

Singapore -Hong Kong -Macau Symposium on Chinese Philosophy 2019

24(FRI) -25(SAT), May 2019

DAY 1 (FRIDAY, 24 MAY 2019)

Session 1		Chair: LOY Hui Chieh (National University of Singapore)
9:30 - 9:45	Opening and Briefing	
9:45 - 10:30	Human Nature, Coercion, and Corruption: Primitivist Worries from the <i>Zhuangzi</i> SAUNDERS, Frank Jr. (Hong Kong University)	
10:30 - 11:00	BREAK	
Session 2		Chair: ZHANG, Ellen Ying (Hong Kong Baptist University)
11:00 - 11:45	The Sameness and Difference of One's Nature (性 <i>xing</i>) in Guo Xiang TAN, Christine Abigail Lee (Nanyang Technological University)	
11:45 - 12:30	'Virtue of Kings' and 'Traces of Sage': Guo Xiang's New Interpretation of the Political Idea of Zhuangzi WEI, Qian Qian (National University of Singapore)	
12:30- 14:00	LUNCH BREAK	
Session 3		Chair: LO Yuet Keung (National University of Singapore)
14:00 - 14:45	A Consequential Evaluation to the Roles of Confucianism and Ubuntu in the Debate on Human Rights on Health CHAN, Shing Bun Benedict (Hong Kong Baptist University)	
14:45 - 15:30	Resenting Heaven in the <i>Mencius</i> : An Extended Footnote to Mencius 2B13 OOI, Daryl (National University of Singapore)	
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Session 4		Chair: KWOK Sai Hang (Nanyang Technological University)
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9:45 - 10:30	Chinese Philosophy or Chinese Thought?	LEONG, Wai Chun (Macau University of Science and Technology)
10:30 - 11:00	BREAK	
Session 6		Chair: Dasha DURING (Nanyang Technological University)
11:00 - 11:45	Four Basic Paradoxes of Nature in Kant and the Compound <i>Yijing</i>	PALMQUIST, Stephen (Hong Kong University)
11:45 - 12:30	Thomas Aquinas and Zhu Xi as Philosophical Exemplars	EH, Edmond (University of Saint Joseph, Macau)
12:30 - 14:00	LUNCH BREAK	
Session 7		Chair: LI Chenyang (Nanyang Technological University)
14:00 - 14:45	Subverting the Cosmos in the <i>Dazongshi</i> : Ancestors, Death and Self-Generation	RIVERA ESPINOZA, Manuel (University of Macau)
14:45 - 15:30	Is Zhuangzi a Patient Relativism? A response to Huang Yong	HU, Jianping (Nanyang Technological University)
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18:00 -	DINNER (Putien Restaurant, Vivocity)	

Human Nature, Coercion and Corruption: Primitivist Worries from the *Zhuangzi*

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The primitivist writings of the *Zhuangzi* offer powerful critiques of morality and other forms of cultural artifice, and promote instead a way of living in harmony with nature and human nature. Their approach contains three main components: a normative conception of human nature, a critique of coercion and corruption by means of cultural forces upon human nature, and a series of suggestions for how to respond to these forces. This talk will offer readings of the first two elements of their project, and then offer a brief assessment of the value of their ideas.

I will first attempt to reconstruct the primitivists' normative conception of human nature. I argue that the primitivists utilize three distinct conceptual foci when discussing human nature. The first concerns the concepts of *xing* ("natural spontaneity") and *xing ming zhi qing* ("the stuff of our natural spontaneity and allotments"). In context, these concepts point to features of human nature having to do primarily with health, such as the spontaneous functioning of the senses and other organs. The second concerns the concepts of *xing* and *de* 德 ("natural virtuosity"), which are treated as more normative concepts, and contribute to a more substantive account of human nature and ideal human flourishing. The third focuses on the concept of the *xin* 心 ("heart-mind") and argues that it is by nature simple, and that this simplicity ought to be preserved rather than corrupted by cultural forces. While not quite coming together to form a clear and coherent theory of human nature, given the assertional nature of the texts, we can, for the purpose of this reconstruction, treat them as belonging to a family of primitivist views on human nature.

