1. Whether an individual can become moral or not depends on his particular nature.
2. The natures of human beings are predominantly such that they lack the potential to become moral.
3. An approach such as Kongzi's requires, at the very least, a significant subset of society developing morally to such a degree that they understand that a wide range of actions are wrong and to such a degree that this understanding has motivational force.
4. Therefore, Kongzi's method will not work and an alternative must be found.

So, Han Fei need not disagree that virtues such a benevolence, ritual, and righteousness, if they could serve as the sort of motivational tools that the Confucians envision, would lead to a more harmonious society at less cost than anything that Han Fei himself can offer. Unfortunately, reality rears its ugly head and demonstrates that such a view is simply untenable. Furthermore, as Eric Hutton has argued, Han Fei is very sceptical of the idea that the Confucian ideal is worth pursuing even if it is not fully realizable (Hutton 2008). Insofar as the Confucian conception of harmony contains an inner, psychological component that is not based on any fixed, identifiable,

[16] Actually, there is some ambiguity in the text that allows for alternative interpretations of this passage. Han Fei is either saying that only Kongzi himself was virtuous or that only one of Kongzi's students (Yan Hui 顏回) became truly virtuous. However, the point remains the same—do not count on moral cultivation.

and measurable set of standards, it is ripe for misuse and abuse.[17]

Given this, the only other alternative available to us is that of reward and punishment. Yes, it has its limitations. It requires not merely that we have a very well developed and pervasive system of laws and attached sanctions, but that we have very advanced surveillance systems, police forces, judiciaries, and punishment systems. After all, laws on their own accomplish nothing, as Han Fei himself often notes. It is only when those who break laws are reliably caught, found guilty of their crimes, sentenced to receive the advertised punishment and actually punished in accordance with the law that individuals have an incentive to refrain from actions that the laws prohibit. And, as anyone who drives the speed limit pretty much anywhere in the world realizes as they are continually passed by speeding drivers, such certainty is extremely difficult to achieve.

Now, there are, of course, a range of criticisms that could be levied against Han Fei's system as described above, and while I cannot address them all there, there is one that stands out. We might acknowledge that Han Fei's system could work in easing conflict within a state. I, for one, would cease stealing Snickers bars if I thought I might lose my hand! However, we might think that a well-developed system of punishment itself introduces a significant element of disharmony into society. After all, punishment has significant social costs and the implementation of a scheme of punishment is in and of itself an implementation of an element of disharmony.[18] Some may find it difficult to describe a socio-political system that regularly engages in the punishment of its members as a harmonious system. And if this is the case, then the worry is that while his system may decrease certain kinds of chaos, it does so only by introducing other types of chaos.

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17 I thank an anonymous reviewer for helping me to draw out this point.

18 On a related note, utilitarians such as Jeremy Bentham discuss at length the dis-utility of punishments and argue that they can only be justified if the benefits outweigh these significant costs. However, while Han Fei would agree with Bentham about the material costs—a system of surveillance, assessment, and punishment takes funding that could otherwise be used elsewhere—he is not concerned about psychological costs such as the various pains and pleasures that may arise from his system.

However, Han Fei does have an answer to this charge. In Han Fei's ideal system, punishments are not actually carried out. Rather, following an idea explicitly borrowed from Shang Yang, Han Fei argues for using punishments to eliminate punishments:

> Gongsun Yang [Shang Yang] said, "If, in implementing punishment one treats light offences severely, then light offences will not occur and heavy offences will not arise." (Lau and Chen 2000, 30/65/16)[19]

The idea here is that it is possible to achieve a state in which no one actually violates the laws and thus one in which no one is punished. In such a state, it makes sense to say that punishments have been used to eliminate punishments—that the threat of punishment is sufficient to ensure that no punishments actually need to be implemented.[20]

Furthermore, it is extremely important to understand that the system that Han Fei envisions is not one in which the ruler (or ministers) arbitrarily punish members of the society. Rather, punishments can only be implemented when these punishments are the advertised sanctions for the violations of publicly promulgated laws. And an implication of this is that they will be regarded by all as being as reliable, unavoidable, and impersonal as the laws of nature.

This, then, leads us back to a point made earlier in our discussion, that what Han Fei wishes to implement is a fixed *system*, a predictable, reliable, mechanical system where everyone plays their role and by doing so does not come into conflict with other members of their society, leading to the highest degree of social harmony that can realistically be achieved.

It may be useful to draw out more explicitly the ways in which this system is related to harmony. The problem with rule by man, no matter how good, sagely, or cultivated that man is, is that they will

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19 一曰, 公孫鞅曰, "行刑重其輕者. 輕者不至, 重者不來, 是謂以刑去刑." See also Lau and Chen (2000, 53/156/15). The *Book of Lord Shang* itself talks variously of 以法去法 and 以刑去刑. See, in particular, chapter 13.

20 Such a view arguing that strict punishments are justified because of their preventative power has had long and continued support, both in the realm of legal theory and in arguments made for actual legislation.

act based on their own personal views. As Han Fei says:

> Therefore, what preserves the state is not benevolence or standards of righteousness. Those who are benevolent are loving and kind and take wealth lightly. Those who are cruel have hearts that are harsh and easily punish. If one is loving and kind, then one cannot bear to do certain things. If one takes wealth lightly, then one is fond of giving to others. If one is harsh, then a hate-filled heart will manifest itself toward subordinates. If one easily punishes, then rash executions will be applied to the people. If there are things that one cannot bear to do, then punishments will often be forgiven and waived. If one is fond of giving to others, then rewards in many cases will lack a corresponding achievement. If a hate-filled heart manifests itself, then those below will resent their superiors. If rash executions are instituted, then the people will rebel.
>
> So, when a benevolent individual is in power, those below will be unrestrained and think little of violating prohibitions and laws. They will look to luck and be lazy, and will hope for good things from their superior. When a cruel individual is in power, then laws and orders will be rashly applied, and the relationship between ministers and their ruler will be one of opposition. The people will be resentful and hearts bent on disorder will arise. Therefore it is said: Both those who are benevolent and those who are cruel will ruin the state. (Lau and Chen 2000, 47/141/9–13)[21]

The chaos and destruction of rulers like the Tyrants Jie and Zhou is significant and arises in part because they were cruel sovereigns who indiscriminately punished individuals. However, on Han Fei's account, the chaos arose not because of their personal vices, but because they were rulers who did not follow a fixed legal system. Furthermore, a consequence of this is that there would be similar chaos if there existed, rather than a cruel sovereign, a sagely, benevolent one who equally discarded fixed standards for the

21 故存國者, 非仁義也. 仁者, 慈惠而輕財者也; 暴者, 心毅而易誅者也. 慈惠則不忍, 輕財則好與. 心毅則憎心見於下, 易誅則妄殺加於人. 不忍則罰多宥赦, 好與則賞多無功. 憎心見則下怨其上, 妄誅則民將背叛. 故仁人在位, 下肆而輕犯禁法, 偷幸而望於上; 暴人在位, 則法令妄而臣主乖, 民怨而亂心生. 故曰, 仁暴者, 皆亡國者也.

implementation of punishments and rewards following, instead, his own sense of how he should act.

