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VITAL POST-SECULAR PERSPECTIVES ON CHINESE PHILOSOPHICAL ISSUES

LAUREN F. PFISTER



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Lauren F. Pfister

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At a number of points in chapters 3–5 and 8, I have referred to the works of two French Jesuits, Séraphin Couvreur and Léon Wieger. These materials and the time spent to study them were supported by a research grant provided by the Research Grant Commission of the Hong Kong Government (HKBU 12406114) for which I am very grateful. The theme of that research project was “Exploring Two Major *savants missionnaires*’ Hermeneutic Engagements with Classical and Modern China: The French Jesuits Séraphin Couvreur (1835–1919) and Léon Wieger (1856–1933).” This was a project worked out in part with the collaboration of Dr. Dimitri Drettas, though the assessments of the works found in this volume are my own.

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A shorter version of chapter 5 has been prepared for a volume that should be published in the future by the University of Hawai'i Press, entitled "On the Demystification of the Mysteries in Classical Ruism: Post-Secular Musings on The *Zhōngyōng*." I want to thank Profs. Ian Sullivan and Josh Mason, who have granted me permission to publish this larger version of that article in this book.

In the appendices found at the end of chapter 6, I have relied on work previously completed and documented by Justin Yifu Lin, in his article "Collectivization and China's Agricultural Crisis, 1959–1961," that was published in the *Journal of Political Economy* 98(6) (1990), 1228–52. Permission has been granted by the University of Chicago Press to republish table 4 and figure 1 from that article (*ibid.*, 1245 and 1247, respectively), while the other tables are allowed to be published on the basis of their fair use in this context.

The article published in chapter 7 appeared initially in a Brazilian journal in 2017 under the title "Comparative Ethical Questions on the Quandaries Involved in the Contemporary Phenomenon of 'Human Flesh Search [Engines]' in the PRC," *Modernos e Contemporâneos* 1(1) (January/June 2017), 127–44. I want to thank the editor-in-chief of *Modernos e Contemporâneos: Revista de Filosofia do IFCH da Universidade Estadual de Campinas*, for allowing me to republish this article that has been further refined and so presented also within this volume.

The preparation of this monograph was unexpectedly complicated, due in part to our return to the United States after living for thirty years in Hong Kong and elsewhere, and also because of my own reconsiderations about what to discuss and how to present these materials to an Anglophone audience, especially with reference to some contemporary philosophical trends related to Chinese philosophical traditions as being developed in the United States. During this process, I have been guided by the immense editorial support and flexibility of Jana Hodges-Kluck and her colleagues at Lexington Press. This book would not have been possible without their continued guidance, support, and openness.

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I want to dedicate this book to my last four PhD students and one other PhD student all of whom studied ancient and modern Chinese texts with me during my last years in Hong Kong, three of them being located at Hong Kong Baptist University. This I do with the sincere wish, confident hope, and continued prayers for their future fruitfulness. They are Dr. Aleksandr Dmitrenko, now working in Heidelberg University; the Rev. Dr. Hwang Tsung-I, now pastor and theologian serving in Taichung and Taipei, Taiwan; Dr. Jesse Ciccotti, who is awaiting news of his first post-doc appointment; Prof. Tsoi Ah-chung, who is nearing the end of his second doctorate dealing with some unusual ancient Chinese texts from the Jǐngjiào 景教 tradition; and the Rev. Dr. Jonathan Johnson, who is now working in his first post-doc appointment in Hong Kong.

Preface

Without question, this is the most personal book I have written in my career. That is not because it is about me, but because it in some ways documents what that has engaged my intellectual interests and spiritual concerns as a person working in Chinese and comparative philosophical studies for nearly forty years of my life. What I have learned has changed me, challenged me, puzzled me, and provoked me. It also involved a process in which—with the immense patience of teachers, colleagues, and students—I have reached a level of competence in two Chinese languages that allowed me to enter into the lives and cultural contexts of those I encountered during thirty years of residence and visits to China at the level of not only a careful observer and a sympathetic intellectual, but also at times as a friend, and at times as a trusted teacher. As a consequence, the multifaceted emotions that have moved out of me onto the pages of this book have also involved an immense feeling of gratitude to so many persons whom I have had the privilege to meet, to interview, to teach, and to join in research projects that deepened my understanding as they also enriched my cross-cultural experiences.

This book does have a set of claims to present to readers: we are in a post-secular age, and the cultural impact of post-secularity is manifest in China in all the ways that this volume documents. Once I came to realize this fact, it became a heuristic basis on which I began to discover even more issues, persons, and documents that “made sense” to me in the light of that fundamental interpretive perspective. Here I will share some of what I have learned. Even now I am continuing to learn from the hermeneutic richness that the post-secular perspective has brought into my own philosophical explorations.

Some readers I expect will be overwhelmed by the new materials that will be documented in this book and will hardly know what to think or believe about what I write regarding them, because they have never before been

introduced to such materials. Other readers will find these studies exhilarating, and some rather exhausting, because of the newness of these claims. If there would be some readers who, as scholars in their own right, would take up these interpretive perspectives to address issues that they themselves have also experienced and discovered, it will fulfill a great and deep purpose for my writing this book in English about so many things Chinese that would not be normally known in Anglophone philosophical circles.

Double Creek Rehsprung Meadows
June 15, 2020

Methodological Introduction

What the reader will find in this volume is not an introductory account of Chinese philosophical issues or a general historical account of Chinese philosophical traditions. In this sense, then, this tome has been written for those who already have some basic understanding of Chinese philosophical issues, some awareness of the diversity of Chinese philosophical traditions, and some initial understanding of a few of the most important philosophical texts that have, at varying periods in Chinese history, been seminal influences in the promotion of philosophical schools, their forms of life and related world-views, and their creative influences on broader ranges of Chinese cultural developments. I have written this volume with an assumption that some of my readers will not be able to read Chinese philosophical texts in Chinese, and so have tried to present and explain the Chinese philosophical issues and their texts in ways that they can be understood by such persons. Many of the works I refer to are originally in Chinese and will be largely unknown to readers, even those who have studied philosophy, and maybe at some time have read some works about Chinese philosophy. I sincerely hope that this will not threaten readers. Whenever I can refer to relevant works and translations in English or European languages that can assist readers in learning more, I have done so. Ultimately, I would hope that my discussion of these Chinese philosophical texts and issues will provoke new interests in the study of Chinese philosophical traditions, persons, and issues, and encourage readers along their way toward learning about some of the complexities of Chinese philosophical traditions, and, perhaps, even learning enough Chinese so that those texts can be read on their own terms at a later time.

Now, with this basic background information in mind, I present to readers within this volume a sustained argument related to the value of post-secular insights into Chinese philosophical claims, texts, figures, and problems. It is

an argument that should stimulate not only new discussions of many of the issues related to those claims, texts, figures, and problems, but also justify the need for a new account of the history of Chinese philosophical traditions.

In this “Methodological Introduction,” therefore, I am setting out the details of my account of post-secularity as it is applied within this volume, and how this account will be employed to justify my arguments found within the eight chapters that constitute the body of this volume. Before taking up that task in earnest, however, there is a more personal side to my existential engagement with the question of post-secularity within philosophical circles in the PRC and greater China that I would also want to share and explain to interested readers.

This volume has grown out of a self-conscious awareness that I myself, being a professional philosopher teaching full-time in Hong Kong for the vast majority of thirty years (from 1987 till 2017), have been not only descriptively attentive to the post-secular context that emerged during the 1990s within the People’s Republic of China but also have gradually become aware of and adopted a variety of post-secular interpretive positions that helped me navigate through the choppy waters surging and ebbing around philosophical themes I found being or needing to be discussed during those years. Having formally retired from that work in the fall of 2017, I continue to be engaged with research, writing, lecturing, and mentoring, and so have devoted myself to pursuing these matters in as thorough a manner as possible, believing that such involvement within China in particular at this time is profoundly important not merely for myself, but also for my colleagues and the students that I continue to engage, mentor, and nurture. These matters initially became more explicit for me personally and more manifest in broader ranges of contemporary mainland Chinese social contexts, particularly after the turn of the twenty-first century.

Though my disciplinary focus for a good amount of my own written work and research has been on Ruist (“Confucian”) traditions, even in that realm I found that I could not avoid dealing also with Ruist traditions as they were described, evaluated, and criticized by nineteenth and twentieth-century Protestant missionary scholars. It was this group of religious scholars who worked to present accounts of the Ruist traditions they encountered in both traditional and post-traditional Chinese contexts. By this I mean that they were involved in producing their monumental translations and interpretive accounts of Ruist traditions, especially during the last decades of the Qīng dynasty 清代 (1664–1911), as well as during the period of the dominance of the Republic of China 中國民國 (1911–1949). Subsequently, during the period of the People’s Republic of China 中華人民共和國 (starting in 1949), they had been rejected in principle for decades by Chinese and foreign secularist intellectuals who saw them as only hindrances to any understanding

of Chinese cultural traditions. This began to change in the mid-1990s in the PRC, provoking my own awareness of their important and complicated contributions.

As a consequence of these matters, I discovered over the years that there had been a small but influential group of those Christian missionary-scholars who presented the first well-documented and more or less thoroughly analyzed translations and commentaries to the ancient canonical traditions of Ruist, Buddhist, and Daoist traditions or the “three teachings” (*Rú Shì Dào sānjiào* 儒釋道三教). Though they were not at all the only scholars involved in that modern transmission and transformation of those ancient Chinese religious and philosophical traditions, their interpretive influences were enhanced by the fact that some of them were later made professors in major universities in Europe and North America.¹ As I have noted elsewhere, among the most notable of those missionary-scholars who later became professors overseas were James Legge 理雅各 (1815–1897) at Oxford University, Samuel Wells Williams 衛三畏 (1812–1884) at Yale University, Richard Wilhelm 衛[尉]禮賢 (1873–1930), an influential Ruist scholar at the University of Frankfurt, and William Soothill 蘇慧廉 (1861–1935), who in 1920 took up the Leggian chair at Oxford.² Though this has been a major interpretive stimulus for my own engagement with post-secular themes of study in relationship to Chinese philosophical issues, past and present, my own explorations were not at all limited to these textual traditions or their cultural expressions. Over the years, I became convinced that the phenomena I was observing, describing, analyzing, and critiquing involved a far more basic set of issues that surrounded the emergence of an explicit post-secular mentality manifest within philosophical circles in the PRC and elsewhere.

As a consequence, I began pursuing research on post-secularity as a major theme and in 2012 produced my first major article on that topic as it applied to contemporary Chinese philosophical discussions within the PRC.³ What came out of that analytical effort was, first of all, a general account of post-secularity where any particular kind of secularism that had previously dominated a cultural milieu was replaced by a situation where a “plurality of modern worldviews” was manifest within that same cultural milieu. Within that plurality of worldviews are also those associated with religious traditions that had been previously rejected by the prevailing secularism but, under this new cultural context, have taken on a vital significance. Because they have emerged from within a contested intellectual environment where certain kinds of secularisms dominated, some of the most important representatives of those traditions have developed and redeveloped their worldviews in order to engage and reengage their own general cultural setting. That is to say, those post-secular perspectives have presented worldviews and accounts of the general cultural milieu from which they have emerged that now required

new analyses, reevaluations of previous values and worldviews, and subsequent adjustments for those recognizing these transformative changes and willing to live in the light of them.⁴

My own efforts in this volume are to offer my own post-secular reflections on Ruist traditions and post-traditional philosophical discussions from several different post-secular interpretive angles. As a consequence, they also are suggestive of a number of ways that new histories of Chinese philosophical traditions, exemplary figures, and seminal texts could be designed and elaborated. Though this is not the main concern of this volume, I take it as a secondary *leit-motif* that is certainly relevant to the revisionary intentions of my own post-secular philosophical interpretations of Ruist traditions in particular. Consequently, I have devoted the second chapter of this volume to a more detailed discussion of those possibilities and will mention at other times in this volume some specific ways these alternative interpretive perspectives would shape a new account of the historical richness, creative diversity, and contested debates in which Chinese philosophical traditions have been engaged. Nevertheless, what I now want to focus on within this introductory essay is the conception of post-secularity that has motivated this study and how it is specifically applied in this volume as I adopt what I consider to be several vital post-secular perspectives in presenting the textual and interpretive studies that constitute the main body of this tome.

On the basis of what I had discovered in 2012 from a much wider set of published materials in European, North American, South American, and Chinese contexts, there were at least four major interpretive positions adopted within post-secular situations internationally that I could also identify within contemporary Chinese philosophical writings. That there could be more than four major interpretive positions was explained in part by the realization that there were a number of subcategories within those interpretive positions that might become distinctive options in differing cultural contexts. Nevertheless, since my focus was on contemporary Chinese philosophical contexts at that time, focused primarily on the first decade of the twenty-first century within the PRC, I did not attempt to indicate how the four major interpretive positions might be changed and increased in quantity when applied in other cultural contexts outside of Chinese settings. Though I believe that such alternative cultural applications of this post-secular account of philosophical traditions can be done and would be worth doing under other conditions, this volume continues to focus on the development of a post-secular set of philosophical interpretations relevant to the contemporary PRC Chinese cultural context. What this means in practice, therefore, is that it not only addresses issues and texts within late twentieth and early twenty-first century PRC contexts, but also broadens the range of historical coverage to include post-secular reinterpretations of ancient, pre-modern, modern, and contemporary

works in mainland China and about Chinese traditions, with a special but not exclusive emphasis on Ruist traditions. (In these contexts, quite naturally, there are suggestions of how these new interpretive perspectives could also be integrated into an alternative historical account of Chinese philosophical traditions, but that will not be the main focus of this volume.)