I then discuss the primitivists' approaches to coercion and corruption on the grounds of this conception of human nature. Briefly, the primitivists argue that cultural forces harm human beings by domesticating them, ruining their nature in the process and forcing them to go against their in-built tendencies that would otherwise lead them to flourish. In this way, cultural artifices and those who enforce them are detriments to human flourishing. Additionally, the primitivists worry about how cultural forces corrupt human beings by convincing them to go against their nature of their own volition. Cultural creations corrupt the heart-mind, for example, and inspire people to pursue lifestyles of excess in any field—whether having to do with sensory, material, or even moral excess—thereby also inhibiting flourishing.

In the final section, I offer a brief, critical assessment of what might be learned from these ideas. On the one hand, the primitivists' faith in human nature and nature in general can be described as overly optimistic, romantic, and idealistic. Additionally, it appears somewhat arbitrary which activities they believe are due to human nature and which are unnatural. On the other hand, however, their critiques of the coercive and corrupting forces of culture are insightful and potentially compelling. Although in modern times, living a life according to nature might not be a live option for most of us—or any of us—being absorbed and corrupted by cultural forces is definitely a live worry for most of us. I have in mind technology-driven forces—social networking and other online communities—as being areas of life that might greatly benefit from a bit of primitivist reflection.

The Sameness and Differences of One's Nature (性 *xing*) in Guo Xiang

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What is human nature? The question of human nature has been a central theme in Philosophy, regardless of origins and cultures. For Guo Xiang, the primary commentator of the Zhuangzi and a philosopher his own right in medieval China, however, the question was really about natures and why they manifest themselves differently, as things and identities were just obviously were, in fulfilling different roles and acting as different agents. Are they, however, fundamentally different, or the same? That is, do what define our natures come internally, or externally?

These, however, are not necessarily contradictory to each other for Guo Xiang. To him, difference and sameness are but one – not simply because they are complementary or don't contradict each other, but because they are necessary to the fullness of each, and are each of the other's logical extremes that allows the other to exist.

In this work, I shall talk about the two angles of nature (性 *xing*): one is one's individual or distinct nature (性分 *xingfen*), which I shall translate as allotted nature or natural allotment, depending on context; the other one being endowed nature (性命 *xingming*). The reason for focusing on these two aspects is that one highlights the particularity of *xing*, whereas the other denotes a relation to the whole, that is, to a conception of the order of the world. These two, as we shall see, are equally important to the philosophy of Guo Xiang and are mutually necessary for the logical consistency of the other. Finally, however, I shall talk about sages and deformities, and the standards for cultivation based on one's nature being both different and the same with other natures.

« Virtue of Kings » and « Traces of Sage » : Guo Xiang's New Interpretation of the Political Idea of Zhuangzi

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This paper examines Guo Xiang's understanding of the kingly virtue embodied, as he claimed, by sage kings such as the Yellow Emperor, Yao, Shun, and Yu, and compares his view on the ideal world of perfect virtue with those of Confucius and Zhuangzi. Guo Xiang argues that Zhuangzi's critiques of the sage kings refer to the traces (ji) of their spiritual virtue rather than their spiritual virtue itself. He attributes the root cause of political chaos in posterity to the lack of a true sage who could continue to nurture the true self of all beings. As people started to imitate the sages in the past by following their traces, the inner power of their true self was lost. Guo thus maintains that traces should be forgotten and the true virtue of the sage should be understood which consists of no-mind and self-so. He insists that there must be one and only one ruler who embodies no-mind because only such a person is able to ensure the self-so and harmony of all things without highlighting his own virtue for emulation.

A Consequential Evaluation to the Roles of Confucianism and Ubuntu in the Debate on Human Rights to Health

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There are many debates on the roles of cultures in the ethics of human rights. In the past, most of them were one-to-one comparison between the West and another region, such as the comparison of Western cultures and East Asian cultures, or Western cultures and African cultures. Yet the situation has been changing in recent years. More and more philosophers believe that cultural debates are not necessary “West-centric, and they extend the debates to cover more cultures. One of the dialogues is Confucianism and Ubuntu. Some philosophers discuss the similarities and differences between these two prominent cultures in East Asia and Southern Africa. Most of them believe that Confucianism and Ubuntu have more similarities than differences. These scholars also believe that both of them have some values that are sharply different from the West. Therefore, they argue that the West and the rest treat some issues in the ethics of human rights in different manners, or even in opposite ways. They conclude that the West should learn from the rest in those debates of the ethics of human rights.