Benevolent rulers will tend to be loving and kind toward their subjects, caring not for wealth. The problem, Han Fei claims, is that this will lead them to giving away the wealth of the state to those who are undeserving while at the same time waiving punishments for the deserving, where desert is understood as arising out of according with the laws of the state. The result of a ruler acting in this way is that the people will cease to follow the laws and no longer work hard for achievements. Rather, they will laze around and rely upon the generosity of their ruler.

A ruler acting out of his love for the people is acting in a way detrimental to the long-term interests of the state and, by extension, to the long-term interests of the people within the state. Moreover, while initially there might be an upswing in harmony, as state coffers are drained and as people see others receiving rewards that are undeserved or escaping deserved punishments, chaos and conflict will return with a vengeance.

This does not mean, of course, that the ruler should act in a vicious fashion either, however. Rather, for Han Fei, both acting out of vice and acting out of virtue are certain to lead to the destruction of the state, and thus to circumstances of extreme disharmony. Rather, the ruler needs to abandon his own feelings and emotions as guidelines for governing, and this is only possible through establishing a legal system and adhering to it without exception. As Han Fei says:

> Therefore the ruler who understands the Way distances himself from benevolence and standards of righteousness, sets aside [his own] intelligence and ability and makes the people submit to the law. Because of this [the ruler's] fame will be widespread and his name will be awe-inspiring. His people will be well ordered and his state at peace. [This is a result of his] understanding the methods of employing the people. (Lau and Chen 2000, 44/132/12–13)[22]

[22] 故有道之主, 遠仁義, 去智能, 服之以法. 是以譽廣而名威, 民治而國安, 知用民之法也.

The law is impersonal and is thus not tempted to change based on feelings. Rather it is designed so that those actions leading to order are rewarded while those leading away from order are punished. If set up appropriately, the legal system of a state will be as inviolable as the laws of nature. Just as we can live in harmony with nature by coming to a deeper understanding of her laws—and according with them as opposed to fighting against them, so too can we live in social harmony by coming to a deeper understanding of the laws of the state and according with them as opposed to fighting against them. And in doing so, Han Fei believes, we will create a deeper, longer-lasting, and more substantive order—and thus harmony—than anything offered by his contemporaries.

It is also important to note that such a vision of order and harmony lacks any substantive moral normativity. For the Confucians, Mohists, and even the Daoists, the harmony achieved in their respective social visions is seen as morally good. Indeed, many of these thinkers argue that the reason why their preferred social system achieves harmony is precisely because it is built upon substantive moral foundations. Han Fei, however, explicitly rejects such a view, believing that there is no necessary connection between morality on the one hand and social and political order or harmony on the other. He advocates for the vision of harmony and order described above not because he sees it as morally good. This is not to say that his political theory lacks any normativity. He clearly talks in terms of 'shoulds' and 'oughts'. However, normativity need not be moral, and certainly it need not be substantively moral in the ways that most other thinkers of Han Fei's time seemed to presuppose. For Han Fei, the claim that the state or the ruler ought to do certain things is not an argument based on moral reason but rather an argument based upon the real practical benefits of such order. An ordered state is one that has a higher chance of survival and one in which those within the state have a higher chance of survival. So, if those within the state wish to maximize their chances of survival, then they ought, Han Fei believes, to implement his proposals. If, however, one does not care about order, if one happens to prefer an environment that is, in Hobbes's terms, "nasty, brutish, and short," then Han Fei has nothing

to say. In more Kantian terms, what Han Fei offers is a hypothetical rather than a categorical imperative.[23]

4. Conclusion

Han Fei's vision for a stable, well-governed, orderly state with its attendant social harmony is in many ways quite different from the visions of many of his contemporaries. For one, it is not a moral vision. He never argues that harmony is a morally justified or morally desirable state of affairs. Furthermore, he does not seem to think that a subjective experience of harmony is even a (nonmoral) psychological good.[24] To the extent that harmony is desirable, it is so because a harmonious society is one in which the state (and, consequently, although derivatively, its people), has the best chance of surviving and thriving. In addition, this means that Han Fei's vision of harmony looks substantially different in many ways from the visions of his rivals.

Unlike the various Confucian thinkers, and also unlike the Daoists, Han Fei's conception of social harmony does not concern itself with the rich psychological inner life of human beings. It is not a harmony that arises when people develop themselves into the best that they can be; it is not the harmony arising when people are able to fulfill their psychological needs in a way that allows them to engage with others within their society and truly flourish as members of a supportive community.

Han Fei's moral psychology is as sparse as that of the Mohists, and he seems equally uninterested in our inner lives and thus very

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[23] An implication of this is that Han Fei is working with a view of political normativity that is not ultimately reducible to moral normativity. For a contemporary argument that makes a similar claim, see Southwood (2003). I thank an anonymous reviewer for pushing me to clarify this issue.