Notably, this interpretive work dealing with the conception of post-secularity and its application within Chinese philosophical contexts occurred independently of one other major work in this area published in English also in 2012, the volume entitled *The Post-Secular in Question: Religion in Contemporary Society*.⁵ As indicated in part within the title of this work, there was a question about “the problem of secularization” especially as a theoretically reliable account of the nature of modern and contemporary religious movements as they were dealt with within the modern discipline of sociology, focusing primarily on those spheres in North American and Western European institutions where modern academic sociology has been contentiously engaged in dealing with religious communities.⁶ Of particular note within the volume was the theoretical shifts that were manifest in the career of Peter Berger⁷ but also the strong connection of challenges of the secularization thesis that Berger initially and famously advocated by certain philosophical figures, primarily including Jürgen Habermas and Charles Taylor.⁸ Though some references were made to Asia (including particularly China and Japan), they were brief and connected to historical accounts of sociological studies within those geographic realms and their cultures as understood primarily by professional sociologists in the United States and Western Europe.⁹ Not one single professional Chinese philosopher was mentioned,¹⁰ though a host of older and contemporary sociologists were addressed and their positions elaborated, including Robert Bellah, Peter Berger, José Casanova, Émile Durkheim, Ernst Troeltsch, and Max Weber. Though in one article within that volume the emergence of the multifaceted studies of religious influences within the American academy and related institutions is addressed, and notably highlighting evangelical Christian influences, and in doing so developed a rubric of various responses to post-secularity that in some ways paralleled some of the claims made in this volume related to Chinese philosophical and religious traditions,¹¹ there was nothing of the sort of engaged discussion of sources outside of North America and Western Europe that is presented here. This has underscored in my own thoughts the vitality and value of the interpretive perspectives found in this volume, precisely because it documents these matters by reference to many works previously unknown or little recognized by those in North America and Western Europe who are neither regularly engaged in research using Chinese sources and have relatively little experience, if any at all, in contemporary Chinese philosophical contexts.

With this strong but indirect affirmation of the importance of the interpretive perspectives adopted in this tome, allow me now to indicate what I myself had already discerned within contemporary Chinese philosophical contexts as described in my own work in post-secularity published in 2012.

What were the four major post-secular interpretive positions identified and described in 2012? I had argued then that the post-secular mentality involved the reality of a diversity of worldviews that were in a contested cultural situation in the PRC. That meant in part that there would still be those philosophers who would advocate their preferred form of Chinese Communist secularism, but their claims no longer were accepted in principle as absolutely true by the majority of philosophers in China, and so their claims were no longer the dominant interpretive trend within philosophical circles or even in general society. This position was referred to as an interpretive perspective adopted by “resistant post-secular secularists,”¹² and in the article, I illustrated this position by quoting a passage from another article written by Arif Dirlik, who in 2008 bemoaned the transmogrification of communist and socialist ideologies that had “bought into” the standards of “global capitalism.”¹³ Still adopting his preferred form of secularism, Dirlik sought to reinterpret his own loss of interpretive hegemony by means of critiquing those who had, apparently from his own point of view at the time, compromised their secularist (and specifically socialist/revolutionary) ideological heritage. What was most interesting to me, however, were the three other major post-secular interpretive positions, because they manifested the points of interpretive contestation far more clearly and were involved in a cultural transformation of contemporary China that I take to be still manifest even at this time in 2020, when there is a greater ideological restrictiveness promoted within the current regime that is also having its own impacts on philosophical studies. Nevertheless, as I will continue to point out, even these more restrictive political projects are being worked out now within a larger post-secular cultural milieu that stimulate in public, educational, and published contexts the articulation of a number of alternative philosophical perspectives that diverge from and even counter the current ideological line.

The second major interpretive position associated with the post-secular mentality that I described in 2012 involved “strategic post-secular secularists.”¹⁴ Such persons are “not unwilling to recognize the post-secular realities around them,” but they find the diversity sometimes perplexing. Though they choose to participate in activities and cultural expressions that put them within the ambit of spiritually-minded or even explicitly religious persons and their organizations, they struggle to make sense of the vital nature of those religious events in the light of their own secularist values and worldview. Notably, this occurs even as they confirm the constructive aspects of what they experience within the religious communities they have experienced and

come to know, and sometimes even explicitly underscore their creative and transformative powers. I illustrated this expression of the post-secular mentality by reference to an article published by a South American academic, Juan Vaggione, who was profoundly and positively impressed by expressions of political dissent he found among Roman Catholic intellectuals and joined them even though he himself was not a member of their community.¹⁵ In some traditional religious contexts, these persons might be identified as “seekers” or “supportive observers,” but they are in fact caught in the midst of an intellectual quandary, recognizing something that is vitally attractive to them, but not being able to articulate a credible account of why that is so. Unwilling to set aside their secularist prejudgments, they find that their assumptions cannot explain (or explain away) what they experience in the social circles in which they move.

The last two interpretive positions are “dialogically open” and have adjusted to affirm the values and worldviews available as a consequence of the emergence of the post-secular milieu which they experience. One is an “engaged post-secular intellectual” position, an interpretive status that does not necessarily involve any personal commitments to a specific religious community, and the other is given the rubric of an “engaged post-secular religious intellectual.”¹⁶ To illustrate how these two categories of post-secular mentality appear within academic contexts that include philosophical discussion, I described in some detail the changes that occurred in the sociological perspectives of Peter Burger and those he worked with from the 1990s until the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, moving away from his “secularization thesis” to one that argued for a contrary “de-secularization thesis” on the basis of new sociological data that he could not set aside.¹⁷ It was these two positions that were illustrated even further in the second half of that article by reference to works published in the latter part of the first decade of the twenty-first century by Chinese philosophers, and so they became main exemplars to highlight the concrete ways some Chinese philosophers expressed themselves within a self-conscious post-secular mode.¹⁸ Obviously, then, a main concern of all these persons and their writings is to argue for the legitimacy of the plurality of values and worldviews that replace the previously dominant form of secularism.

What I had realized in addition to that main concern, and documented only briefly with regard to those who would could be identified as “engaged post-secular religious intellectuals,” is that they could involve a wide range of interpretive options, some on the more conservative side reflecting a traditionalist form of resistance to the plurality of worldviews and others on the more open-ended side willing to reject many aspects of their traditional religious beliefs in order to move toward adjusting their values and worldviews on the basis of the social pluralities that they understood to warrant

that kind of radical departure from previous forms of religious life in which they participated. What I did not explain in any detail within that account is that those “engaged post-secular religious intellectuals” could also sometimes serve as commentators and critics of secularist values and worldviews, sometimes without even mentioning their own religious commitments and at other times take up interpretive positions that sought to make sense of some of the other religious phenomena around them that is not associated with their own preferred religious community and its worldview(s). In this way, they participate in what might be seen as a more or less sympathetic observer of other religious traditions and spiritualities, while continuing to apply their critical insights into the post-secular milieu.

As I have had opportunity to reflect again on my own efforts, especially since the turn of the century, I can identify quite readily how the post-secular mentality informed and enlivened my own research and writing as either an engaged post-secular intellectual and philosopher or as an engaged post-secular religious intellectual and philosopher. What is presented in this volume is a series of what I consider to be poignant discoveries, critiques, and explorations that have been grounded in varying vital post-secular perspectives. Sometimes my research has been engaged in correcting how one or more secularist worldviews (e.g., a non-religious rationalism, a Marxist historical materialism, a materialistic capitalism, a non-revolutionary socialistic atheism, or a scientific naturalism) have skewed the understanding of ancient canonical texts when the values and standards of those worldviews are applied as basic principles or critical assumptions applied to truth claims in those texts. Other times I have questioned various values that have become prominent in modern Chinese social settings, whether in pre-1911 contexts or the more explicit post-1911 post-traditional contexts, because of their unforeseen problematic social consequences. At still other times, I have adopted positions from within specific Chinese religious traditions—many times as a sympathetic but critical observer of Ruist, Daoist, or Chinese Christian traditions of one sort or another. These interpretive studies have sometimes involved cross-cultural multidisciplinary interpretive methodologies—finding that in this manner there were many concerns to raise that reflected blind spots, inadequate accounts, or distorted interpretations that required reconsideration.

This volume, then, represents some of the more recent results of my own research that has been informed by one or more of these post-secular perspectives—that is, as either an engaged post-secular intellectual or as an engaged post-secular religious intellectual—as they have applied to ancient, premodern, modern, and contemporary Chinese philosophical issues. In what follows, therefore, I will describe briefly the basic issues and some of the perspectives that will be addressed in each of the three parts of this tome.

In part 1, I address the life and work of Féng Yǒulán 馮友蘭 (1895–1990) as well as questions related to the characterization of a new philosophy of history that I believe is now required within the Post-Maoist period of Chinese philosophical developments. In these interpretive tasks, I take an approach as an engaged post-secular intellectual and philosopher. As will be seen, Féng is undoubtedly one of the most influential and controversial figures within the post-traditional establishment of academic philosophy in twentieth-century Chinese universities, being both a systematic philosopher in his own right as well as a prolific writer in the subdiscipline of the study of historical accounts of Chinese philosophical traditions. His rationalist orientation and analytical prose have shaped the minds of several generations of Chinese philosophy students. Yet his controversial involvement in promoting critiques of “Confucius” (Master Kǒng, Kǒngfūzǐ 孔夫子) have earned him the reputation of being a traitor to his own philosophical heritage. In part 1 of this volume, therefore, I present an argument that portrays Féng as a “Chinese Gadamer,” both confirming the fact of his traitorous attitudes during a particular period late in his life and his emotional and ideological rejection of that extremism afterward but accomplished in a manner that requires further considerations. This kind of rubric has never before been employed to deal with the controversies swirling around Féng’s life and works, being stimulated into my own thoughts as a post-secular way of handling what many philosophers in China would either prefer to forget or to avoid addressing. Such willful philosophical amnesia is, I believe, neither wise nor salutary for contemporary Chinese philosophical discussions or future developments in Chinese philosophical circles, an argument that I have now laid out in detail in a forthcoming article.¹⁹ Precisely because many of Féng’s works involve several different approaches to the interpretation of the history of Chinese philosophical traditions, I have taken a further step in the second chapter to address post-secular interpretive concerns that would promote an alternative philosophy of history that now could be employed to redesign, revitalize, and reconceive the history of Chinese philosophical traditions.

In the second part of this volume, I address another controversial set of issues related to the conceptualization and affirmation of historical realities associated with several different kinds of “religious Ruism” that include theistic and Buddhist-Ruist synthetic worldviews. These issues I approach not only as a largely sympathetic but also critical, engaged post-secular religious intellectual and philosopher. While these phenomena have been documented in historical studies for several decades, there has been a resistance among some secularist philosophers dealing with Ruist traditions to admit that such worldviews were actually advocated by notable Chinese intellectuals we would now identify in retrospect as Chinese Ruist philosophers. I approach these questions initially from detailed textual studies of the works of a Míng

dynasty 明代 imperial tutor and influential Ruist scholar, Zhāng Jūzhèng 張居正 (1525–1582). Subsequently, I explore the philosophical significance of the textual reorganization and terminological changes found in two of the four books that were created in the eleventh-century CE during the Sòng dynasty development of Ruist traditions, those texts being the *Dàxué* (often called *The Great Learning*) and the *Zhōngyōng* (given a variety of names, including *The Doctrine of the Mean*, *The Practice of the Mean*, and *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*). To illustrate the intensity and vitality of the philosophical debates related to those textual emendations and fundamental restructuring of those texts, I refer to a number of current volumes published in Chinese that point toward a synthetic Buddhist-Ruist worldview promoted by a Ruist scholar, Mǎ Yīfú 馬一浮 (1883–1967), who was punished for promoting his richly integrated traditional Ruist worldview during the Cultural Revolution, and so in spite of his contributions had been set aside by many within Chinese philosophical circles for decades following that tragedy. The final chapter sets forth a critique of a “philosophical translation” and interpretation of the *Zhōngyōng* produced early in the twenty-first century by Roger Ames and David Hall, arguing that their modern American secularist assumptions make it particularly difficult for them to offer a comprehensive vision of the metaphysical claims found within that ancient Ruist classic.

A contemporary turn is made in the third part of this volume, where I adopt an engaged post-secular intellectual perspective in the first two chapters and an engaged post-secular religious intellectual and philosophical perspective in the final chapter. To address matters found in the first chapter of this final portion of this volume, I first characterize “utopian visions” promoted by three major figures in the twentieth-century China and then present post-secular critiques of all of them. These involve, first of all, the conceptualization of a trenchantly formulated and semi-techno-scientific justified vision of Kāng Yǒuwéi’s 康有為 (1858–1927) “Great Unity” (*dàtóng* 大同), and then Máo Zédōng’s 毛澤東 (1893–1976) promotion of the “Great Leap Forward” in the period between 1959 and 1962, with all its terrifying destructiveness, and then finally the later development of the one-child policy in mainland China that was justified by scientific projections but overlooked the negative social consequences of such an unrelenting policy that affected the lives of millions of Chinese citizens. Within the second chapter, I address a set of ethical and epistemological problems that arise in assessing some of the negative social consequences of the online phenomenon of a “crowd-driven” vigilanti activism known as the “Human Flesh Search [Engine]” or *rénròu sōusuǒ* 人肉搜索 (abbreviated as RRSS). Notably, this form of online activity has been declared to be illegal in other modern cultural contexts, but it remains a legitimate manner of online behavior within contemporary societies in the PRC. In fact, even though this online activism has been promoted by some in China as having important positive public values, especially in

exposing corruption among Chinese officials and in catching people who act illegally, there have also been some specific and more general negative social consequences of these actions that have not been previously considered philosophically. I have approached the problem from a comparative cultural perspective, drawing on an earlier mid-nineteenth-century Danish social context when articles written by anonymous authors provoked a sarcastic and blistering social whiplash against the writings and character of the Danish Christian philosopher, Søren Kierkegaard (1813–1855). Though the media of contemporary Chinese online activism involves many other techno-scientific problems that were not part of the controversial Danish context that took place more than 150 years earlier, I argue that the social *Angst* and personal traumata experienced in Denmark do parallel larger social problems in the contemporary PRC context that deserve further reflection, critical appraisal, and even possible legal protection that is not currently provided.