One of those debates is about human rights to health. In the era of globalization, many health issues are not confined by national boundaries, but also problems for the whole world. For example, AIDS, SARS, Ebola, etc. have spread globally; preventing and controlling their spread requires the cooperation of people around the world. Global health issues raise a lot of questions in ethics. Global health ethics is a sub-field of bioethics and the philosophy of public health, specifically focusing on answering these ethical questions. One of the most important questions in global health ethics is about the ethics of human rights to health. Human rights to health are not the same as human rights to be healthy. Human rights to health simply refer to the obligations that governments or other agents should establish policies to promote health and prevent fatal diseases, so that suffering and premature death could be prevented. On the one hand, some scholars argue that we do have moral obligations to global health and everyone has human rights to health as specified in international documents such as the Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Cultural, and Social Rights. In other words, they believe that human rights to health are universal. On the other hand, some scholars argue that we do not have these human rights, or these human rights seem impossible to satisfy in the current conditions of the world, and so it is unrealistic to claim that everyone has human rights to health. In other words, they believe that human rights to health are not universal.

My research project seeks to investigate the ethics of human rights to health in the globe. Particularly, this project aims at seeking out a moral justification for the universality of human rights to health by evaluating and comparing different ethical theories and cultural traditions. In this presentation, I first introduce the works from Bell, Metz and others on community values such as relationship and harmony in Confucianism and Ubuntu. And then I argue that even if their interpretations were correct, their works still cannot justify the conclusion they want. I argue that it is better to use consequential evaluation rather than cultural evaluation to justify human rights. An example of human rights to health will be discussed. Although one presentation cannot answer all the questions in these human rights debates, at least some preliminary but important philosophical investigation and practical issues will be addressed.

Resenting Heaven in the Mencius: An extended footnote to Mencius 2B13

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It is widely accepted among Mencius scholars that for Mencius, the *junzi* is the kind of person who accepts Heaven's will and never resents Heaven. There are, however, several passages where resentment seems to be presented as a quality that the *junzi* possesses. In particular, 2B13 has been the subject of much contention. In S1, I will discuss various interpretations of 2B13, building on and updating Philip Ivanhoe's helpful 1988 survey. In S2, I will develop an argument for resentment against Heaven in the Mencius.

I argue from passages in the Mencius and its relationship with the *Shijing* that we have good reason to think that, under certain circumstances, the *junzi* ought to resent Heaven. In S3, I will develop a theory of resentment from the Mencius and demonstrate how 2B13 can be understood in the larger context of this theory.

Yang Zhu and Mozi as Counterpropaganda of Just War

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In the standard narrative of classical Chinese philosophy, Yang Zhu and Mozi are often portrayed as two thinkers with extreme perspectives that are incompatible with each other— one cares exclusively for oneself and the other cares inclusively for all — and Mengzi holds the middle and the real “benevolent and righteous” position between the two extremes. This portrayal relies mainly on Mengzi’s criticisms of Yang Zhu and Mozi. Due to the dominance of his criticism, many scholarly discussions on Yang Zhu and Mozi revolve around the question of whether Mengzi’s harsh criticism of Yang Zhu and Mozi is fair. The existing answers to the question reflect two major types of opinions. One is that Yang Zhu and Mozi somehow “deserve” the criticism according to Confucian perspectives. Yang Zhu’s thought is problematic for its selfish egoism (or hedonism). As to Mozi, he is reprehensible for his advocating “impartial love” which violates the Confucian norm of gradation of love. The other opinion is that Mengzi misinterprets (or misrepresents) Yang Zhu’s and Mozi’s thoughts. While the two types of opinions exhibit divergent evaluations of Yang Zhu and Mozi, they share two assumptions: (1) Yang Zhu and Mozi represent (or manufactured by Mengzi as representing) two extreme irreconcilable moral perspectives regarding one’s moral obligation towards others; (2) One of the following two propositions must be true: either that Yang Zhu and Mozi are reproachable, or that Mengzi misunderstands or distorts their philosophy.