[24] Nor does he seem to think that the subjective experience of chaos or disharmony is a (nonmoral) psychological bad. Rather, the value of harmony is purely instrumental. In this regard, he differs from both the Confucians and the Daoists for whom both avoiding disharmony and experiencing harmony are core goods.

dismissive of the possibility that tensions between external demands placed upon us and the internal demands of our psychology might lead to significant disharmonies even if our actions are harmonious. This is perhaps exacerbated by the fact that while he does share some similarities with the Mohists, he does not think, as the Mohists at times seem to, that social harmony arises from unifying conceptions of right and wrong—by getting everyone to not only do what the ruler demands, but to change their motivational set such that they agree that these demands are appropriate. Recall that on Han Fei's account, our motivational sets cannot be changed in any substantive fashion, regardless of the desires of our rulers. Therefore, on his account, not only can we not develop ourselves so as to take part in a richer, psychologically edifying life of virtue alongside those around us, we also cannot come to agreement with others around us about what is good or desirable. As such, the social harmony achieved is merely a harmony of action—by adhering to the overarching system and never deviating from its dictates, all the various cogs in the machine will operate without conflict, much as we might think of the harmonious inner workings of a fine clock or watch.

There is, however, a worry that this might lead to what might be termed a schizophrenia of motives.[25] The problem here is one similar to one that Bernard Williams diagnoses in utilitarianism. According to Williams, an agent who is acting in a utilitarian fashion and considering only what will do the greatest good cannot give pride of place to his or her own stable commitments, and must be willing to relinquish them should the utilitarian calculus so require (Williams 1973). In Han Fei's system, a similar thing must occur. In Han Fei's ideal society, members must give pride of place to the system as constructed rather than to his or her own stable commitments and must be willing, in action at least, to give up the latter should Han Fei's legal system so require. This is potentially problematic because our personal commitments are our commitments because of the importance we place upon them. In addition, our willingness to relinquish them in

[25] I borrow the idea of schizophrenia from Michael Stocker. His concern is not identical but is closely related (Stocker 1976).

the manner that utilitarianism (or Han Fei's state consequentialism) requires could lead to a schism in our motivational set.

This is perhaps primarily a worry for the ruler rather than ordinary individuals within the state insofar as a much greater range of the ruler's actions are necessarily of political import as opposed to private. If it is the case that ordinary individuals are in many instances free to act as they please, subject only to the constraint that their actions not violate the law, then Han Fei's system may actually provide more freedom and less of a worry of such a schizophrenia than might arise from following alternate political visions.[26] Whether it does so, though, depends upon how pervasive the system of law that Han Fei envisions actually would be. Moreover, this would depend on a deeper analysis of the extent to which we can truly separate those actions of individuals that are truly private from those that have an impact on the order—and harmony—of the state itself.

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[26] As one reviewer noted, the Confucian interest in ritual that makes prescriptions for even the most minute details of people's lives—from the clothing they wear to the music they listen to—may be even more susceptible to Williams' worry, precisely because it is a comprehensive moral doctrine.

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Feature Book Review: *A History of Chinese Political Thought*

A History of Chinese Political Thought, by Youngmin Kim. Cambridge, UK and Malden, MA: Polity, 2018, x + 273 pages. $26.95. Paperback. ISBN 9780745652474.

Jiyan Qiao*

Befitting the author's global background, a Korean trained in the US writing on China, this introductory book not only makes an important first step in approaching Chinese political thought historically, but also contributes to ongoing methodological discussions in the discipline of intellectual history at a moment when it is reconfiguring itself while turning global.[1] Benefitting from what has been addressed by previous reviewers, this review focuses on the methodological choices Professor Youngmin Kim made when tackling the formidable task of writing a history of Chinese political thought from Confucius to the present while remaining faithful to historicity. I first discuss where his approach figures in the two scholarly communities that are coming closer than ever but are yet to be joined together—sinologists with an

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[1] For a survey of the global turn in the discipline of intellectual history as well as the fields of political theory and middle period China since the beginning of this century in an attempt to bridge these three scholarly communities, see Jiyan Qiao (2020), Introduction. On the need to overcome the customary divide between history of political thought and political theory, see Eric Nelson (2019, xi). I am grateful to Peter Bol for asking me to take the course he taught with David Armitage on methods in intellectual history in 2013 and to Quentin Skinner for helpful exchanges in 2016–2017.

interest in political thought and Western[2] intellectual historians with an interest in China—and then propose a few ways in which we can build on Kim's work and move forward.

Since the early twentieth century, there have been many histories of Chinese political thought, if few in English.[3] Compared with them, this slim book is neither comprehensive in topical coverage nor in-depth on any period. Not every reader will necessarily agree with Kim's interpretation of selective texts or the main theme he chose for each dynastic cycle, either. The new ground Kim broke lies in having discarded two prevailing assumptions that have been driving such histories to date: nationalism and the idea that Chinese political thought can be reduced to a few essential features that persist throughout Chinese history. In Kim's account, Chinese political thought does not have such essences, nor is there one "China." Rather, Chinese identity—one of the five threads holding the book together—is shown to be constantly contested and in continual negotiation. Moreover, authoritarianism by no means defines Chinese political thought, which Kim shows to be a rich source from which interesting thinking resources can be drawn, like the metaphysical republic discussed in Chapter 6. Perhaps most importantly, while Kim makes it clear from the opening lines in the Preface that in writing this book, he is responding to rising interest in China among nonsinologists, he does not write in the language of John Rawls or under any other Western conceptual framework.[4] Different from the vast and rapidly growing literature on Confucian political theory, like the voluminous works on Confucian democracy or Confucian perfectionism, Kim treats Chinese political thought on its own terms.

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[2] Various other words are used to refer to this concept, like "Europe" and "Euro-America," and scholars do not always agree on what it precisely refers to. However, there seems to be a consensus on what it does not refer to, like China, India, or the Middle East. For this reason, I shall use "Western" as a convenient designation while not taking its content as fixed.

[3] Kim (2018, 1-2) reviewed this literature.

[4] The profound critiques of Rawlsian political philosophy launched by Forrester Katrina (2019) and Eric Nelson (2019) are changing the configurations of western political philosophy by restoring Rawls to his contexts.

These make the book a starting point in a new approach to Chinese political thought that promises to make the subject more interesting to sinologists[5] and more capable of standing up to rigorous scholarly scrutiny among historians of political thought globally speaking. Of course, the downside of challenging the reader's expectations is that it may not immediately resonate with them. The patient reader with an open mind, however, shall be rewarded by gaining a sense of the internal dynamism and diversity of Chinese political thought, the main goal Kim aimed for in this preliminary step.