The final chapter in this section addresses a contemporary reconsideration of what ancient Ruist texts refer to as *shèngrén* 聖人, a term often rendered as a “sage,” though the same Chinese term is also used to translate the concept of “saint.” Whether or not there are such things as Ruist sages within China in the twenty-first century and whether all persons can become sages (a major theme in pre-imperial ancient Ruist texts) is a matter of great poignancy as it relates to the viability of Ruist traditions in the twenty-first century Chinese and other contexts. I take up a number of related themes within this article to indicate why the question of sageliness is such a controversial matter in contemporary Ruist studies and how it should be distinguished from certain expressions of saintliness, focusing on a biblically oriented Protestant version of saintliness for comparison. Subsequently, I suggest that there are in fact four ways to expect both sageliness and saintliness in Chinese and other Ruist and Christian contexts that could synthesize these two concepts in the rare achievement of a contemporary living saintly sage and an alternative vision of a living sagely saint in both Ruist and Protestant traditions.

In the “unconcluding” finale to this volume, I readdress the interpretive significance of various post-secular perspectives within the studies of Chinese philosophical traditions at this time. Within that concluding statement, I purposefully move beyond a mere recapitulation of the claims made in the eight chapters of the body of this monograph to address other important phenomena, because they indicate to me how the post-secular context of philosophical studies in China and elsewhere as pursued by Chinese philosophers (whether ethnically Chinese or not) is truly vital and should be taken as a well-justified and warranted interpretive approach that should expand its analyses in many ways that include issues not addressed in this particular volume.

By adopting various interpretive perspectives drawn from my own conception of post-secular mentalities, I have explored a number of texts and themes

within this volume and have gained some insights that I sincerely hope will prove to be interesting to readers. Sometimes I expect that for certain readers, these interpretive accounts will be surprising, because they have been overlooked or avoided in other writings. At other points in this volume, the issues addressed may prove to be revelatory to some readers, because they broach issues that have been submerged and even denied under previously prevalent secularist ideological cultural contexts. If such responses do occur, particularly as persistent readers work through the diversity of texts and issues that this tome engages, I will be both grateful and motivated further to work on some of the remaining tasks I already have identified in the conclusion that need to be addressed in similarly creative post-secular ways.

NOTES

1. My first major attempt to define the technical term, “missionary-scholar,” appeared in an article published in 2010 within a major volume on the study of Christianity in China. Those interested can consult “China’s Missionary-Scholars,” in R. G. Tiedemann, ed., *Handbook of Christianity in China. Volume Two: 1800 to the Present* (Leiden and Boston: E. J. Brill, 2010), 742–65.

2. One way I have tried to indicate the importance of the Leggian heritage in these sinological realms was to explore the nature of the translations and commentaries he produced for Ruist and Daoist traditions, and then to indicate where there were standards of sinological translations that he generated that continued to have an influence on later renderings in other European languages. An article describing those Leggian standards and their hermeneutic value in revealing aspects of Richard Wilhelm’s work in German can be consulted by those who are interested. See “Classics or Sacred Books? Grammatological and Interpretive Problems of Ruist and Daoist Scriptures in the Translation Corpora of James Legge (1815–1897) and Richard Wilhelm (1873–1930)” in Max Deeg, Oliver Frieberger, and Christopher Kline, eds., *Kanonisierung und Kanon-bildung in der asiatischen Religionsgeschichte* (Canonization and Canon Formation in the History of Asian Religions) (Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences, 2011), 421–63.

3. Consult “Post-Secularity within Contemporary Chinese Philosophical Contexts,” *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 39(1) (March 2012): 121–38.

4. The quotation and general account are found in Pfister, “Post-Secularity within Contemporary,” 123.

5. Four editors were involved, the first and third being academic sociologists, the second and fourth being involved in various aspects of religious studies: Philip S. Gorski, David Kyuman Kim, John Torpey, and Jonathan VanAntwerpen, eds. 2012. *The Post-Secular in Question: Religion in Contemporary Society*. New York and London: The Social Sciences Research Council and New York University Press.

6. This has been discussed under the rubric of “the secularization thesis” as documented in the index. See Gorski et al., *The Post-Secular in Question*, 374.

7. As mentioned in Gorski et al., *The Post-Secular in Question*, 2, 138, and 279.
8. See discussions of how philosophers dealt with the concept of post-secular in Gorski et al., *The Post-Secular in Question*, 144–7, 171–2, 176–7, 310–12, 320–9.
9. “Academic attention to Asia” is mentioned only once, while references to China involve Bellah’s studies, current religious fervor in the PRC (especially of Christianity, but very little of Chinese Buddhism, Daoism, or Islam). No Chinese studies by Chinese sociologists or other academic scholars in China have been mentioned, as far as I could discern. Consult Gorski et al., *The Post-Secular in Question*, 23–4, 28–35, and 205.
10. “Chairman Mao” is mentioned only once in the context of the Cultural Revolution, in Richard Madsen’s brief account of “the veneration of Chairman Mao” as a “quasi-religious practice.” Though mainland Chinese philosophers would include him in their litany of “modern Chinese philosophers,” most non-Chinese philosophers outside of Asia relegate him and his works to the academic realm of political science. No other Chinese person who was or is a professional philosopher is mentioned in the volume that I could find. See Gorski et al., *The Post-Secular in Question*, 29.
11. This is seen in the article by John Schmalzhauer and Kathleen Mahoney, “Religion and Knowledge in the Post-Secular Academy,” in Philip S. Gorski et al., *The Post-Secular in Question: Religion in Contemporary Society*, 215–48. In one section of this article they describe American faculty members’ responses to religious renewal and post-secular phenomena in three different manners, “indifference, anxiety, and engagement” (Ibid., 229–32). How their account both parallels, but also simplifies, the post-secular perspectives I identify will be addressed once again in the conclusion to this volume.
12. Cited from Pfister, “Post-Secularity within Contemporary Chinese Philosophical Contexts,” 126.
13. See Pfister, “Post-Secularity within Contemporary Chinese Philosophical Contexts,” 121–2. Notably, by means of that reference to Dirlik’s account in a major work on contemporary China, I illustrated at that time how according to his own claims the problem of post-secularity was not merely a concern related to Chinese cultural contexts but also applicable to a number of other contemporary cultural contexts as well.
14. Quoting from Pfister, “Post-Secularity within Contemporary,” 127.
15. Described in general terms and then with specific details in the endnote, as found in Pfister, “Post-Secularity within Contemporary,” 127 and 136, endnote 15.
16. Described and explored in Pfister, “Post-Secularity within Contemporary,” 127–9.
17. Developed in detail in Pfister, “Post-Secularity within Contemporary,” 123–6.
18. Consult Pfister, “Post-Secularity within Contemporary,” 130–4.
19. For those interested, please see Lauren F. Pfister, “Three Dialectical Phases in Feng Youlan’s Philosophical Journey” for a volume edited by David Elstein, being part of the *Dao Companion to Contemporary Chinese Philosophy*, forthcoming in 2020. In this article, I use a Hegelian concept of “modernity” to interpret three phases of Féng’s dialectically expressed philosophical journey, and conclude with a number of ironies that arise from within his own efforts to live out an explicitly “modern consciousness” within the Chinese philosophical institutions and traditions he helped to form and establish.

Part I

**POST-SECULAR REFLECTIONS ON
RECHARACTERIZING CHINESE
PHILOSOPHICAL TRADITIONS**

Prefatory Note

In this section's first chapter, I explore one of the earliest systematic attempts in the post-1911 Chinese context produced by Féng Yǒulán 馮友蘭 (known in post-1949 contexts as 冯友兰 1895–1990) to argue for a post-traditional and modern account of the nature of “philosophy” as he conceived of it, as well as offering alternative accounts of the character and content of “Chinese philosophy” within his several different presentations of the history of Chinese philosophical traditions. His initial account of the nature of “philosophy” was published as part of a long preface in 1931 within the first of two volumes of his first “history of Chinese philosophy” (*Zhōngguó zhéxué shǐ* 中國哲學史). This two-volume set continues to be republished in Chinese both outside mainland China and within the PRC; also, it was this two volume set that was rendered into English by Derk Bodde (1909–2003) in the early 1950s, even though that preface was only summarized and reduced to about one-quarter of its original length. Notably, however, Féng wrote several other versions of a history of Chinese philosophical traditions in the 1940s, and then ended his philosophical career with a six-volume Marxist-inspired “new edition” of a more dialectically intensified history of Chinese philosophical themes, texts, and persons. (A seventh volume dealing with his account of the history of contemporary Chinese philosophy was published posthumously in Hong Kong in 1992, and so has subsequently been added to that major six volume set.) As a consequence, Féng Yǒulán has been one of the most influential, as well as one of the most controversial, professional philosophers in China during the twentieth century.

My own research into Féng Yǒulán's massive published corpus began in earnest in 1997, when a small group of three Chinese elderly scholars and two relatively younger Americans, one being myself, began to consider working out an annotated English translation of the posthumously published volume

of Féng's *History of Contemporary Chinese Philosophy* (*Zhōngguó xiàndài zhéxué shǐ* 中國現代哲學史). That was the volume that had originally been published in traditional Chinese characters in Hong Kong in 1992, but then by 1996, it was also available in a mainland Chinese version prepared in simplified Chinese ideographs. In the process of working out some chapters of those annotated English renderings within that particular volume, I read more about Féng's life and explored other volumes of his published works, having also the opportunity later in Běijīng to meet his daughter, an author in her own right and using the penname Zōng Pú 宗樸, and his son-in-law, Cài Zhòngdé 菜仲德, two key promoters of the academic study of his many works. As a consequence of all these factors, I began to produce my own interpretive essays on various aspects of Féng Yǒulán's own philosophical system, called New Principle-centered Learning (*Xīn Lǐxué* 新理學)¹ and to assess his varying versions of "the history" of Chinese philosophical traditions. What I learned was integrated into my teaching both at Bonn University (2000–2001), and subsequently at Hong Kong Baptist University during the first decade of the twenty-first century.

There being so much to deal with in Féng's corpus, most of my earlier essays have been primarily descriptive, while offering some inchoate interpretive accounts of his life and work. During the past five years, however, I began to become self-conscious of several problems that challenged my earlier accounts, particularly in making sense of the period after the founding of the PRC in 1949 in which Féng remained in mainland China. Very significantly, under the impact of Maoist propaganda techniques over a period of more than twenty years, Féng gradually adopted a Marxist philosophy of history and worked with others to apply the interpretive standards of that particular philosophy of history to create a new Marxist (but not necessarily Maoist) account of the histories of Chinese philosophical traditions. This general orientation and the related research contexts in which he worked ended up moving Féng into a notorious situation in 1975 where he wrote out a trenchant critique of the iconic ancient Chinese philosopher, "Confucius" or Master Kǒng (*Kǒngfūzǐ* 孔夫子). Motivation for reconsidering this problem within Féng's life came when I was invited to write another chapter on his philosophical works by the editor of the *Dao Companion on Contemporary Philosophy*. The chapter prepared for that volume took a new Hegelian approach to Féng's complicated philosophical career, focusing on the nature of "modern consciousness" in Hegel's account that provides a new framework for revealing Féng's own problematic journey as it developed across three dialectically related philosophical phases.² Though I do not repeat that argument here, what I do present in the initial chapter of this section is a different interpretive approach that employs Jacques Ellul's account of "propaganda," in order to indicate why I would now consider Féng to be

“China’s Gadamer” and not simply a traitorous Maoist philosophical turn-coat who had published one of the most trenchant critiques of the icon of Chinese philosophical traditions. What I argue, then, is that Féng’s political status with the ruling regime at various times in his later life was different in varying degrees from such philosophers as Heidegger among the Nazis or the Japanese philosophers of the Kyoto Zen school among the Japanese imperialists of World War II and was more like Gadamer (in his response to Nazism), in that he made a decisive and complicated turn away from Maoist extremism. In this regard, Féng has remained one of the most notable philosophical figures in late twentieth-century Chinese philosophical circles, and his troubled passage through Maoist extremism suggests many new questions that should be brought to bear on both understanding the problematic contexts in which post-Mao Chinese philosophical traditions have emerged, and also reconsidering new ways of addressing the histories of Chinese philosophical traditions.

Precisely on this basis, then, I have offered in the second chapter of this section a reconsideration of what might count as a suitable history of philosophy of Chinese philosophical traditions for the Post-Maoist era. This has been done especially in the light of my own comparative studies of Féng Yǒulán’s various writings dealing with historical accounts of Chinese philosophical traditions. By contrasting Féng’s accounts of Ruist (“Confucian”), Daoist, and Chinese Buddhist traditions within those “histories” written in the pre-PRC era and those accounts made in his extensive “new edition” of the history of Chinese philosophical traditions published primarily in the 1980s, I argue that there are inherent shortcomings within Féng’s presentations of those varying histories of Chinese philosophical traditions that require a new approach, and specifically, a new philosophy of history to answer three major questions that have not been adequately addressed and explained in Féng’s varying accounts.

In this regard, then, the first chapter provides a basic account of the philosophical texts and basic interpretive problems that provoke the issues addressed in the second chapter. When all this is taken from the perspective of an engaged post-secular intellectual and philosopher within contemporary Chinese philosophical circles, as I do in these two chapters, it suggests that there should be new ways of reading many other ancient, pre-modern, and modern Chinese philosophical texts and contexts. This is what I am seeking to accomplish through the specific issues addressed within the second and third sections of this volume. Nevertheless, within the second chapter in this section, I focus attention in the last section of that chapter on indicating and justifying the elements and standard for creating a new philosophy of history that can address the needs that are apparent from this thorough comparative study of Féng’s different histories of Chinese philosophical traditions.