This paper tries to argue that the two assumptions do not cohere with other early accounts of Yang Zhu and Mozi including Mengzi’s. It argues that Mengzi’s criticism is not directed at “Yangist egoism” or “Mohist altruism” but at their counterarguments against just war (or unification war) as an “expediency” 權. This interpretation, as I will try to demonstrate in this paper, can contextualize Mengzi’s criticism in a wide range of classical texts such as the Zhuangzi, the Hanfeizi, and military texts. By accepting this reading of Mengzi’s criticism of Yang Zhu, we can also gain some further insights into the frequent reference to Yang Zhu and Mozi in conjunction.

On Philosophical Method and « Pluralism »

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How should philosophy be done? What types of evidence suit philosophy? How to compare multiple philosophical theories? How should one understand philosophical disagreement? These are just a few of the numerous meta-philosophical problems concerning the method that philosophers do or ought to comply with in their activity. The discussion about the method in philosophy is often related to the attempt to maintain the discipline as unitary as possible, and thus to strengthen its alleged autonomy with respect to disciplines such as literature, sociology, psychology, history, and the like. Philosophical practices from different times and traditions may seem to be incommensurable, as scholars from different fields tend to disagree about the most essential methodological assumptions, such as assumptions about the very nature of philosophical problems, the place of truth and progress in philosophy, the kind of the data that philosophers could/should explain, or take into account. The variety of philosophical practices is sometimes called 'philosophical pluralism' (or, alternatively, 'pluralistic philosophy'). Such an expression, made available to the wider public by Robert Nozick (1981, 1989), is commonly - and controversially - used as to denote philosophy departments featuring scholars working in various traditions (e.g., hermeneutics, phenomenology, analytic philosophy, Chinese philosophy, comparative philosophy etc.), as opposed to 'mainstream analytic philosophy' departments. Yet, the objection might be raised that even mainstream philosophy is intrinsically pluralistic, given that there is no limit upon the conclusions that may be possibly defended, and that there is no agreement on the most fundamental metaphysical or methodological assumptions.

Pluralism, and the on-going development of new movements and traditions in philosophy, also occurs specifically as a result of methodological reflections, and as a consequence of how methodological problems are assessed and resolved. Just as the pioneers of the Analytic tradition held that philosophy should begin with the analysis of propositions, and Husserl's technique for gaining access to phenomena gave rise to the phenomenological tradition, the most recent debates on the nature of intuitions and their role in philosophical inquiry strictly relate to the emergence of experimental philosophy. Moreover, notably in the latest few decades philosophical practices displayed an extraordinary multiplication of varieties and traditions previously geographically insulated. Comparative philosophy, bringing together traditions originally developed in (relative) isolation from each other, offers a paradigmatic example of this phenomenon. The philosophical pluralism characterizing the current practices in philosophy, however, should not persuade us to dismiss the idea that a unitary method in philosophy is possible. Nor the desire for methodological homogeneity should encourage us to regard pluralism as problematic per se, and perhaps as an obstacle to be removed for the sake of disciplinary unity. In this paper, I aim to provide support to the view that the problem of the philosophical method is not just worth being addressed, but also especially urgent, as well as compatible with pluralism in philosophy as defined above.

By drawing upon Hector-Neri Castaneda's model for philosophical method, I will highlight the main requirements that a philosophical method shall satisfy in order to function within the pluralistic status quo of contemporary philosophical practices. Rather than being incompatible with the quest for a unitary methodology, I will argue, the (fortunate) reality of philosophical pluralism – which consistently produces a multitude of theories addressing homologous data/phenomena – requires us to look for general methodological criteria as to allow for their comparative assessment. In this sense, the starting point for the reflection on philosophical method is not the mere tolerance for variance in philosophical practices, but it is rather the recognition that any "diaphilosophical" activity essentially needs different theories and systems to compare. As pointed out by Hector-Neri Castañeda in his *On Philosophical Method*, "philosophy just is different things to different persons. Philosophy is diaphilosophical all the way through" (Castañeda 1980, p. 133).