Other than helping to get the nonsinologist reader off to a good start, this book also made a timely contribution to the discipline of intellectual history, which in some circles consists mainly of history of political thought.[6] Since especially 2010, partly in response to the crisis of humanities in a neoliberal world,[7] two trends have been on the rise unabatedly: the return of the history of ideas (McMahon 2014) and global intellectual history (Moyn and Sartori 2013). Two sides of the same coin, both stem from a desire to free ideas from being contained (Gordon 2014, 35) by their historical worlds, the former in time, the latter in space.[8] This made the contextual method most influentially articulated by Quentin Skinner (1969) and practiced, with variations under a family resemblance,[9] by a number of historians of political thought affiliated to Cambridge University at

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[5] Yuri Pines (2009, 6-7; 2012, 1) notes the declining interest in political thought and political culture among China scholars over the past few decades. Part of the reason has to be that past accounts, driven by nationalism and essentialization, were not interestingly written.

[6] Especially at Cambridge University. This is less so among sinologists, who as Pines notes have become less interested in things political. In the field of middle period China, intellectual history has long been focused on cultural thought. With scholars like Peter Bol taking up political theory (https://globalinstitute.harvard.edu/political-meritocracy-comparative-historical-perspective), the situation is changing. All websites were last accessed on February 15, 2020.

[7] This has led to rising presentism (McMahon 2014, 25) among historians, for which David Armitage (2020) produced a justification.

[8] Sanjay Subrahmanyam (2015) points out the latter is in a Marxist vein. Ian Hunter (2019, 187) notes the left-Hegelianist nature of Gordon's position, which Gordon himself acknowledges (Gordon 2014, 49).

[9] Samuel James (2019) problematizes this so-called school.

one point or another, inconvenient. As a result, concerted criticism was launched on this commonly agreed methodology in the historical study of past intellectual life,[10] while new approaches were being proposed and the very identity of intellectual history became open to redefinition.[11] By now, as Antony Black (2019, 2) implied in his review of Kim's book for *Global Intellectual History*, a journal debuting in 2016 amidst these developments, the discipline has entered a "post-Skinner, post-Pocock age."[12]

Black is right to regard Kim's book as having contributed to historians of Western political thought methodologically, but perhaps in less conspicuous ways. First, while covering a similar temporal span, Kim's approach is qualitatively different from the neo-Lovejovian (Gordon 2014, 35)[13] history of ideas advocated by scholars like Darrin McMahon (2006, 2014) and David Armitage (2012, 2017). Rather, this book was written with the contextual method throughout: Kim opens each chapter with a painstaking reconstruction of the context, sometimes devoting half of the chapter to it (like in Chapters 4, 5, and 6),[14] before beginning to discuss the political thought in this period. Instead of tracing the genesis and metamorphosis of an idea over two thousand years, Kim treats a *different* theme in each chapter. Underlying this is an assumption that as times change, so do the questions. Like R. G. Collingwood, Kim does not think there are perennial questions across time or one idea running through Chinese history. As a

[10] Peter Gordon (2014) and Martin Jay (2011) provided the most theoretical critique.

[11] Among them, the one put forward by Peter Gordon (2014) amounts to having intellectual history let go of its grounding in history and become philosophy instead. Eric Nelson (2019, xi), however, recently said crisply: "getting the history right will often enable us to do better philosophy."

[12] See also McMahon and Moyn (2014). By putting "interim" before "intellectual history" in their introduction to a book titled *Rethinking Modern European Intellectual History*, they suggest the existing paradigm is to be discarded, even while a new one is yet to be settled upon. With all the new projects undertaken since then (for more on this, see Qiao [2020, introduction]), by 2019, Black's perception of the current state of the discipline indicates their goal has been partly attained.

[13] Essentializing is a key feature of the Lovejovian approach to intellectual history (e.g., Lovejoy [1941, 266]) that the neo-Lovejovians are carrying forward. In this sense, Kim's fight against essentialization in this book took on a global relevance.

[14] It should be noted that Kim's is not just linguistic context, but the more wide-ranging social-political contexts that make up the historical world.

matter of fact, Kim did not even take ideas as the subject matter of his book, but rather the "thinking agents" (p. 17).[15] It is precisely with this agent-based approach that he was able to steer clear of stereotyping or essentializing Chinese political thought, thereby succeeding in presenting it as a living tradition that changes over time and has great complexity within each period. In so doing, Kim points toward an alternative, albeit perhaps much more demanding, way to do longue durée intellectual history.

Second, while Kim did not state it explicitly, he was also exploring writing global intellectual history—he opens the book by addressing rising interest in China amidst the ongoing global turn across Western academia and closes it by pondering over the larger issues raised by China's rise as a global power to this globalized world. Moreover, going out of his way to make this book user-friendly to nonsinologists (p. x), he customized it for a global audience. And, with what Lowbna El Amine (2019, 3) called his "ecumenical knowledge," he freely drew upon or otherwise engaged with Western material where relatable, juxtaposing the Chinese case side by side with the Western one. On the other hand, while foreign relations were given an important role in each period's political formation and thereby political thought, Kim's case studies in the nine main chapters were not about the global circulation of ideas or thought on the global but were firmly grounded in the local. In this way, that is, studying the local under a global lens in order for it to have greater global relevance, the book points toward an alternative way to do global intellectual history that adds a much-needed perspective from an arguably non- Western[16] scholar working on non-Western material to the discussions on the tension between the local and the global. In its gist, Kim's approach is strikingly similar to the one J. G. A. Pocock, whose

[15] Kim did not engage such a question like "Can the subaltern speak?" that is current among scholars of post-colonial and global studies, but simply operated on the assumption that everyone has agency in Chinese history. This in effect refutes, with eloquent silence, the premise on which such questions rest.

[16] In this age of global citizenship, it is hard to decide whether Kim, trained and having worked full-time in the US, is still non-Western, even though he was born and raised up in East Asia.

methodological statements Kim invoked a number of times (e.g., pp. 15, 17–18, 186), recently put forward. Against the proposition that "'the quest for the global' entails a critique if not an abandonment of the concept of 'context,'" in an article titled "On the Unglobality of Contexts: Cambridge Methods and the History of Political Thought," Pocock argued for the necessity to continue studying the local as well as to "retain the use of the methods of preglobal historiography," on the grounds that different language-worlds will continue to exist actively in a globalized world (Pocock 2019, 1, 7, and 10). While Pocock, an historian of Western political thought, can hardly avoid being suspected of sounding a conservative note with an apparent attempt to justify parochialism, Kim's contextualized study of mainly premodern Chinese political thought for current global relevance has shown that the same method applies to a different language-world and that the local, if not yet connected to the global, should be studied on its own. On the one hand, the focus on the local does not undermine its global relevance. Rather, it seems to be Kim's assumption that the deeply local is global, given human communality. On the other, studying the local under a global lens entails no small change: as can be seen from the Preface, it shaped how Kim conceptualized the research from the beginning and guided his decision on how to formulate the results. And, of course, one needs to be globally knowledgeable, as Kim has made the efforts to be so, to be able to juxtapose different local cases side by side.