NOTES

1. The first major essay I published in English on Féng Yǒulán's own philosophical system appeared in a volume edited by my Chinese philosophy teacher and dissertation chairman, Chung-ying Cheng 成中英, and the Oxford University philosopher, Nick Bunnin, in a volume entitled *Contemporary Chinese Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). It was entitled "Féng Youlan's New Principle Learning and his Histories of Chinese Philosophy" (*ibid.*, 165-87), and indicates how I found it necessary to deal with both his own philosophical system as well as his various accounts of "the history" of Chinese philosophical traditions. The following year I published a more critically interpretive chapter readdressing the status and nature of Féng's own philosophical system, claiming that in fact on the basis of accepted standards for identifying a scholar's pedigree as a "modern" or "contemporary New Ruist ('Confucian')," Féng's works did not fit into the more conservative mold of a post-traditional New Ruist. Consult "A Modern Chinese Philosophy Built upon Critically Received Traditions: Feng Youlan's New Principle-Centered Learning and the Question of its Relationship to Contemporary New Ruist ('Confucian') Philosophies," in John Makeham, ed., *New Confucianism: A Critical Examination* (Houndsmill, England: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 165-84. As will be seen, other articles have also been written since then, so that the two chapters dealing with Féng in this volume are the result of a number of stages in my own growing awareness, appreciation, and critical interpretive concerns related to his life and works.

2. For those interested, consult Lauren F. Pfister, "Three Dialectical Phases of Feng Youlan's Philosophical Journey," in David Elstein, ed., *The Dao Companion to Contemporary Chinese Philosophy*, a volume which should be published later in 2020.

Chapter 1

Post-Secular Insights into the Professional Philosopher Féng Yǒulán's (1895–1990) Life and Works

INTRODUCTION TO INTERPRETIVE THEMES AND CONCERNS RELATED TO FÉNG YǒULÁN

Among mainland Chinese philosophers in the twentieth century, Féng Yǒulán 馮友蘭 (1895–1990, in simplified characters 冯友兰) is the most well-known professional philosopher outside of China, and in some English language philosophical anthologies is normally ranked with Máo Zédōng (1893–1976, in simplified characters 毛泽东) as the most significant Chinese philosophers among international philosophers during that century.¹ Although he wrote out and published his own philosophical system in six volumes during the war years from 1939 to 1946, referring to it as the *Xīn lǐxué* 新理學 (New Principle-centered Learning), he was far better known within China and internationally as the preeminent post-traditional writer of modern accounts of the history of Chinese philosophical traditions.² In fact, he produced at least four different histories of Chinese philosophy during nearly sixty years of philosophical study and published writings in this realm.³ The first work appeared as a pair of large Chinese volumes entitled *Zhōngguó Zhéxuéshǐ* 中國哲學史 (A History of Chinese Philosophy) in the early 1930s, while the fourth and last was a six volume revisionary account that was published sequentially during the last two decades of his life (1970–1990) under the title *Zhōngguó Zhéxuéshǐ Xīnbiān* 中國哲學史新編 (New Edition of the History of Chinese Philosophy), with a posthumously published seventh volume entitled *Zhōngguó Xiàndài Zhéxuéshǐ* 中國現代哲學史 (A History of Contemporary Chinese Philosophy) in 1992.⁴ Because these four different histories were motivated by different interpretive

assumptions and philosophical methodologies, the last one mentioned above being strongly influenced by Chinese Marxist philosophical categories and methodologies, Féng's final work in this area was considered to be highly controversial by those outside of China and rejected by some contemporary Ruist ("Confucian") scholars as both ideologically skewed and written by an intellectual traitor to his own philosophical and cultural traditions.⁵

Philosophical Themes and Controversies Related to Féng Yǒulán

Having outlived Máo so that he could ultimately provide his own modern Ruist critique of Máo's Marxist leftism and its extremes,⁶ Féng also gained notoriety for his intellectual independence within Chinese circles but appears to have been successful in having a continuing influence in matters specifically related to the modern history of Chinese Ruist and Daoist traditions. Notably, his lectures on the history of Chinese philosophical traditions presented to American graduate students in 1947 have been translated into Chinese at least twice during the last three decades, so that the bilingual English-Chinese version of *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy* has become standard reading for first-year Chinese students in philosophy departments in universities across much of mainland China.⁷

In fact, there is a new and industrious effort by a good number of scholars and publishers to republish many of Féng's previous writings and lectures posthumously;⁸ in addition, there are also important studies and creative accounts made public by his living relatives.⁹ Much of this is done, at least in part, in order to reassert the credibility of Féng's complicated personal history, especially related to his numerous self-criticisms and public denunciations beginning in the late 1950s and continuing through much of the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), all taking place during the period of Máo Zédōng's reign as "the chairman" of the People's Republic of China. Because Féng ultimately committed himself to write a "new edition" of the history of Chinese philosophical traditions guided by Chinese Marxist standards and its particular form of dialectical materialism, starting in the early 1960s and lasting at least until 1978, it seemed that Féng's earlier philosophical commitments tied to New Principle-Centered Learning had been completely jettisoned. Yet during the last decade of his life, and within his one posthumously published volume on twentieth-century Chinese philosophy, Féng returned once again to inspirations from Sòng Ruist philosophers in order to criticize Máo and to assert his own intellectual freedom as a modern post-Maoist philosopher.

Parallels between this so-called "Féng Yǒulán phenomenon" (*Féng Yǒulán xiànxàng* 馮友蘭現象)¹⁰ with some of the public criticisms of the explicit Nazi involvement of the notable German philosopher, Martin Heidegger

(1889–1976), and the more complicated situation that Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900–2002) faced under the Nazi regime are troubling, to say the least.¹¹ There are also parallels between the nationalism Féng expressed within the six volumes of his own philosophical system and the Japanese nationalism expressed during World War II by members of the Kyoto school of Zen 禪 philosophers Nishida Kitarō 西田幾多郎 (1870–1945), Nishitani Keiji 西谷啓治 (1900–1990), Tanabe Hajime 田辺元 (1885–1962), and others.¹² In this case, however, we should contrast the Japanese philosophers’ orientations that justified their support for Japanese nationalism and imperialism with the Chinese nationalism that arose as a result of Japanese aggression within the minds and writings of Féng and other Chinese philosophers during that period. Nevertheless, all these issues suggest that there are some complicated matters that ought to be considered here which are directly related to Féng’s desire and choice to live as a modern professional philosopher. Of particular importance is his controversial involvement after 1949 with the ideological critiques of traditional Chinese philosophical teachings during the period of Mao’s regime. As we have already indicated, Féng’s works published during Mao’s reign involved explicit philosophical submission to certain Marxist principles that were also shaped by propagandistic critiques, so that he participated in written critiques of traditional Chinese philosophical figures and values, including those within Ruist traditions. Ultimately, these involved some deep ethical quandaries and strongly felt existential vulnerabilities on the part of Féng, most of these being resolved in his own mind several years after Mao’s death in 1976, so that he could continue his research and writing as a retired and yet active professional philosopher. As with the cases of Heidegger, Gadamer, and some Zen advocates, we should consider seriously the published philosophical justifications of the rejections of his past convictions and ask once again why a Chinese professional philosopher, such as Féng during those periods of ideological tyranny, would find his own philosophical convictions essentially ineffectual in opposing oppressive political propaganda and cruelly inhumane governing policies.

Féng Yǒulán’s Self-Reflective Criticisms and Continuing Influences

In the end, therefore, even though his own philosophical system was also criticized as inadequate and “contradictory” by the later Féng himself in his posthumously published volume on contemporary Chinese history,¹³ the elderly Féng’s modern accounts of the history of Chinese philosophical traditions continued to advocate certain concepts developed within his own New Principle-centered Learning (*Xīn Lǐxué* 新理學) philosophical system, even within some of the later volumes of what was putatively presented as

a Marxist-oriented interpretation of Chinese philosophical traditions, that is, within his *New Edition of the History of Chinese Philosophy*.

Ironically, and in spite of his earlier pre-1949 modern philosophical contributions expressed in his own philosophical system, the New Principle-centered Learning, there are good philosophical reasons not to rank Féng as belonging to the group of New or Modern Ruist philosophers.¹⁴ That is to say that Feng's own philosophical system had a distinctive character that differentiated his own pre-Maoist philosophical writings from those who sought to reassert the value of Ruism in post-traditional contexts. What made all of this far more complicated was his ultimate submission to not only Marxist philosophical categories during the last four decades of his life as a professional philosopher but becoming in the mid-1970s one of the most well-known advocates for a Maoist–Marxist critique of Chinese traditional philosophical teachings.

In this chapter, therefore, I will attempt to offer explanatory accounts of all of these matters along thematic lines, linking together the development and key concerns expressed in Féng's own philosophical system and his life as a modern professional philosopher with those expressed in his extensive, complicated, and varying interpretive accounts of the history of Chinese philosophical traditions. In this process, I will also seek to indicate some of the strengths and limits of Féng's various philosophical projects, exploring in particular the significance of his Marxist compromises in the light of his own earlier political philosophy, his relatively privileged position among Chinese philosophers and intellectuals during the early years of Máo's reign, and his subsequent endurance through public criticisms that functioned as part of the larger Maoist propagandistic campaigns, leading to his submission to many Marxist philosophical concepts and methodologies during the last four decades of his life.

Starting points for these analyses will be particular insights drawn from three persons very close to Féng Yǒulán during various stages of his lifetime. The first is a person we can consider to be his historical biographer and chronologer, Cài Zhòngdé 蔡仲德 (1937–2004), who was also his son-in-law and a music scholar;¹⁵ the second person is the contemporary Chinese philosopher, Chén Lái 陳來 (1952–), his last doctoral student in the Philosophy Department of Běijīng University;¹⁶ and the third person, Jīn Chūnfēng 金春峰 (c. 1940–),¹⁷ his former student during the early 1960s and an editor of the People's Press who worked with Féng to complete the “new edition” of his final history of Chinese philosophical traditions.¹⁸ Other scholarly accounts will subsequently be referred to in order to build upon and extend insights that are found in the works of these three major Chinese interpreters of Féng's life.

THE PRE-1949 YEARS: FÉNG AS A YOUNG AND PROLIFIC PROFESSIONAL PHILOSOPHER

In order to initiate our exploration of Féng Yǒulán's career, we need to ask what is meant by referring to Féng as being a "professional philosopher"? Before the 1911 Revolution, there were no indigenous public Chinese universities that maintained philosophy departments; these emerged as part of the creation of China's modern universities during the Republican period¹⁹ and were based in part on precedents established in China within earlier Christian universities as well as those set in overseas universities in Europe, Japan, and the United States.²⁰ Féng's life and studies were linked to this modern emergence of the discipline of philosophy, and so once he completed his doctoral studies at Columbia University in the United States in 1923, he returned to China to take up a position as a philosopher teaching in a good number of departments of philosophy within various modern Chinese universities and remained involved in that kind of work even after he was no longer involved with regular teaching.²¹ As a consequence, he identified himself as a professional philosopher for a period stretching across more than six decades. Details about his professional career during this long period are worth repeating here, even if only very briefly.

Féng Yǒulán on Modern Teachers and on Being a Professional Philosopher

During the three decades after Féng graduated with the equivalent of an MA degree in 1918 from the newly established Philosophy Department at Běijīng University, he went to the United States near the end of 1919 to study for his doctorate at Columbia University under the supervision of the American philosopher, John Dewey (1859–1952). After returning to China in 1923, he began to teach and write as a professional philosopher, finally settling into a position at Tsinghua (Qīnghuá) University in 1928, so that he was living and teaching in Běijīng for most of the remainder of his life.

It is of some interest, but seldom mentioned by those who write about Féng's philosophy, that he actually wrote about the significance of being a teacher in a modern industrialized social setting. He did so when he contrasted that modern teaching role from traditional settings of education within the second book of his own six-volume philosophical system,²² *Xīnshì lùn* 新事論 (what Féng subtitled as *China's Road to Freedom*). In that context, where "teaching" (*jiào* 教) is separated from the transforming influences of a long-term connection with a specific teacher (*huà* 化), there is only the transfer of knowledge and no longer the imprint of a teacher's virtuous

character and distinctive excellences upon those the teacher receives as students. Though this is not all that a “professional philosopher” would do, and we have evidence that Féng still maintained special relationships with some of his graduate students, it was an interesting evaluation of what Féng took to be the significance of professional teachers in the modern form of Chinese society he and others were experiencing in the 1930s and 1940s.

In fact, in that account, Féng said nothing about the conditions of research and requirements for publications, modern scholarship networks, or the differences between public and private universities. So, even though we must admit that this early account of a “professional teacher” made by Féng in 1940 is curtailed and inadequate, nevertheless it was written at a time when he was struggling with a bigger question about the relationship between traditional and modern forms of Chinese and other cultures and published within educational contexts shaped dramatically by the war against Japanese imperialist armies. I will return to explore the significance of that cultural and educational setting later in this chapter.

Féng Yǒulán’s Philosophical System: The New Principle-centered Learning

Having an identity as a professional philosopher in modern Chinese university settings for more than six decades allowed Féng to embody an unusual and nontraditional educational role; he was for most of his lifetime a modern professional faculty member in philosophy departments, wherever he was located, even across periods of tumultuous political and cultural changes in mainland China. In fact, having endured through such a lengthy period of professional teaching and research allowed Féng enough time to reconsider the significance of his own philosophical system in at least two of his own published works, one in 1948 and one posthumously aired in 1992.²³ Yet here, first of all, we should summarize the character of Féng Yǒulán’s philosophical system written in six volumes, a system self-proclaimed within these works as the “new standard tradition” (*xīntǒng* 新統) among modern Chinese philosophical writings.