Chinese Philosophy or Chinese Thought?

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The legitimacy of Chinese philosophy has been questioned since the introduction of the phrase zhexue 哲學 into China in the early 20th century. Some scholars think that Chinese philosophy does not exist because, they claim, the notion of philosophy refers to a particular way of thinking that can be traced back to ancient Greek, while Chinese thinkers, at least for those who lived before the 20th century, have a different way of thinking. This understanding of the notion of philosophy, however, does not fit well with our ordinary use of the word “philosophy,” for this understanding seems to imply that the word “western” in “western philosophy” is redundant, which is not the case. Early supporters of the legitimacy of Chinese philosophy, on the other hand, argues that China has philosophy even before the pre-Qin period, in terms of a definition of philosophy they propose. Nonetheless, the definitions of philosophy they propose are not widely accepted.

So far this issue may seem to be mainly definitional. If we can have a consensus on the definition of philosophy, then we can judge whether China has any philosophical works or activities. However, the issue has an interpretational aspect too. If there is no agreement on what those alleged philosophical texts actually say, we cannot judge whether they contain any philosophical content. Scholars from different backgrounds may have different preferences in the interpretation of these texts. Philosophers may prefer philosophical readings while sinologists may prefer non-philosophical readings, and sometimes it is not apparent which are better. Some scholars, therefore, go so far as to claim that our current issue is a bogus one, for everything comes down eventually to what interpretations we give to those texts.

The definitional and interpretational aspects of our issue are usually being discussed separately. Contemporary discussions on what philosophy is seldom even mention Chinese thought. If, however, Chinese thought is indeed philosophical, then these meta-philosophical discussions would fail to consider one important tradition and would likely be incomplete. By contrast, scholars who interpret Chinese texts do not usually talk about the nature of philosophy. This is perhaps why in Mainland China, an approach emerges in recent decades that advocates using “native” Chinese concepts or notions, including a “Chinese concept of philosophy”, to study Chinese philosophy. However, it is unclear how this “Chinese concept of philosophy” is related to the concept of philosophy. Previous approaches to our issue fail, I think, partially because these two aspects are not being considered together.

This paper, therefore, aims to illustrate that these two aspects of the current issue must be considered together. In particular, it tries to argue that in interpreting Chinese philosophical texts, an implicit understanding of the nature of philosophy often has a subtle influence. More specifically, an understanding of philosophy involves a standard of what good philosophy looks like. Once we acknowledge a text as philosophical, we will try to give an interpretation to the text that, as far as possible, meets this standard. Interpreting a text in this way may risk distorting the evidence to fit one’s interpretation. More importantly, a presumed understanding of philosophy may affect one’s selection of materials. Some texts or passages may be judged to be non-philosophical and thus being ignored as irrelevant to philosophical content. These ignored texts or passages may be part of a bigger context of philosophical texts, a context in which essential links to the philosophical content may be found.

Four Basic Paradoxes of Nature in Kant and the Compound *Yijing*

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"This paper presents one-third of the last instalment in a six-part series correlating the key aspects of Kant's architectonic conception of philosophy with a special arrangement of the Chinese Book of Changes that I call the "Compound *Yijing*", which groups the 64 hexagrams (gua) into both fourfold and threefold sets. The foregoing articles argue that, although Kant and the *Yijing* employ different types of architectonic reasoning, the two systems can both be described in terms of three "levels" of elements. Starting at an unnumbered level devoid of any element (the tao or thing in itself), the system proceeds by elaborating a key fourfold distinction (or "quaternity") on the first level, a twelvefold distinction on the second level, and twelve quaternities (grouped into four sets of three) on the third level.