Another methodological contribution Kim's book made is on extending the temporal range for global intellectual history. In the Introduction to *Global Intellectual History*, a programmatic book for this new subdiscipline, the editors Samuel Moyn and Andrew Sartori kept invoking Joseph Levenson (1920–1969),[17] the one and only intellectual historian of China to be found there (Moyn and Sartori 2013, 6). In Kim's book, however, we find many scholars working on China's intellectual past, but no Levenson. To a great extent, this discrepancy has something to do with the former's focus on the

[17] Despite his great achievements in the immediate postwar decades, through the use of "Confucian China," Levenson (1958) belongs to those who essentialize China.

"modern" period,[18] or more precisely, the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. When reviewing this edited book, Sanjay Subrahmanyam (2015, 131) has pointed out that this "lack of chronological depth" does not help with redressing the problem of Euro-centrism that practitioners of this new type of intellectual history apparently take issue with. Pushing this one step further, one could say that restricting global intellectual history to the few centuries when Europe dominated global knowledge production risks being essentially an extension of Hegelian universal history. By contrast, except for a few pages in Chapter 10 and the foray in the Epilogue, Kim's book almost exclusively deals with the centuries before the nineteenth, the supposed time when "globalization" began.[19] Like the proponents of the "Global Middle Ages" (Holmes and Standen 2018), Kim, himself a scholar of middle period China,[20] takes it as a given that one can study the premodern period from a global perspective.

Finally, as El Amine has noted, Kim did not just study philosophical works, but made ample, and good, use of literary and art pieces as well. For example, in Chapter 5, he used the "Tale of Oriole" to present mid-Tang mainstream thought as a contrast to the new ideas put forward by men like Han Yu 韓愈 (768–824); in Chapter 10, he used paintings to tap into the thinking of the Qing emperors on how to govern a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural empire. Worth noting also is Kim's taking classical commentaries as sources of political thought (pp. 21–22, 129, 164ff, 184), an approach shared by some historians of Western political thought, like Sophie Smith (2018) and Anna Becker (2017) in their work on Aristotelian commentaries. Underlying Kim's use of such diverse forms of material is a conception of the identity of intellectual history that is much broader than history of philosophy.[21]

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[18] While critical of Moyn and Sartori's project, Duncan Bell (2013) nonetheless shares their temporal focus.

[19] In recent years, this has been challenged by some medievalists, like Catherine Holmes and Naomi Standen (2018) and Carol Symes (2014). From its title, it seems Valerie Hansen (2020) seeks to establish the starting point at 1000.

[20] Roughly from Tang to Ming. Not using "medieval" or "middle ages" to call this period implies the European conception of time does not necessarily apply to China.

[21] On the relationship between intellectual history and history of philosophy, see Mandelbaum (1965).

Taken as a whole, the methodological choices Kim made in writing this book constitute interventions not just in approaching Chinese political thought more historically, but also in what intellectual history is and how to do it at a critical moment when it is undergoing profound and perhaps irreversible changes. His having produced a historically-grounded interpretation of the diverse sources in Chinese political thought by applying the contextual method onto Chinese material suggests that shared historical method could be a common ground on which trust can be built and comparisons made among scholars working on various local worlds. Having such a common ground helps intellectual history to be reconstituted as truly global in character while retaining some disciplinary unity. To historians of Western political thought, this is not "methodological nationalism"—"global" being a *spatial* attribute and contextualism a *method*, the former does not necessarily entail discarding the latter;[22] to historians of Chinese political thought, this is not welcoming methodological imperialism—ultimately, what calls the shots is helpfulness in our getting right about the past. As Ian Hunter recently demonstrated, the contextual method has a long history in the West that began centuries before the few figures usually associated with the so-called "Cambridge School." Even among them, much of Skinner's methodological writings was but an updated formulation of what Collingwood wrote in *The Idea of History* (Skinner 2001).[23] And, certainly, this is not the only method that helps in studying past intellectual life, as Kim's application of many other methods in addition to it has shown. Regardless, as Kim admitted in the beginning (p. viii), the contribution this book made was still preliminary. To move forward, more

[22] On the other hand, spatial and/or conceptual parochialism is a real issue to be addressed among them. In this regard, Christopher Goto-Jones (2009) is right to focus his critique of "Cambridge School" on Euro-centrism.

[23] That the contextual method is not any individual's patent is seen most clearly in James Hankins (2019). In a profound critique of Skinner's historical scholarship on Renaissance Italy for being anachronistic, Hankins' guiding methodology is nonetheless still contextualization: by locating the humanist virtue politics he reconstructed in the first seventeen chapters as Machiavelli's context, Hankins convincingly shows that what Machiavelli did was to make virtue irrelevant in politics rather than turning it into vice.

work needs to done, such as in the following directions.

First, fill in temporal lacunae. For practical reasons, coming as we are to an age with such deeply entrenched specialization, it is hardly imaginable for any individual scholar to be able to thoroughly command the literature on such a long temporal span. While Kim deftly drew on Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and English secondary literature, and certainly the sparse notes and concise bibliography do not reflect all the voracious reading across area and disciplinary boundaries that went into his preparations, still, much of his account has to be built on the historical work that had been done by other scholars. As such, where he takes big leaps, like from the end of Eastern Han to the founding of Tang and from the end of Tang to Southern Song, it gives an indication of where original research is needed. In particular, more work needs to be done on Northern Song political thought. The three passages on Wang Anshi 王安石 (1021–1086) (pp. 119–120) certainly do not do justice to the rich political thinking going on in the long eleventh century, a watershed period in the history of Chinese political thought with no less diversity than the Warring States period.