First of all, it should be noted that each title of the six volumes (1939–1946) that constitute the philosophical system of the New Principle-Centered Learning begins with the Chinese character for “new” (*xīn* 新). Here are the following Chinese titles of those six volumes (not including their subtitles) rendered in a more literal fashion, presented in their transcription as phrases I take them to portray,²⁴ including the year of their publication:

- *Xīn Lǐxué* 新理學 (*New Principle-Centered Learning*, 1939)
- *Xīnshì lùn* 新事論 (*Discussions about New Affairs*, 1940)
- *Xīnshì xùn* 新世訓 (*Instructions for the New Age*, 1940)

- *Xīn yuánrén* 新原人 (*New Account of Humans*, 1943)
- *Xīn yuándào* 新原道 (*New Account of the Way*, 1944)
- *Xīn zhīyán* 新知言 (*New [Ways] of Knowing Words*, 1946)

It should be noted that the first volume bears the name of the whole system, and so to distinguish it from the system, I italicize the English title. Also, I understand the titles of the second and third volumes to involve a phrase where the *xīn* character is bound to the second character and not describing a phrase made up by the other two characters. In fact, while the phrases *lǐxué*, *yuánrén*, *yuándào*, and *zhīyán* are almost all direct references to earlier precedents in Chinese philosophy and literature, the titles of the second and third volume are distinctively and putatively intending to address contemporary issues. Essentially by this means we can understand, in a most general manner, that Féng Yǒulán as a modern professional philosopher sought to write up a “new standard tradition” (*xīntǒng*) for modern Chinese philosophy by means of these six volumes. He intended to do this by indicating the logical underpinnings and elaborations of his new Chinese philosophical system, its practical implications for social and moral concerns in contemporary China and internationally, as well as a new approach to what we now would refer to as philosophical anthropology and metaphysics. He explicitly referred to his New Principle-centered Learning as this “new standard tradition” within the final chapter of the fifth volume of this series.²⁵

Féng himself much later, in the early 1980s, identified the general context in which he sought to produce a “new” philosophical system: “I lived in a period of contradiction and struggle between different cultures. How to understand this contradiction, how to deal with this struggle and what place I myself had in this contradiction and struggle: this kind of question is the one I faced squarely and answered.”²⁶ What we need to realize in this statement is that Féng was “struggling” not only with cultural and philosophical differences found in places, such as “China” and “America” and “Western Europe” in his own day, but also with cultural and philosophical differences between ancient, pre-modern, modern, and contemporary China itself. The contradictions of cultures he faced included those related to Ruist (“Confucian”), Daoist, Chinese Buddhist, and Chinese Marxist traditions, and the synthetic (and therefore “new”) possibilities of bringing these together with other cultural and philosophical traditions that he had come to appreciate. As a consequence, then, there are manifestations of struggle and contradiction even within Féng’s claims about his own philosophical system and his own philosophical contribution, matters that Chén Lái, Jīn Chūnfēng, and others have highlighted.²⁷

So, how could “philosophy” as Féng defined it be made “new”? In 1939, what Féng Yǒulán considered to be “philosophical” (*zhéxué dǐ* 哲學底)

was in absolute contrast to what he described as “[empirically] scientific” (*kēxué dǐ* 科學底); philosophy at its “best” was metaphysics and did not deal with the hosts of empirical details that fascinate scientists and prompt their empirical theoretical judgments. The “most philosophical philosophy” (*zui zhéxué dǐ zhéxué* 最哲學底哲學) would always deal with “realities” or what is “truth-and-reality” (*zhēnjì* 真際) that do not change but elevate the level of understanding and wisdom that a person comprehended rationally and experienced existentially.²⁸ This being the case, how could anything “new” be done in philosophical realms? Newness could arise because of developments in thought discovered by new philosophers, in new analytic interpretations, and by revealing new ways of thinking.²⁹ The “new ways of thinking” Féng directly linked to “the method of logical analysis,” a realm of philosophical work that he considered to be “the permanent contribution of Western philosophy to Chinese philosophy.”³⁰ This continued to be one of the most often repeated claims Féng made related to the newness of New Principle-centered Learning, that it provided an analytical and systematic approach to Chinese philosophical traditions.³¹ It was also quite often by this means that Féng claimed he had made philosophical advances into “new” areas of both more mundane as well as more technical philosophical discussions.³²

Generally speaking, during this earlier period of Féng’s professional philosophical career, his preferred definition for “philosophy” itself was “systematic [and] reflective thinking on life.”³³ Whatever was systematic in Féng’s vision of philosophy had to be formulated logically and analytically, suggesting that it was formally about the ideas being discussed and not focused on studying empirical data or mundane affairs. Also, Féng advocated that philosophical thinking also had a reflective dimension, a style of thinking that continued to have a self-referential and critical edge to it, a method that allow persons to elevate their thinking to higher intellectual/spiritual horizons (*jìngjiè* 境界).³⁴ The object being systematically and reflectively identified, comprehended, analyzed, and assessed is “life,” a word in English that he rendered as “human life” (*rénshēng* 人生) in Chinese in 1931,³⁵ nevertheless, it is significant to point out that within his later histories of Chinese philosophical traditions as well as his New Principle-centered Learning, he discussed some logical and metaphysical realities that were not strictly human, including patterned principle (*lǐ* 理), the Supreme Ultimate (*tàiji* 太極), vital energy (*qì* 氣), the *dào* 道 and the heavenly way (*tiāndào* 天道), ghosts and spirits (*guǐshén* 鬼神),³⁶ and the great whole (*dàquán* 大全).³⁷ Obviously, he intended to emphasize ways that his “systematic and reflective” form of thinking could be employed to understand the nature of “modern” and “industrial life” in contrast to “traditional” and “agricultural life,”³⁸ and so also offer political guidance that involved acting in a non-calculative manner, so that informed philosophers would harmonize their lives and teachings with

the dictates of rulers.³⁹ While the former manifested one way Féng applied systematic analysis to contemporary situations, the latter illustrated how he reflectively reconsidered ethical ways of engaging political leaders. Notably, especially in the latter realm of philosophical discussion, he was also relying on some distinctively Daoist concepts rendered in his own “modern” way.⁴⁰ It has been these two volumes of what could be referred to as “applied New Principle-centered Learning philosophy” that have been largely overlooked by many contemporary Chinese and other philosophers dealing with Féng Yǒulán’s philosophy and its influences, and yet it is here that we can discern points where his “professional philosophical” reflections ended up causing him some poignant political alienation and undeniable existential *Angst* within the post-1949 setting of the People’s Republic of China.

Féng’s Various Critical Self-Evaluations: Focusing on Texts of 1948 and 1992

Here I will be following a warning that comes from Chén Lái’s analyses of Féng’s autobiographical statements about his career and the works he produced, noting that Féng did not necessarily comprehend or represent all that he had actually done (or not done) as a professional philosopher within these evaluations.

Already in 1948, Féng expressed the desire to be known as a “pure” philosopher, and not so much as a “historian of philosophy,” or even more precisely, “merely” a historian of Chinese philosophy.⁴¹ Rather ironically, then, it is notable that those two self-evaluations occurred as passages within larger works on the history of Chinese philosophical traditions. In fact, “pure philosophy” also works within particular historical and cultural contexts, and so Féng as a philosopher was also working within a particular set of Chinese historical settings and participating in creating a new trend within the contemporary history of Chinese philosophy, in particular, and of comparative philosophical studies internationally. From the perspective of his own published writings, it is manifest that many of his major works involved the history of Chinese and other philosophical traditions, and even his comparative philosophical studies had a strong element of self-consciousness of their historical moorings. So, even though Féng desired to be known as a philosopher *per se*, his international reputation in particular has been shaped by the publication of several of his histories of Chinese philosophy published in the English language.⁴² From the perspective of his six-volume presentation of the New Principle-centered Learning, the two last volumes were clearly historical in nature; in addition, the second and third volumes were historical in relationship to cultural values. Though one can see the impact of Féng’s analytical and logical method in these volumes as well, especially as he continued over

the period of six years to explore what constituted the nature of “the most philosophical philosophy,” they are not the only interpretive concepts that shape their content.

From another historical and cultural set of perspectives, Féng Yǒulán’s initial philosophical writings were clearly affected by a post-traditional Chinese cultural setting and his own experiences as a graduate student studying comparative philosophy in the United States. Having finished his initial university-level study of Chinese philosophy at the newly established Philosophy Department at Běijīng University in 1918, he then travelled one year later to Columbia University to study philosophy. Having completed his dissertation on “A Comparative Study of Life Ideals” at Columbia University under John Dewey, it is notable that Dewey’s influence was not very obvious in that or any other works Féng produced during his doctoral studies.⁴³ Within the Chinese introduction of his first major two volume work, *A History of Chinese Philosophy* (1931–1934), Féng referred to an American neo-Platonist who had captured his attention, W. P. Montague (1873–1953), and also mentioned a concept from William James’ writings but never mentioned Dewey.⁴⁴ Only in *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy* published in 1948 did Féng mention Dewey’s presence in China but nothing about any influence on his own philosophical system or other written work.⁴⁵ More significantly, when Féng worked out his own philosophy in the six volumes published between 1939 and 1946, he devoted one full volume to ways his own philosophical system responded to overseas philosophical concerns, but once again did not mention Dewey. Only much later, in September 1982, when Féng revisited Columbia University for the first time since 1923, did he actually mention both Dewey and Montague as his teachers there in the 1920s and gave a brief statement about some of the influence of Dewey’s philosophical writings on his own philosophical development.⁴⁶

As it happens, Féng’s philosophical system in six volumes has been republished in Chinese since his death in 1990 in an accessible two volume format,⁴⁷ and also within his collected works, but that philosophical system in itself has not excited much philosophical attention. Perhaps the most important contribution is his account of the development of human consciousness as being represented by four intellectual/spiritual horizons (*jìngjiè* 境界), as found in the fourth volume among the six tomes. This particular contribution of Féng has been described by Chén Lái, his last PhD student, as a form of “philosophical mysticism,”⁴⁸ with the highest horizon being insightfully characterized by Hans-Georg Moeller and others as relying on a Daoist account of transcendent experience based on precedents in the *Zhuāngzǐ*.⁴⁹

As a consequence of all these factors and his publications up till 1948, Féng could already be called a comparative philosopher refocusing attention on Chinese philosophical traditions with international research awareness

and some modern sensibilities. He presented himself as a modern secular philosopher; within his philosophical system, he adopted a realist metaphysics but had interpretive tendencies in the 1940s that showed his interest in a *qi*-centered account of the material world, so that it might be seen as a kind of materialism, but not at all in the Marxist sense of that term. By the mid-1940s, Féng had clearly become a philosopher driven by certain passions that did not embrace interests in a number of important realms of philosophical study, including aesthetics, philosophy of (natural) sciences, non-anthropocentric ethics (and so revealing no deep concern for animal ethics or environmental ethics), and philosophy of religion. His comparative philosophical approach was essentially limited to selective figures in European, American, and Chinese settings, and so he remained largely unaware and unresponsive to Ruist developments in Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese contexts, not to mention the influential “*canon-in-translations*” produced in a wide range of languages by modern missionary-scholars in China as well as modern sinologists outside of China. Féng’s avoidance of all of those sources indicate something of his own hermeneutic pre-judgments as a “modern secularist philosopher,” yet within those alternative texts was a multi-disciplinary appreciation and critique of the very same canonical texts that Féng himself tended to read and interpret from logical and rationalist methodologies that supported more-or-less traditional ways of philosophical thinking. As a consequence, it is not hard to anticipate that his ethical norms were generally shaped by a more-or-less traditional Ruist (“Confucian”) set of categories, standards that were intending to manifest his own post-traditional and modern form of philosophy, one that was rationalistic in tone and materialistic in metaphysical orientation. Nevertheless, these same norms and standards were largely unresponsive to the ethics driving Marxist revolution and its political implications. It is precisely in this last case, especially in relationship to questions he raised regarding the key principles of political philosophy within his own philosophical system, and its concerns about social and economic justice as they related to the advocacy of military revolution, that Féng’s modern secularist form of New Ruist thinking was largely unresponsive and uninformed. So, it is along this trail of philosophical inquiry involving his willingness to remain in the revolutionized China after October 1949, believing that he as a secular modern philosopher could share in its national and political development, that I will now travel. What I believe that we all should understand is why Féng’s political attitudes shaped by his New Ruist approach made him essentially uninformed about the nature of the Chinese Communist political regime, and so made him particularly vulnerable to revolutionary critiques as well as harsh propaganda techniques that moved him ultimately to deny the very Ruist orientation that had informed the first thirty years of his philosophical research and writing.

When viewed from this more critical angle related to the nature of his own political philosophy, Féng's account of social and political developments in the two volumes within his philosophical system devoted to these themes seemed very abstracted from the actual wars that had been fought during the anti-Japanese campaigns and the ideological conflicts between the Chinese Nationalists and Chinese Communists. Precisely in these realms, they did not prepare him with adequate insight into how to adjust to the new political conditions that accompanied the victory of the Chinese Communists under Máo Zédōng's rule.

This period ended in 1948 with the publication of his notable volume of essays prepared in English which he prepared and presented to American students, given the title, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*. As has been mentioned already above, even though this volume was prepared for American graduate students who knew next to nothing about the history of Chinese philosophical traditions, this volume has been retranslated into Chinese twice (in the mid-1980s and during the first decade of the twenty-first century) and is still employed as a standard textbook for undergraduate students in philosophy departments within many Chinese universities to this day.