Each set of three quaternities on the third level corresponds to one of the four "faculties" of the university, as elaborated in Kant's book, *Conflict of the Faculties*. Previous papers have examined the correlation between the relevant 12 gua and three key quaternities that Kant defends in relation to the faculties of philosophy, theology, and law. The final paper explores the fourth set of 12 gua on the third level, those corresponding to the medical faculty. The "idea of reason" in Kant's metaphysics that guides this wing of the comparative analysis is freedom. At last year's Symposium, I presented the final one-third of this final part of the project, the four basic concepts of medicine in Kant's *Conflict of the Faculties*.

In this year's presentation I explore the first of the three Kantian quaternities that correspond to three sets of four gua in the "yin-yang" quadrant of the Compound *Yijing*: Kant discusses the idea of freedom itself, which gives rise to the area of traditional metaphysics known as rational cosmology, in the first Critique's Dialectic, in the section on the Antinomy of Reason (CPR A405-567/B432- 595). There he examines four irresolvable issues concerning the natural world: whether the world has a beginning in time; whether composite substances consist of simple parts; whether a causality of freedom operates in the natural world; and whether an absolutely necessary being exists. I argue that these correspond to the quaternity consisting of gua 15, 22, 36, and 52.

Thomas Aquinas and Zhu Xi as Philosophical Exemplars

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In order for a truly global philosophy to be possible, two great challenges will need to be met: the long history and the broad diversity of human thought. In this paper, Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) and Zhu Xi (1130-1200) are presented in a comparative manner as excellent examples of thinkers who managed to take into account both history and diversity in their philosophical reflections.

Aquinas wrote complete commentaries on Aristotle's most significant texts, including the *De Anima*, the *Physics*, the *Nicomachean Ethics*, the *Politics* and the *Metaphysics*. Aquinas also made extensive use of the early Christian writers, including Augustine of Hippo, Ambrose of Milan, Anselm of Canterbury, Bernard of Clairvaux, Gregory the Great, Jerome and Hilary of Poitiers. Similarly, Zhu Xi produced detailed commentaries on the *Four Books*: the *Daxue* (Great Learning), *Lunyu* (Analects), *Mengzi* (Mencius) and the *Zhongyong* (Centrality and Commonality). Like Aquinas, Zhu saw himself as a philosopher who inherited a rich heritage of ideas from his predecessors and set out to organise them into his own coherent vision. He employed various concepts from the thinkers of Northern Song (960-1126), including Shao Yong, Zhou Dunyi, Zhang Zai and the brothers Cheng Yi and Cheng Hao.

Thus their philosophical education was formed based on a profound understanding of the canonical texts found in the Greek and Chinese traditions. Aquinas and Zhu sought first of all to be authentic interpreters of the classical sources. This shows their respect for the historical origins of philosophical thought. Their philosophical systems also display a synthetic vision formed by using the major thinkers of the past. Aquinas and Zhu found a way to provide legitimate continuity and development to the Aristotelian and Confucian schools of thought. This reflects their concern to accommodate the diverse opinions of various philosophers.

Subverting the Cosmos in the *Dazongshi*: Ancestors, Death and Self-Generation

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In this paper I argue that the way in which the problem of death is dealt with in the *Dazongshi* 大宗師 chapter of the *Zhuangzi* 莊子 dramatically differs from the way the same issue is treated in various *ru* 儒 texts, particularly the *Liji* 禮記. In my view, this relates to the fact that while the *Zhuangzi* adheres to a cosmos of unity (一) and self-generation (自本), the *ru* instead favor a cosmos where the completion and generation of things depends on the continued performance of rituals (*li* 禮) and thus on the continued enforcement of the hierarchical distinctions (*shifei* 是非) embedded in them. This contrast is also to be observed in the articulation of a variety of seminal ancient Chinese concepts: generating (*zao* 造), transforming (*hua* 化), achieving (*de* 得) and completing (*cheng* 成), among many others. I make these points with respect to the different dialogues which appear in the chapter, but mainly in reference to the conversation between Zisi 子祀、Ziyu 子輿, Zili 子犁 and Zilai 子來. Their ideas on death directly subvert the ritual-centered cosmos of the *ru*, a cosmos where the cult to the ancestors was of paramount importance.