Second, deepen the analysis and broaden the juxtaposition. For instance, when discussing the notion of the political (pp. 47–48), one would expect to see an engagement with Michael Freeden's work (especially Freeden 2013), if not Hannah Arendt's (1958) as well;[24] when discussing the existence of a republican vision under a monarchy (p. 114), James Hankins's work on republicanism being not always exclusively nonmonarchical could help reinforce Kim's argument (Hankins 2010; 2019, chap. 3). More empirical evidence can be found to support this as well: as my dissertation shows, this monarchical republic actually first emerged in the mid-eleventh century, after Emperor Renzong 仁宗 (r. 1023–1063) fell dysfunctionally ill in 1056 and lasting till the capable Shenzong 神宗 (r. 1067–1085) took the throne in early 1067. The Southern Song one was continuing its spirit, only changing its grounding from the phenomenal world to the metaphysical.

[24] Freeden's is an updated formulation of Arendt's Aristotelian concept of the political.

Third, work out a theoretical formulation for the kind of glocal intellectual history Kim practiced in this book and more actively participate in methodological discussions going on among historians of Western political thought. After the 1960s, sinologists have not shown much interest in this regard and apparently the pressure to turn global is not as great on scholars working on China, given the inherent global nature of working on this area in the West. But as this review has shown, Kim's methodological choices, some explicitly stated, some implicitly made, are very much part of a global conversation that can be greatly enriched with the addition of perspectives of scholars working on non-Western material.[25] It is perhaps high time to bridge the gaps separating these scholarly communities.[26]

Fourth, explore alternative narrative units. While Kim's critical choice of the dynastic cycle can be justified—each dynasty was founded on the basis of a different social, institutional, and international structure, which set the contours of political issues for thinkers to respond to—one wonders if the time may be ripe for analyzing long historical cycles across several dynasties, like early China from Western Zhou to Han, or middle period China from Tang to Ming.

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[25] In addition to Kim, there are many other intellectual historians of premodern China whose work likewise exhibits methodological awareness, like Anthony DeBlasi (2002), Jeffery Moser (2012), and Curie Virág (2017). Peter Bol (2013) has made a preliminary attempt at direct methodological intervention.

[26] Through convening conferences as part of their ERC-funded projects, Hilde De Weerdt (http://chinese-empires.eu/events/conferences/) and Curie Virág (http://paixue. shca. ed.ac.uk/conferences) have been bringing scholars working on China face to face to those working on Europe and Byzantium. Under the support of a Harvard Global Initiative grant, Peter Bol is doing the same (https://globalinstitute.harvard.edu/news/political-meritocracy-comparative-historical- perspective-conference). Other than research collaboration, new teaching initiatives are also being undertaken. As early as in the 1980s, Michael Nylan had been co-teaching comparative political theory with her Western political philosophy colleague at Bryn Mawr College (Salkever and Nylan 1994). In the past few years, more and more scholars started to make similar efforts. For instance, in the early 2010s, Peter Bol taught the aforementioned course with David Armitage at Harvard, in several iterations, to train a new generation of intellectual historians who would bring a global perspective to bear on their local work (https://scholar.harvard.edu/armitage/classes/methods-intellectual-history-history-2300). From 2020 spring, he starts teaching a new course with James Hankins (https://history.fas.harvard.edu/classes/history-2114-political-meritocracy-comparative-historical-perspective-seminar) (accessed 20 Feb. 2020).

Finally, if this book goes into reprint—I hope it will, which was one reason this review was written—a few textual errors can be corrected. For example, on pages 11 and 255, "Nathan Sivin" should be "Benjamin Elman." For some references, it would perhaps help to give the date of their first editions, like Mark Bevir ([1999] 2002, 17), for easier common reference, especially given that these appear in the main body.

We have Youngmin Kim to thank for having brought back to life, through rigorous contextualization, a dynamic and diverse tradition of Chinese political thinking that can have global relevance while being locally reconstructed on its own terms. With this volume in place, and with the translated texts in the history of Chinese political thought to appear in the globalized Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought under the co-editorship of Kim's classmate Hilde De Weerdt from 2020,[27] there is reason to believe that Chinese political thought will have more to offer scholars working on various areas on this globe as we grapple with political issues the global community faces together.

[27] https://www.cambridge.org/core/series/cambridge-texts-in-the-history-of-political-thought/CC1E9888A90FEA2D68B4CF40E7F7A1E7. (accessed February 15, 2020).

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The Code of Management for the Editorial Board of the *Journal of Confucian Philosophy and Culture*

I. General Regulations

1. (Objective)
   This regulation is established according to article IV-10-4 of the Regulations for the Institute of Confucian Philosophy and Culture (hereafter, ICPC). It comprises the regulatory guidelines for publishing the *Journal of Confucian Philosophy and Culture* (hereafter, *JCPC*).
2. (Mission)
   1) To supervise publication of *JCPC* and the related affairs of acceptance, review, editing, and so on.
   2) To set up rules and regulations for publishing *JCPC*.

II. Organization of Editorial Board

3. (Constitution)
   The editorial board is comprised of editorial advisors, editorial councils, the chief manager (the director), the editor-in-chief, the head of the editing team, and other editing team members.
4. (Appointment of Editorial Advisors and Members)
   The director of ICPC appoints editorial advisors and members among noted scholars of highest achievement, both in Korea and abroad.
5. (Terms)
   The basic term for editorial board members is two years, extendable when necessary. The editor-in-chief is tenured by principle, in order for the journal to maintain its congruity.
6. (Chief Manager)
   The director of ICPC is also the chief manger and supervises the editorial board.
7. (Editor-in-chief)
   The editor-in-chief is appointed by the director of ICPC and is responsible for all editorial issues.
8. (Head of Editing Team, Editing Team)
   The head of the editing team and the editing team's other members are appointed by the director of ICPC. The head of the editing team is responsible for general issues concerning editing, and the assistant head is responsible for assisting with related editorial matters.

III. Publication of *JCPC*

9. (Numbers and Dates of Publication)
   JCPC is published twice in one year: on February 28 and August 31.
10. (Circulation)
    The size of circulation for *JCPC* is determined by the editorial board.
11. (Size)
    The standard size for *JCPC* is 176mm × 248mm.
12. (Editorial System)
    1) Academic articles written in either Chinese or English.
    2) Academic articles include: title, abstract, keywords, contents, bibliography, an abstract written in Chinese or English, keywords written in Chinese or English.
    3) The English title and name of the author must be specified.
    4) The affiliation of the author must be specified.
    5) Regulations, bulletins, and materials other than academic articles may be included according to the decision of the editorial board.