FÉNG IN THE 1950S: RUNNING THROUGH THE MODERN CHINESE MARXIST GAUNTLET

There is no controversy about the fact that a major intellectual shift occurred in Féng Yǒulán's life and works after 1950.⁵⁰ More significant is the question of whether there was also a third and final transformation of his intellectual horizons after 1978. The controversies this question raises involve the following issues: first of all, to assert whether or not Féng's turn away from Maoist ideological critiques of Master Kǒng orchestrated by the Gang of Four in the mid-1970s; second, to ascertain whether or not Féng willingly participated in that Maoist critique, whether or not his involvement was genuine, and whether or not its critique was comprehensive and/or philosophically significant. Regarding these matters, I will take a new interpretive approach, asserting that Féng was philosophically and practically unprepared for his encounter with Máo Zédōng and the conditions of the "New China," and that during the 1970s, he ultimately submitted himself to the propagandistic techniques that he had previously sought to resist through silent determination. Subsequently, I will argue that it was only in 1978 that Féng did in fact have another existentially liberating experience of intellectual reorientation. This has much to do with what has been called the "Féng Yǒulán Phenomenon" (*Féng Yǒulán xiànxàng* 馮友蘭現象)⁵¹ as well as the complicated question about the categorization of Féng's philosophical system and personal commitments. This

latter question is dealing with the character of Féng's philosophical thought at the end of his life: whether it is primarily Ruist, Daoist, Marxist, or a more or less eclectic and/or synthetic expression of philosophical commitments.⁵² How Féng's submission to propagandistic techniques finally brought him to the point in the mid-1970s of presenting a highly provocative intellectual rejection of Master Kǒng and how he turned away from that ideologically loaded period of publication, as well as how that final "turn" was expressed philosophically, will be discussed in the remaining sections of this chapter.

Undoubtedly, Féng Yǒulán returned to China after 1948 and remained after the Chinese Communist takeover of mainland China, believing that he could serve as a professional philosopher and educational agent of change within the newly established People's Republic of China. In this regard, his relatively vague political philosophy, his rationalistic secular worldview, and his politically uncommitted form of materialism simply did not prepare him for the rude revolutionary awakening and the cruel propaganda techniques that would pester him for nearly three decades. It is important to understand these matters from both historical and philosophical perspectives, and so both of these perspectives will be pursued in what immediately follows.

The initial stage of Féng's rude awakening to the realities of Maoist revolutionary culture occurred within the first year of his engagement with the new regime.⁵³ The Communist takeover of Běipíng 北平⁵⁴ in January 1949 accompanied a restructuring of Tsinghua University where Féng taught and served as the chair of the Department of Philosophy and the dean of the College of Arts. At first he was given a position on the University Affairs Committee by the new cadre leadership, but by August of that same year, the Head of the Cultural Department of the Běipíng Military Administrative Committee, Qián Jūnrui 錢俊瑞 (1908–1985), "said [Féng]'s thoughts did not accord with those of the Communist Party." As a consequence, several matters of importance for the conditions of his academic life as a professional philosopher began to change. On the one hand, this began the process of Féng's "re-education" through self-critical reflective writings, a process that would continue through the 1960s and lead him ultimately to initiate a new history of Chinese philosophy based upon Marxist historical materialist principles of interpretation, among other basic interpretive principles. Nevertheless, on the other hand, Féng was actually being handled rather gently by the new regime in the first years of the People's Republic of China. At that time in 1950, Féng Yǒulán was allowed to continue to teach and was only one of only four "first rank professors" (*dìyījī jiàoshòu* 第一級教授) in the academic discipline of philosophy, along with Jīn Yuēlín 金岳霖 (1895–1984), and two aestheticians, Zōng Báihuá 宗白華 (1897–1986) and Zhū Guāngqián 朱光潛 (1897–1986).⁵⁵ What this meant politically and culturally is that, even though Féng was not given privileges of leadership at

Tsinghua University, he was still being treated (*dàiyù* 待遇) well by the new government. Only in the latter part of the 1950s would he undergo severe public criticisms, experienced during public shaming campaigns⁵⁶ that were part of the propaganda techniques he and many others were forced to endure. Though he at times was working within an intellectual circle where Máo Zédōng and other cadre were present, Féng was first categorized in the 1950s as part of a “centrist right” class of intellectuals,⁵⁷ because he had “tried to adjust” his previous philosophical position to the Chinese Communist Party line at the time, and so he was considered to be “a re-educable senior intellectual.”

Among some notable revolutionary intellectuals before 1949, Féng had already been criticized for his seemingly traditionalist philosophical stance, so that the famous writer, Lǚ Xūn 魯迅 (1881–1936), considered him to be “too naïve” (*tài lǎoshí* 太老實), being one of the leading Chinese educators of the time who had also studied in the United States; on the contrary, Hú Shì 胡適 (1891–1962) criticized him harshly as being “too stupid” (*tài chǔn* 太蠢).⁵⁸ What could this mean from the angle of his philosophical writing in the 1930s and 1940s, in particular, with regard to his account of political philosophy within his philosophical system of the New Principle-centered Learning?

The presentation of political philosophy in Féng’s New Principle-centered Learning was a very selective account of Ruist political philosophy. It explored principles of governance based upon assumptions of a sagely ruler and those under the ruler who would live according to principles of loyalty and patriotism. Though he dealt with the impact of war, Féng did not discuss the uniqueness of revolution as a particular kind of war. Remarkably, many of the questions that could be raised from Ruist classical sources regarding concrete political problems he did not address. For example, he did not even mention of the justification of regicide by Master Mèng (*The Mencius* 1A: 8) or the advocacy of a “great filial piety” expressed in a Ruist-informed political praxis that would oppose a ruler for the sake of upholding the Dao, such as argued by Master Xún in his chapters on “The Way of Sons” (*The Xúnzǐ*, Ch. 29). In his first history of Chinese philosophy, Féng had also studied and seemed to appreciate the Míng dynasty Ruist scholar, Huáng Zōngxī 黃宗羲 (1610–1695)⁵⁹ and his unusual political innovativeness, including a system of governance with checks and balances, but these were not taken into Féng’s more traditionally bound account of the role of a philosopher as a supporter and guide for responsive rulers. From these angles, then, it is possible to see why Féng’s political philosophy did not prepare him for the onslaught he would face in the series of public criticisms that began in 1957, challenging his assumptions that as a “professional philosopher” he still could have an effective role as a teacher and public intellectual within the “New China.”

MARXIST FÉNG YŌULÁN: TRANSMOGRIFICATION IN THE MIDST OF EXISTENTIAL TERROR

What Féng Yŏulán experienced over a period of just over twenty years, from 1957 to 1978, was the impact of what Jacques Ellul (1912–1994) has referred to as “total propaganda.”⁶⁰ This is not to say that he was constantly under this propagandistic oppression, but that it did come at different times, initially including public meetings staging criticisms of his previous works by philosophy students and colleagues,⁶¹ and throughout the period from the early 1950s to the end of the 1970s numerous required personal self-criticisms, a good number of those also being published.⁶² Though he managed to endure through personal attacks and public rejections for more than two decades,⁶³ as he neared the age of 80 in the 1970s he finally submitted to this harsh environment of “total propaganda” and became a well-recognized leftist critic of the philosophy of “Kŏng Qiū” 孔丘 (a revolutionary-styled reference to Master Kŏng or “Confucius”).⁶⁴ To understand this drastic rejection of China’s iconic Ruist sage and the traditional philosophical past associated with it, as well as its impact on Féng’s life, we need to go beyond simply seeking to justify or excuse his actions, and explore sociological factors related to total propaganda and its impact on Féng’s willingness to adopt an intellectual rejection of his own past philosophical work, as well as of the role of Master Kŏng in China’s philosophical history.

What makes Ellul’s systematic account of propaganda so relevant to this part of Féng’s life is that the French sociologist adds an appendix specifically devoted to the study of “Mao Tse-Tung’s Propaganda.”⁶⁵ Notably, Ellul also dealt with “the educated man” who thinks he/she is not vulnerable to the “crudeness of propaganda” but who does not realize how much a totalizing media environment can break down even those highly educated by means of terror tactics and an ideological “encirclement” by means of “horizontal propaganda” and brainwashing techniques.⁶⁶ What Ellul describes empirically and evaluates from the angle of its technological character is now a classical account of propaganda; the propagandists, Ellul explains, claim and aim at a “total” ideological impact among the populace which is under their authority, but in fact, though it is impactful, it fails as a “perfectly effective” means of human control. This is not a matter of a simplistic “folk psychology,” but is based on a manipulation of human fears that are driven by a calculated and dehumanizing calculus employing public shame, decimation strategies, and group pressure tactics. “Total propaganda” consequently produces a fear of not conforming to the overwhelming pressures of ideologically loaded and repetitive messages, so that the “propaganda of integration” is far more effective on those who take themselves to be “intellectually superior.” Under these conditions, Ellul documents how an ironic situation occurs when those very

same intellectuals “participate” in conforming to the ideological norm, and do so with a glee that can be expressed sometimes by even a heady carelessness, all driven by a release from the fear of execution, torture, and any further “re-education” techniques that seek to thoroughly demean them as “anti-revolutionaries.”⁶⁷ Precisely due to these factors, “[i]ntellectuals are more sensitive than peasants to integration propaganda.”⁶⁸ As will be seen in what follows, though Féng resisted becoming a Marxist cadre, even though a good number of his other colleagues and many younger intellectuals did decide to do so, he ultimately fell prey to the propaganda of integration and became one of the two major intellectual figures supporting leftist Maoist rejections of both Máo’s enemies and of the vilified Kǒng Qiū. Put in other words, Féng starting in 1975 joined in both the chorus of a gleeful proclamation of the revolutionary rejection of past and present Chinese oppressors and their lackeys, as well as took part in the celebration of the putative “successes” of “Chairman Máo’s” rule and the “Great” Cultural Revolution.

Reconceiving Philosophy under Máo Zédōng’s Propaganda Techniques

How did Féng’s philosophical commitments, written up in the six volumes of the New Principle-centered Learning, bolster his initial confidence in joining the Chinese Communist leaders and their administrators in Běijīng?

Already noted above was the fact that he initially was allowed to keep his positions of academic leadership at Tsinghua University in early 1949, but then was “re-categorized” as politically unsuitable for such roles. He and others who were summarily re-categorized in subsequent public criticisms as being “re-educatable”—Féng himself being considered a “central rightist” (*zhōngyóu fēnzi* 中右分子) and not an incorrigible “rightist”—did not suffer as much during the initial decade of the new Máo-led regime.⁶⁹ Along with others who were gradually embedded within inter-relational webs created by the propaganda of integration, Féng was actually attracted over time to the possibility of taking part in the major social transformations that were being engineered by the Chinese Communist Party. Having a more traditional or even traditionalist vision of the “intellectual mentor to the ruler,”⁷⁰ Féng apparently believed he could serve as Máo’s intellectual counselor on his own terms, a hope that proved to be false.⁷¹ Even though he bent to the pressure of the propaganda of integration by admitting that his previously written philosophical system did not apply the fundamental Marxist category of “class” in his analysis of philosophical thought or of the history of Chinese philosophical thinking,⁷² with the increased number of times that self-criticisms had to be written (especially during the 1960s in order to prove over and over again his capacity to receive “re-education”), he was already being “homogenized”

into the PRC pro-Maoist intellectual “class,” a marked sign of the effectiveness of Maoist propaganda of integration.⁷³

During the later 1950s, Féng manifested this process of integration by being slightly responsive to questions about his class categorization and the lack of “true Marxist” principles of analysis within his philosophical system and his histories of Chinese philosophical traditions.⁷⁴ In those processes, however, he was only passing through the initial gauntlets of the revolutionary integration that would ultimately break down his intellectual resistance to “the homogenization of Chinese intellectuals.” In this light, then, it appears superficial to point out that in 1949 he was “not a true Marxist” and that even though he was “fawning over Mao” in the early 1950s, he was not “completely transformed” at that time, simply because these propaganda techniques were “never lethal enough to silence him.”⁷⁵ In a personal recollection, a contemporary intellectual and colleague, Gāo Wàngzhī, 高望之 recalled how he was very concerned for Féng during the public criticisms held against him in 1957 on the Tsinghua University campus, but when he saw how he was not disturbed by these vigorous defamations, he felt at ease, believing that Féng knew how to handle those situations, and so would never be moved.⁷⁶ Others recognize that Féng had lost his intellectual moorings during his capitulation to Maoist propaganda in the mid-1970s and suffered the consequences after the Gang of Four were criticized in the late 1970. Indeed, it was such a bizarre time that we should pay more attention to what form of Marxist thought Féng continued to espouse after he regained his sense of intellectual courage.⁷⁷ These analyses (and those like them) misunderstand the purposes why Maoist ideologues employed total propaganda in these ideologically-loaded contexts. The point of Maoist propaganda was not to silence the re-educatable intellectuals, but to convince them first forcefully (by various inhumane means, including terrorizing them through public defamation campaigns, penalizing their family members, and taking away any privileged treatment)⁷⁸ and then with public acclaim supporting their “conversion” to support the ruling ideology.⁷⁹ Under these conditions, Féng chose to speak up for the Maoist–Marxist ideology, to become an ideological icon, so that he could participate as one of the “new intellectual leaders in an era of social transformation.”⁸⁰ Many younger scholars achieved this purpose by becoming Chinese Communist Party members and then demonstrating their loyalty by joining in the public criticisms and “smear campaigns” of the more resistant intellectuals (such as Féng during the 1960s).⁸¹ Others, especially among the older scholars who refused to change or had reached a point of hopelessness, due to repeated public shaming tactics and being forced to write self-confessions, committed suicide. This can be illustrated by the sad case of the notable historian from Běijīng University, Jiàn Bózān 翦伯赞 (1898–1968). Yet he was not alone in this desperate means to end

the gauntlets created out of the propaganda of integration.⁸² Along with him were hundreds of other teachers, scholars, and professors. One elderly and remarkable historian from another university in Běijīng told me personally about a terrible scene related to that same historical moment, one that had remained etched in his memory. It occurred during the days when the Cultural Revolution was at its height. Taking me outside the teacher's dormitory where his family lived, he pointed to the street where we were slowly walking, and recalled how he had seen the bodies of dozens of teachers lying there on the road, dead or dying, some he knew personally, others only recognized as having been among the faculty at that time; they had gone to the top of their dormitory buildings and dived head first into the road. Such was the character of the pressure of Maoist propaganda and the poignancy of the terror of those days.