Is Zhuangzi a Patient Relativism? A Response to Huang Yong

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In his recent papers, Professor Huang Yong has been attempting to interpret the ethics of Zhuangzi from the perspective of patient moral relativism. There are two sorts of moral relativism: agent relativism and appraiser relativism. The former means that the moral judgements of rightness and wrongness of an action depend on the agent's moral standards, while the latter considers the appraiser's standards as the only criterion we use to assess the moral appropriateness of a certain action. According to Huang, we can find a new version of moral relativism in Zhuangzi, which he calls "patient relativism" and is able to avoid the problems that other two different moral relativism are faced with. In contrast to agent relativism and appraiser relativism, patient moral relativism advocates that whether an action is moral or not should be in light of the standard of the patient or recipient of the very action. However, what I want to show in this essay is that patient relativism is not only self-contradictory within the theory itself, but also cannot conform with the fundamental ideas of Zhuangzi. Therefore, I believe that it is not very appropriate to classify Zhuangzi into the camp of patient relativism.

In this paper, I intend to propose the "two patients" challenge to Huang's interpretation. Sometimes there can be more than one patients or recipients of one certain action, what should we do when the patients have different or even incompatible interests, desires, and demands? It is, I believe, quite common in real life because we live in a society where individuals are always interdependent and affected by other people's decisions and actions. David Wong has already noticed this question in his response to Huang, but he does not proffer a fully developed argument. In the story of Cook Ding, Huang argues that what Cook Ding does to the ox is not morally right because it is against the natural disposition of the ox. However, the ox is not the only patient of Cook Ding's action of butchering. King Hui of Liang is also a patient in this story, as he not only gets the slaughtered ox, but also learns how to nourish the process of life from watching the way Cook Ding butchers the ox. If Cook Ding does not cut up the ox, King Hui of Liang may not feel satisfied or happy. Therefore, Huang obviously overlooks the second patient in the Cook Ding story.

One possible rejoinder to this "two patients" challenge is that we can sort the patients according to the degrees away from the agent, namely the distance of each patient and the agent in the agent's interpersonal network, and take the closest patient's standard as the standard of our actions unto not only the first patient but also all the other patients on the list. Unfortunately, I intend to argue that the rejoinder will not only make the patient relativism self-contradictory, but also conflict with Zhuangzi's philosophy. On the one hand, the rejoinder is actually against the fundamental claim of patient relativism because this sort of moral relativism not only stresses the distinctiveness of patients, but also emphasizes the equality of them. On the other hand, some stories in the Zhuangzi implies the equality of things, so Huang deems that there is a congeniality between patient relativism and Zhuangzi. If patient relativism is to some extent against the equality of things, then it is also against the idea of Zhuangzi, which questions the claim that Zhuangzi can be considered as a patient relativist.

Even if patient relativism can be revised to respond to the "two patients" challenge successfully, it is incompatible with some important passages in the Zhuangzi, so I think it is problematic to regard Zhuangzi as a patient moral relativist. First, in the story of the tiger trainer, people will get killed by the tiger if they follow its true nature and treat the tiger in the way it wants to be treated. Thus, the professional trainer does not feed it uncut sides of meat for fear of arousing its lust for dismemberment, although he knows the tiger's real desires for food. Zhuangzi criticizes Bo Le and Marquis of Lu for disrespecting the real needs and interests of the horses and the seabird, but he seems to agree with the way the tiger trainer feeds the tiger. Second, even one patient is sometimes multiple. In Zhuangzi's view, no patient only has one single perspective. In chapter 2,

Lady Li cried when she was captured and taken to the palace in the first place, but later she regretted her tears since she started to enjoy the luxurious life there. That is why Zhuangzi says "how do I know that the dead do not regret the way they used to cling to life". Third, even if it is acceptable that people's desire or standard changes, what is more important in the text is that the agency is unstable, unfixed and in constant transformation. In the story of butterfly, the agent himself knows that he does not know what he is or what he really wants. How are we supposed to treat this kind of individuals the way they want to be treated? Therefore, it is problematic to apply the patient moral relativism to Zhuangzi's ethical ideas.

I do appreciate the theoretical and practical significances of patient relativism. However, I believe it has problems and should be further developed. Therefore, I generally agree with Huang when he acknowledges that it is an "experimental" idea.