IV. Submission of Articles and Management

13. (Subject and Character of the Submitted Article)
    The subject of article includes:
    1) Confucian thought and culture in Korea and abroad.
    2) Analysis of books, translations, or research articles on related subjects published in Korea or abroad. It may include dissertations.
    3) Critical reviews on academic trends, mainly in the arts and humanities, related to Confucianism and East Asian studies.

    No certain qualification for submission is required.
14. (Number of Words)
    1) A length of each article is limited to 25,000 characters for Chinese and 12,000 words for English, including the abstract, footnotes, bibliography, etc.
    2) The number of words permitted for materials other than academic articles and reviews are to be determined by the editorial board.
15. (Submission Guidelines)
    1) A general call for papers is always extended, but only articles submitted at least three months prior to the publication date are usually subjected to the review process for a specific issue.
    2) Submissions should be forwarded to jcpc@skku.edu as an email attachment.

3) Abstracts in Chinese and English must include five or more keywords.
4) If written jointly, the first (main) author and the second (joint) author, as well as their respective name, affiliation, area of research, part(s) of writing, must be noted.
5) E-mail address(es) and phone number(s) must be provided for all authors.

16. (Control of Submitted Articles)
    1) Submitted articles are, as they arrive, subject to a controlled process.
    2) Submitted articles are not returned, and copyright for published articles belongs to ICPC.

V. Reviewing Submitted Articles

17. (Obligation to Review)
    All submitted articles must pass the reviewing process.
18. (Regulations for Reviewing Board)
    1) In principle, the editorial board will select three outside reviewers for each submitted article and commission them to evaluate the article. If two of the reviewers agree, the article can be published.
    2) In specific situations, the editorial board can precede the reviewing process by selecting two outside reviewers. If only one of the reviewers recommends publication, the editorial board can decide whether to publish or reject the article based on the journal's academic standards. In such cases, the editor-in-chief is supposed to make a written report to the chief manager (the director).
    3) If submitted articles do not meet the basic requirements of the journal (e.g., in terms of length, subject, etc.), the editorial board can decide not to proceed with the reviewing process and return the submission to the author(s). The editorial board can also ask the author(s) to resubmit after revision.
    4) In principle, the board of reviewers must maintain a just and fair attitude, and should not review articles written by scholars with whom they are personally affiliated.
    5) For the sake of fairness, the review process will remain anonymous.
19. (Standard of Review)
    1) Articles will be reviewed for basic format (20%), originality (20%), clarity of subject (20%), logic (20%), and congruity (20%).
    2) The result will divide the articles into two groups: publishable and not publishable.

3) Articles evaluated as not publishable cannot be re-submitted with the same title.

20. (Feedback time)
Reviewers must submit their feedback on each article to the editorial board within two weeks from it was assigned to them.

21. (Reporting Back the Result)
The editorial board must report back to the author(s) as soon as the results of the reviewing process have been received.

VI. Revision of Regulations

22. (Principle)
This code of management is subject to change when 2/3 of the editorial board agrees, provided that more than half of the editorial board's members are present at the time of voting.

* Other Regulations

23. (Others)
1) Other issues not written in this code will be treated following customary practices.
2) The above regulations take effect from December 20, 2006.
3) The editorial board will determine and deal with all other details concerning the above regulations.

Publication Ethics and Malpractice Statement

The editors of *JCPC* are committed to insuring the integrity of its published content and toward that end all authors, reviewers, and members of the editorial and advisory boards associated with the journal are expected to fully adhere to our publication ethics and malpractice policies as described below.

I. Authors

All authors must adhere to the following regulations; they must insure:

1. That their submissions are original research not previously published or under consideration for publication elsewhere and that they have taken all necessary precautions to avoid breach of copyright.
2. That they provide appropriate citation of all previously published works.
3. That they provide two versions of their manuscript in a format that complies with the journal's stated requirements, one disclosing academic rank and affiliation, one anonymous and intended for blind review.
4. That they disclose to the editors any conflicts of interest that may influence or appear to influence the integrity of the work submitted. For example, all sources of financial support for the research leading to the submission must be disclosed.
5. That all persons who have made significant written contributions to the submitted work be acknowledged as co-authors and the approximate contributions of all co-authors be clearly stated.
6. That they immediately inform the editors of any significant errors or problems with the submitted work that they might discover prior to or after publication so that the editors can either correct or retract the paper or acknowledge published mistakes that come to their attention.

II. Reviewers

All reviewers must adhere to the following regulations; they must:

1. Evaluate submissions purely on the basis of their intellectual merit and conformity with the stated aims and requirements of the *JCPC*.
2. Immediately inform the editors of *JCPC* in the case of any potential conflict of interest. For example, if the reviewer recognizes the author by the work and has any close professional or personal relationship with the author that might influence her or his judgement.

3. Maintain strict confidentiality in regard to the manuscripts they review. Reviewers may choose to share their identities with authors in cases in which the manuscript is accepted but they are not to share the manuscripts or any parts thereof without first securing the explicit permission of the author.
4. If they choose not to review a given submission, state briefly their reasons for declining.
5. Assume that their reviews will be communicated to the authors and so should take care to make clear any comments they intend only for the editors.

III. Editors

The editors are responsible for insuring that the review process is fair, swift, and as transparent as possible. In particular, they are tasked with implementing and maintaining the standards and process of peer review described in the following section. They are also responsible for investigating and deciding any apparent cases of misconduct that they perceive or that are brought to their attention as described in the concluding two sections of this statement of publication ethics and malpractice.

IV. Peer Review Process

The editors of *JCPC* read all submissions and make an initial judgment about whether to submit a received paper to the process of peer review. The editors may reject a paper without peer review if its topic or content fall outside the journal's stated mandate, is of poor quality, or does not comply with the journal's stated format. A decision not to send a paper for peer review will not be influenced by an editor's views about the authors or their home institution; the Editor-in-Chief will communicate the reasons for not advancing a given submission to the author.