Notably, it is important to realize that the Maoist–Marxist ideology was also moving through transformations of its own content and emphases during these same years, a point insightfully captured by Diana Lin.⁸³ Practically speaking, this meant that anyone who “finally submitted” to the current ideological line regularly found that they were later castigated by political officials, because the ideological line itself had been changed. This added intense forms of sharply felt desperation to many persons living through the cultural gauntlet of the varying and often contradictory stages of the ideological development of the Maoist regime.

Already, by 1959, Féng revealed how far that process of the propaganda of integration had led him, as expressed in the second stanza of a leading poem presented on the page before the preface of a published self-criticism, entitled *A Retrospective Look over [the Past] Forty Years*.⁸⁴

马列道高北斗悬, Marx and Lenin's Way is the Big Dipper hung high,
淫辞一扫散如烟。All wanton words, like smoke, are merely passing by.
明时不虑老将至, Times are now revealed; fret not reaching old age's shore;
一悟昨非便少年。Past errors once enlightened, we are young once more.

In the above stanza, the “wanton words” are meant to refer to Féng's own previous writings. But the Big Dipper he extolled, what in Chinese is the constellation of the “Northern Plough,” was Marxist-Leninist thought, and this was not adequate. Máo Zédōng had become the pole star, but still at that time, Féng was only thinking philosophically about the basic categories of Marxist-Leninist ideology. To be a “true Marxist,” he needed to become a devoted Maoist, but philosophically speaking, particularly in the light of the histories of Chinese philosophical traditions that Féng had already written, that was a bitter pill to swallow.

The Cultural Revolution, The Gang of Four, and Féng's Survival Tactics

How did Maoist total propaganda reshape Féng's decisions regarding the assessment of his own philosophical system and his previous accounts of the history of Chinese philosophical traditions? There are many details that could be added to the list of changes in assessment, but here I will focus on some important general interpretive trends related to some of his own basic philosophical concepts and the standards for making these judgments.

A Maoist–Marxist ideology required Féng to take account of the particular kind of Marxist materialism that should be applied to his interpretations of key metaphysical terms and ideas within his own philosophical system. Féng had early on been influenced by a Platonic-informed understanding of general terms as “universals,” so that from the angle of his system of the New Principle-centered Learning, these universals operated within language as well as in reality as “metaphysical entities.”⁸⁵ This was completely unacceptable to anyone advocating a Marxist materialist viewpoint.

At the same time that Féng started considering the serious criticisms of his lack of any “class analysis” in his philosophical system, he also had to reconsider how to work out the dialectics within Marxist historical accounts as they applied to any historical account of Chinese philosophical traditions. Previously, he had not indicated the role adopted by various Chinese philosophers in their support for certain classes of persons, so this undoubtedly reshaped his interpretive evaluations and historical emphases of certain characters and texts in profound ways. In order to prepare for the intellectual exercises of rewriting, critiquing, and reevaluating his previous works, Féng published already in the late 1950s a number of essays on the historiography of Chinese philosophy,⁸⁶ and then, especially in the 1960s, continued to write and rewrite essays in this vein, including selected readings for such a Marxist-inspired historical account of Chinese philosophical traditions.⁸⁷ All of this activity was not a freely chosen exercise of his creative energies, but was part and parcel of the ongoing and unending techniques involved in the Maoist propaganda of integration.

As a consequence of the influences of the integration of these Marxist categories into his philosophical reflections, Féng not only started to take into account those persons and movements that did not previously count as “philosophical” in his histories of Chinese philosophical traditions published in the 1930s and 1940s—such as the addition of discussions of the early Daoist movement motivated by the *Tàipíng jīng* 太平經 during the Hàn dynasty, and, much later, the writings and roles of Hóng Réngān 洪仁玕 (1822–1865) and his opposing Ruist scholar general, Zēng Guófān 曾國藩 (1811–1872) during the nineteenth century—but he became far more critical of those who

sported the “elites” and “slave-owning classes.” Among the most telling of these reinterpretations was his critical analysis of the ancient Chinese sage he had previously honored, Master Kǒng (“Confucius”), presented by the Marxist Féng in 1975 in his most notorious anti-Ruist published tractate, *On Hillock Kǒng*.⁸⁸

That volume was written in the heat of the Anti-Lín (Biāo 林彪) and Anti-Kǒng (Qīū) Campaign, a movement that occurred during the last two years of Máo’s life. Its writing style reflects the character of propagandistic productions of the age—apothegmic, poignant criticisms, and principled opposition to anything considered non-Marxist and non-Maoist. The conclusion is a devastatingly principled critique of the status and claims of the vilified intellectual Kǒng.⁸⁹ All the values which that ancient intellectual supported, including the return to the rites of Zhōu and support for the Zhōu leadership, were now reinterpreted as pedagogical tools supporting the slave-owning classes which lived before and during his own lifetime. Ultimately, even the ideal of *jūnzǐ* 君子 or “exemplary persons” was a symbol of his support for slave owners, for it was the moral category of the *xiǎorén* 小人, “petty persons,” that included the slaves.⁹⁰ On top of this, all his rhetorical emphasis on “humane cultivation” (*rén* 仁) and its expression by “loving the people” (*ài rén* 愛人) was simply manipulative ideology; it was nothing more than a ploy to trick those common people into submission to their slave-owning masters.⁹¹ The final two paragraphs of this blistering critique, written in three concise sentences, reveal how far the propaganda of integration had finally broken down Féng’s previous intellectual resistance.⁹²

The articles I wrote previously about extolling Kǒng were all in fact intended to strengthen the “divinization” (*shénhuà* 神化) of Kǒng Qīū.

Nevertheless, the laws of history are ruthless: the history that has been turned upside down must regularly be set up right, and then as expected will be turned on its head once more. This is the victory of the Proletariat’s Great Cultural Revolution that was set into motion and led by Chairman Máo and is the victory of the Anti-Lín Anti-Kǒng Movement.

Here the complete submission to the Maoist form of total propaganda had reached its goal. The Marxist Féng had left no room for any hedging regarding the writings related to Master Kǒng produced by the pre-Marxist Féng. The deterministic forces of human history have worked out their dialectic in his own self-consciousness, leading to his own intellectual transmogrification. And it should be expected to continue to do so (a point of irony that Féng would experience concretely when under house arrest for his extreme leftist political activities from 1978 to 1982). Marx is also part of that historical process as well, because now Féng finally trumpeted the ideological line that

it was Chairman Máo and Maoism that was what could be considered to be truly great. At that time, it was Maoism that dominated, plainly and simply; all who knew the merciless powers of dialectical historical materialism would see this conclusion as self-evident.

POST-MAO FÉNG: INTELLECTUAL LIBERATION, PHILOSOPHICAL MYSTICISM, AND LIVING WITH A CHECKERED PAST

There is a political irony that it was not the Maoist extremists who placed Féng under house arrest soon after Máo Zédōng died in September 1976 but Chinese Communist moderates who wanted nothing more to do with the excesses of revolution. This was a pattern in all modern revolutions that philosophically-inclined Marxists and Maoists had almost never seen, but it has been repeated regularly within European as well as Chinese revolutions.⁹³ Yet here we should continue to ask about the philosophical writings of the post-Mao Féng, because among them, we find both complexities and confessions that are worth considering.

What remains within Féng's philosophical legacy after his leftist Maoist phase of submission to total propaganda is not minor, but it is also not completely liberated from that Maoist–Marxist branding. This is a major point that is only hinted at by Fāng Kèlì⁹⁴ but not elaborated in any detail. So here I will add just a few relevant points that reveal the complexities involved in making any philosophical evaluations of the last ten years of Féng's philosophical writings, starting from about 1980 till his death in 1990.

Having experienced a moment of intellectual liberation to be discussed below, Féng once again began in the early 1980s to rewrite what would ultimately become a seven volume “new edition” of the history of Chinese philosophical traditions. Many philosophers only know this as a six-volume set, but the seventh and final volume was published posthumously in Hong Kong under another title and constituted the sequel to his sixth volume by covering the “contemporary history of Chinese philosophy.”⁹⁵ That final volume was not a comprehensive work but focused on key philosophically inclined intellectuals, a number being prototypes of the new Chinese Communist philosophers of the post-1949 period but limited to those who remained in the Chinese mainland in the twentieth century and who were known by Féng. Already from this description, it is obvious that Marxist philosophical concerns and figures appeared as a prominent aspect of that last volume, and so Fāng Kèlì is correct that Féng Yǒulán did not simply drop all references to Marxist and Maoist concepts, themes, and persons in his post-1980 writings. Because its coverage was also somewhat limited, it basically involved the period from 1900 or so till the 1970s and notably

included a self-critical account of his own philosophical system as well as a critical account of the philosophical claims found in Máo Zédōng's writings. In the conclusion to the volume, which was presented as the conclusion to the whole seven volume set of the "new edition" of this Marxist-inspired history of Chinese philosophical traditions, Féng specifically criticizes Máo's leftist extremism by means of reference to the Sòng dynasty philosophical attitudes expressed by Zhāng Zài 張載 (1020–1077) about seeking peace in the midst of war.⁹⁶ That fact is intriguingly not mentioned by Fāng Kèlì and so indicates the poignancy and need to take much more seriously the "intellectual liberation" that Féng described that he himself had experienced.

Two Deaths and a Renewed Life

Certainly, with the death of Chairman Máo on September 9, 1976, there was a seismic shift within the Chinese Communist Party, and one that also struck hard on the Marxist Féng's extensively publicized vilification of the ancient and iconic Chinese philosopher, Kǒng Qiū. Within two months of Máo's death, the Gang of Four had also been arrested, and Féng was himself restricted in a semi-informal, but all the more stringently felt, house arrest and official detention.⁹⁷ Just over a year later, his wife, Rèn Zàikūn 任載坤, who had witnessed all these twists and turns of her husband's fate, also passed away. It is warranted to claim at that point in time that the two persons whose lives had most affected Féng—the political leader he had learned to fear and his partner for more than fifty years of marriage—left him in a relational and intellectual hiatus that prodded him toward the possibility of reconsidering his ways.

Thirteen years later, when writing the preface to the final volume of his *New Edition of the History of Chinese Philosophy*,⁹⁸ the volume in which he had also criticized Máo Zédōng's later philosophy as "leftist" and excessive, Féng recorded an elegiac couplet, a poetic expression simultaneously capturing his sense of grief and liberation. He wrote at that time, just months before he himself would pass away, "At that time I started to realize the bondage that is caused by seeking personal fame and benefits," and so he comprehended in a new way where his freedom lay. He described that mood in the last sentence of that couplet: *Hǎikuō Tiānkōng wǒ zì fēi* 海闊天空我自飛 "Above expansive seas and within wide-open skies I raised myself up and flew."⁹⁹ Signs that this intellectual freedom was authentic are manifest, appeared not only within this poetic context (because he did not mention Chairman Máo at all) and also in the chapter on Máo's philosophy, but also in the general conclusion of the whole series. In those other two places, Féng criticized Máo's militancy by reference to a major Ruist philosophical emphasis on social harmony (*hé* 和).

Rethinking the Unthinkable: Escape to New Horizons?

Can a modern Chinese philosopher repent of his extremist activities and be accepted back into the fold of “authentic philosophers”? The likeness of this situation within German philosophical circles in relationship to Hans-Georg Gadamer is not without its merits; German philosophers and other intellectuals now discuss Gadamer’s case openly. What is both strange and awkward in contemporary China is that even though Féng Yǒulán himself declared his repentance openly, very few Chinese philosophers ever talk about it as a moment of personal transformation. Beyond this, some Chinese philosophers clearly doubt that this could be an expression of genuine repentance, to the point that some have straightforwardly rejected him as a traitor to his own cultural traditions and philosophical commitments. Most philosophers, including those of younger ages, simply do not discuss the matter. Part of the reason for this, it should be understood, is that Féng is just one of many who went through such a cultural gauntlet and survived; even though he was probably among the most prominent Chinese philosophers to do so, it cannot be denied that there were also others. Far more discomfiting, however, there are a large number of contemporary philosophers—some who have already passed away and others now in their retirement—who participated in the public criticisms as Maoist proponents, driven by the same propaganda of integration and its attendant techniques, pressures, and terrors. As a consequence, the unspoken becomes for some a psychological repression of immense proportions, and it remains a part of a cultural shame that continues to be felt, though it remains largely hidden from the public arena.