If a submission is deemed appropriate in topic, content, quality, and format it will be sent out to two reviewers with the requisite expertise needed to evaluate the work for publication. Reviewers are asked to complete their reviews within two months of receipt and to provide clear reasons for judging the submission to be in one of the following four categories:

- Publish (as is)
- Publish after minor revisions (to be noted in the evaluation)
- Revise and resubmit
- Reject

JCPC applies double-blind peer review, the identity of both the author and reviewer is kept hidden. Authors can identify potential conflicts of interest and provide the names of up to two "opposed reviewers" at the time of submission. Authors are required to explain the reasons why identified opposed reviewers should not be asked to evaluate their work. While the editors of *JCPC* will give serious consideration to such identified opposed reviewers, they retain the right to invite whomever they deem appropriate and cannot guarantee that "opposed reviewers" will not be invited.

The editors will make the final decision concerning each submission and their reasons will be clearly communicated both to authors and their reviewers.

To help broaden and strengthen its cadre of potential reviewers, *JCPC* assumes that authors whose papers have been accepted by the journal agree to serve as reviewers for other manuscripts submitted to the journal.

V. Plagiarism

Plagiarism in any form is unacceptable; any suspicion of plagiarism will be vigorously investigated by the editors. If confirmed, plagiarism is sufficient grounds for immediate rejection of a submission and the offending authors will be banned from making further submissions to the journal.

Recycling of one's own previously published work should be avoided as much as possible and if deemed excessive by reviewers or editors can be grounds for rejecting a given submission. When the duplication of previous work is necessary for advancing a new argument or line of inquiry, the cited work must be properly cited and the extent of overlap with the previously published essay(s) must be clearly indicated in the submission itself.

VI. Procedures concerning Reports of Misconduct

The editors are committed to maintaining the highest ethical standards in managing the business of the journal and we encourage anyone who suspects misconduct to contact us immediately. Every report of suspected misconduct will be investigated collectively by the editorial team: i.e., the Editor-in-Chief, Associate Editor, and Managing Editor.

Under normal circumstances, the Editor-in-Chief is responsible for leading all investigations brought to the attention of the editorial team. Should the Editor-in-Chief be accused or implicated in a charge of misconduct, the Associate Editor will take responsibility for the investigation.

As part of the investigation the Editor-in-Chief or Associate Editor will contact both parties involved in any conflict; they will explain and ask them to respond to the accusation and will study and if need be further investigate their responses. No decision will be reached and no action will be taken without sufficient evidence of misconduct.

If the case involves another journal, its Editor-in-Chief will be contacted and both editorial teams will investigate and work to arrive at a shared decision.

The editors of *JCPC* fully endorse the International Standards for Editors and the International Standards for Authors published by COPE (Committee on Publication Ethics), http://publicationethics.org/international-standards-editors-and-authors.

Journal of Korean Religions

The **Journal of Korean Religions** (***JKR***), the only English-language academic journal dedicated to the study of Korean religions, was launched in the autumn of 2010. It aims to stimulate interest in and discuss the study of Korean religions in various academic disciplines within the humanities and social sciences. A peer-reviewed journal, ***JKR*** is published twice a year, in April and October, by the Institute for the Study of Religion at Sogang University in Korea.

We are included in the Thomson Reuters *Arts & Humanities Index* and our digital version is available on *Project MUSE.*

Call for Articles

JKR invites contributions from senior and junior scholars researching all aspects of Korean religions from a wide range of perspectives, including religious studies, philosophy, theology, literature, folklore, art, anthropology, history, sociology, political science, and cultural studies. Articles submitted for consideration should be under 10,000 words in length including endnotes (bibliographies and appendices are additional) and should not have appeared or be under review or publication elsewhere. ***JKR*** also welcomes book reviews (up to 1,000 words) and review articles (up to 3,000 words).

All contributions or inquiries should be sent to the Managing Editor

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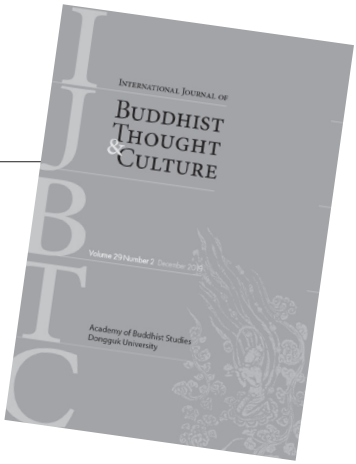

The *International Journal of Buddhist Thought & Culture* (*IJBTC*, ISSN 1598–7914) is published twice a year in June and December by the Academy of Buddhist Studies, Dongguk University.

IJBTC has been publishing to promote the Buddhist studies by encouraging comprehensive research of Buddhist thought and culture. It aims to stimulate interest in and discuss the departments of Buddhist studies, and other related programs of universities and research institutes from around the world.

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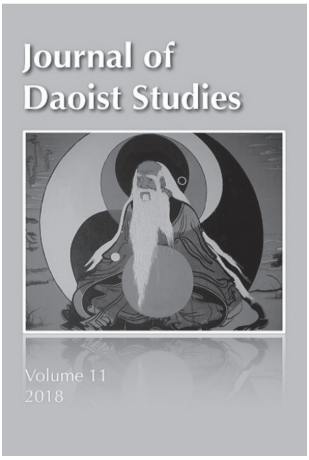
Journal of Daoist Studies



The *Journal of Daoist Studies* (JDS) is an annual publication dedicated to the scholarly exploration of Daoism in all its different dimensions. Each issue has three main parts: Academic Articles on history, philosophy, art, society, and more (limit 8,500 words); Forum on Contemporary Practice on issues of current activities both in China and other parts of the world (limit 5,000 words); and News of the Field, presenting publications, dissertations, conferences, and websites.

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The Review of Korean Studies (*RKS*) is an English-language peer-reviewed journal, published biannually by the Academy of Korean Studies. Since its first publication in 1998, the *RKS* has been striving to promote the exchange of ideas, theories, and perspectives among Koreanists in both Asia and the West, by publishing cutting-edge articles in all subfields of Korean Studies. But the journal would like to be devoted to the interaction of scholars particularly on Premodern Korean Studies. The *RKS* has been indexed in Scopus, the Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI), MLA Directory of Periodicals, and Korean Citation Index (KCI). All papers featured in the *RKS* are also accessible in PDF format at http://review.aks.ac.kr.

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For submissions and further information, please contact:

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