From my own perspective about this general situation and its impact on our understanding of Féng Yǒulán’s philosophical journey—after much reading, rereading, research, discussion, rethinking, and further reflections—I would now want to portray the following assessment of the post-Máo Féng in the light of a particular comparison with a contemporary Chinese philosopher whom Féng knew well, Jīn Yuēlín (1895–1984). They had been born in the same year, 1895, but Jīn went to the United States before Féng, graduating also with his doctorate from Columbia University, and then travelling to the United Kingdom for post-doctoral studies before returning to China.¹⁰⁰ Both were considered exemplary figures in their own pre-1949 philosophical careers, Jīn in particular being known for his Chinese works in epistemology and logic. Unquestionably, both considered themselves to be professional philosophers, and both earned their living by teaching, research, and producing philosophical works in Chinese, as well as in English. After the founding of the PRC, Jīn became involved in a Marxist study group in 1953, and finally requested and was confirmed as a member of the Chinese Communist Party in 1956.¹⁰¹ Subsequently, Jīn joined a key group of intellectuals who produced

English versions of Chairman Máo's works, because he was seen as being one of the truly excellent English language writers in China at the time and was well-recognized among Chinese intellectuals as a Marxist philosopher.¹⁰² Though many studies of his philosophical works do not mention his involvement in this major work of Maoist translation, or his regular involvement in major committees of the Chinese Communist Party hierarchy, it is unquestionable that, unlike Féng, he became a self-conscious Marxist cadre intellectual.¹⁰³ It is all the more ironic that one can also find later studies that locate Jīn Yuēlín as a member of the "New Ruist" Movement, as if his Marxist philosophical commitments that he held to the end of his days have no impact on this assessment.¹⁰⁴ In fact, after the death of Máo and the jailing of Maoist extremists, Jīn was adamant about his Maoist identity and refused to rethink his previous commitments.¹⁰⁵ Yet like Féng, who lived six years longer than Jīn, both have been reintegrated into the realm of contemporary research in Chinese philosophy. Nevertheless, Féng's works were more diverse and influential within China, and so he has become one among very few previous Chinese philosophers whose Chinese philosophical works rank among the most important materials addressed in current philosophical research by contemporary Chinese philosophers. In contrast, Jīn's works have not received much further attention. Much of this has to do with the fact that Féng did not only pursue Marxist interpretations of Chinese philosophical themes and their history during his later career within the PRC, but also offered a much wider range of philosophical discussions from many different interpretive angles, while Jīn's later works were more focused on Marxist themes.

From this angle, then, both in terms of their attitudes toward life and their involvement in Maoist propaganda, during their mature years as professional philosophers, I would consider Jīn Yuēlín to be something like the equivalent of a Chinese Heidegger (who nevertheless recanted of his Nazi ties later in life), while Féng Yǒulán would stand as a Chinese Gadamer. The former adopted a stand toward Maoist-Marxism that was similar to the stand Heidegger took toward Nazism during most of the 1930s,¹⁰⁶ involving an active affirmation of its political and philosophical value as a self-conscious member of the Chinese Communist Party; the latter never became a party member and was categorized at various periods as a re-educatable but resistant intellectual, sometimes also as a counter-revolutionary. Ultimately, however, Féng did submit to the Maoist propaganda of integration, and, as has been documented above, became a notoriously prominent intellectual advocate for the rejection of the icon and sage of ancient Chinese philosophical traditions, Master Kǒng. Subsequently, and in this regard, very much like Gadamer,¹⁰⁷ Féng repented publicly in print of his involvement in those extreme leftist Maoist activities and reasserted a serious, painful, and credible alternative interpretation of Máo Zédōng's philosophical works before he passed away.

ENDS, LIMITS, AND IRONIES OF FÉNG'S PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNEY

As a consequence of all these matters, the evaluations of the philosophical worth of Féng Yǒulán's philosophical heritage have been a matter of growing interest and serious debate. Though he has at times been referred to as one of the second generation of contemporary Ruist philosophers in post-traditional Chinese cultural settings, I would still maintain that he should not be identified with those Chinese philosophers. Féng's synthetic interests in certain Daoist and Buddhist claims—particularly those of Master Zhuāng and of the Chán School—and his purposeful but also propaganda-driven involvement in Maoist-leftist attacks on traditional Ruist figures and themes—above all his vilification of Kǒng Qiū or “Hillock Kǒng”—place him within a category of desperate intellectuals who managed to survive the cultural gauntlet of Maoist propaganda of integration. Of particular note is the fact that he, having survived yet another twist in the dialectics of the ideological history of the Chinese Communist Party, was one of the few who offered a credible and critical philosophical assessment of twentieth-century Chinese Communist figures who wrote philosophically, and boldly presented an informed philosophical critique of Máo Zédōng's philosophical claims and influences before he died in 1990. Herein lies both his authenticity as a professional Chinese philosopher and the limits of the scope of his published works.

The limits of his work as a philosopher were addressed by Féng in his last book, but in that process, it is significant and notable that he did not admit to the claims that have been presented here in this chapter, that is, that his political philosophy based upon the New Principle-centered Learning did not prepare him philosophically, politically, or existentially for the Marxist propaganda techniques that he had to endure for three decades. Féng's particular expression of a Chinese secularized philosophy of life was inadequate in its political philosophy, misleading him during the political upheavals that he experienced after 1949, so that in spite of his strategic resistance to propaganda techniques for over twenty years, he ultimately submitted to the ideological efforts to “homogenize” him and other Chinese intellectuals to the Maoist–Marxist line by means of the use of what Jacques Ellul has carefully documented and described as the “propaganda of integration.”

Elsewhere I have listed numerous other limits to his understanding and evaluation of the history of Chinese philosophical traditions, and so I will not repeat those claims here. What should be underscored here is that this account of Féng's submission to Maoist–Marxist ideology in the 1970s and his subsequent rejection of its extremes is, I believe, very relevant for offering a philosophically comprehensive account of the limits of his monumental

studies in the production of four different histories of Chinese philosophical traditions.¹⁰⁸

In conclusion, therefore, I would prefer focusing on the philosophical and existential problems that remain with regard to the failure of Féng Yǒulán's political philosophy and his choice in the mid-1970s to take up his pen to elaborate a thorough Maoist–Marxist critique of “Hillock Kǒng,” all done (as he himself confessed) in order to avoid further traumatization from the extremes of Maoist propaganda techniques. If he had not done so, he may have been able to survive the painful cultural gauntlet of another series of self-criticisms. Instead, he pre-meditatively chose to write out a scathing critique of Master Kǒng, a figure he had previously honored as a progressive thinker and “China’s first philosopher.” As a result, he could not control the impact of his writing once Máo Zédōng himself had edited it, so that he was catapulted into the contemporary limelight at the age of 80 as a prominent promoter of Maoist propagandistic rejections of “Hillock Kǒng” in 1975.

Though Féng managed to survive that cruel cultural gauntlet, he also fell prey to the full impact of its extremes and the propagandistic goals that changed after more moderate cadre officials took power. As a consequence, he (and so many others) have lived with a checkered past, one that embarrasses the philosophically-inclined who take his teachings about the four spiritual/intellectual horizons as guidance for living. Here I can at least try to indicate where the irony lies in this reflection, when it does not include a self-conscious awareness of the profound negative impact of Féng’s submission to Maoist extremism. Using his own words at the point where he began to experience his intellectual liberation from that checkered ideological past and its philosophical destructiveness, we could consider the irony inherent in his final and still very prolific decade of life as a professional philosopher. People may indeed learn well how to “fly above the seas in the broad heavens,” even in spite of immense sufferings that they have endured, but if they have not managed well their life on the earth below, they may leave behind them a myopic vision of life that may well descend into self-destructive chaos. It is still the case to this day that some surviving elderly Chinese philosophers, as well as multitudes of others who have studied Chinese philosophical traditions and their contemporary interpretations under their guidance, have not self-consciously dealt with the terrifying possibilities that may arise, because they have not yet learned how to deal philosophically, culturally, and politically with their own checkered pasts. In this light, I want to confirm that I take Féng Yǒulán’s repentance and intellectual liberation that began in 1977 or 1978 to be an authentic turn toward a post-Maoist stage of his philosophical career. It left him with many painful memories and a checkered past, but he openly admitted many of those problems, and, as I have tried to indicate by

means of some concrete examples from the final volume of the *New Edition of the History of Chinese Philosophy*, he learned some more humble and philosophically insightful ways to address them.

NOTES

1. See entries for Féng Yǒulán in the compilation of Diane Collinson Stuart and Robert Wilkinson, eds. *One Hundred Twentieth-Century Philosophers* (London: Routledge, 1998), 54–6 and Robert L. Arrington, ed. *A Companion to the Philosophers* (Malden and Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999), 58–61, where he is either the only other Chinese philosopher or one of only a few other philosophers mentioned along with Máo Zédōng in the twentieth century.

2. As asserted in Lauren F. Pfister, “Von den ‘drei Lehren’ zur ‘chinesischen Philosophie’: Die moderne konstruktion des Grundkonzeptes der ‘chinesischen Philosophie’ in Feng Youlans verschiedenen chinesischen Philosophiegeschichten,” trans. Jari Grosse-Ryken. In *minima sinica: Zeitschrift zum chinesischen Geist* (Fall 2002): 28–66.

3. As developed in detail in the article by Nicolas Standaert and Bie Giever, “Feng Youlan (Fung Yu-lan): Works on the History of Chinese Philosophy,” in Antonio S. Cua, ed., *Encyclopedia of Chinese Philosophy* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 261–5, and then explored further in relationship to his last major work in that realm in Nicolas Standaert, “The Discovery of the Center through the Periphery: A Preliminary Study of Feng Youlan’s History of Chinese Philosophy (New Version).” *Philosophy East and West* 45(4) (October): 569–89.

4. An account of these matters from a comparative point of view is presented in Antonio S. Cua’s article, “The Emergence of the History of Chinese Philosophy.” In Bo Mou, ed., *History of Chinese Philosophy* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 43–68.

5. A text that seeks to indicate the tensions between the academic and political dimensions of Féng’s career is produced by a notable researcher from the Chinese Social Sciences Academy in Běijīng, before the author’s own academic career was ended due to legal restrictions of his unacceptable behavior. Consult Zhèng Jiādōng 鄭家棟, *Xuéshù yǔ Zhèngzhì zhī jiān: Féng Yǒulán yǔ Zhōngguó Mǎkèsīzhūyì* 《學術與政治之間—馮友蘭與中國馬克思主義》 (Taipei: Water Buffalo Press, 2002).

6. Féng’s philosophical critique of Máo Zédōng was apparently considered controversial enough by Féng himself that it was not published until two years after his death. It is found in two places within that book: in a chapter devoted to Máo’s writings, and also in his concluding chapter, the latter being developed further later in this chapter. See Féng Yǒulán, *Zhōngguó Xiàndài Zhéxuéshǐ* 《中國現代哲學史》 (Hong Kong: Zhōnghuá shūjú 中華書局, 1992), 143–178 and 256–262.

7. The initial Chinese version was produced by a former student and colleague, Tú Yòuguāng 涂又光, but the latter has been published in the thousands in several editions, because it continues to be read by university students, among others. Zhào Fùsān 趙復三 is the translator of that later Chinese version, with one edition of that work being entitled *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy* by Fung Yu-lan:

English–Chinese Bilingual Edition 《中國哲學簡史 [由] 馮友蘭：英漢對照》(Tiānjīn 天津: Tiānjīn Social Sciences Academy Press, 2007).

8. Eight examples of this wave of republication that stretches for twelve years from 1996 to 2008 include the following works: Féng’s New Principle-Centered Learning in a six-tomes-in-two-volume set, a number of volumes on selective sets of his writings on Chinese philosophical themes, and some of his reflective writings about his own life. See *Zhēn Yuán Liùshū: Liǎngcè* 《貞元六書 兩冊》(Shànghǎi: East China Normal University Press, 1996); Li Zhōnghuá 李中華, ed., *Féng Yǒulán Wénshù Wénhuà Suǐbǐ* 《馮友蘭學術文化隨筆》(Běijīng: China Youth Press, 1996); Shàn Chūn 單純, ed. *Féng Yǒulán Zìshù* 《馮友蘭自述》(Zhèngzhōu 鄭州: Hénnán Hénnán People’s Press, 2004); Hóng Zhìgāng 洪治綱, ed., *Féng Yǒulán Jīngdiǎn Wéncún* 《馮友蘭經典文存》(Shànghǎi: Shànghǎi University Press, 2004); Chén Lái 陳來, ed. *Féng Yǒulán Xuǎnjí* 《馮友蘭選集》(Chángchūn 長春: Jílín 吉林 People’s Press, 2005); selections from Fēng’s journals in *Nándù Jí* 《南渡集》(Běijīng: Sānlíán 三聯 Bookstore, 2007); also *Féng Yǒulán Suǐbǐ – Lǐxiǎng Rényǎng* 《馮友蘭隨筆 – 理想人生》(Běijīng: Běijīng University Press, 2007); and Shàn Zhèngqí 單正齊 and Gān Huībīng 甘會兵, eds., *Tīng Féng Yǒulán Jiǎng Zhōngguó Zhéxué* 《聽馮友蘭講中國哲學》(Xī’ān 西安: Shǎnxī 陝西 Normal University Press, 2008). Another volume that includes his lectures on a topic shared with texts of lectures by many other scholars is Fēng Yǒulán 馮友蘭, Li Líng 李零 *et al.*, *Sūnzǐ Èrshí Jiǎng* 《孫子二十講》, ed. Yán Xiǎoxīng 嚴曉星 (Běijīng: Huáxià 華夏 Press, 2008).

9. Specifically by his daughter and son-in-law. For volumes produced by the former, see Fēng Zhōngpǔ 馮鐘璞, ed. *Zóujìn Féng Yǒulán* 《走近馮友蘭》(Běijīng: Social Sciences Literature Press, 2013), and under her penname Zōng Pǔ 宗璞 (Fēng Zhōngpǔ), *Rénwù Jùdiǎn Cóngshū – Féng Yǒulán* 《人物聚焦叢書 – 馮友蘭》(Hong Kong: Sānlíán 三聯 Bookstore, 2003). For some representative works by his son-in-law, consult Cài Zhòngdé 蔡仲德, *Féng Yǒulán Xiánshēng Niánpǔ chūbiān* 《馮友蘭先生年譜初編》(Zhèngzhōu: Hénnán People’s Press, 1994); “Lùn Féng Yǒulán dé Sixiǎng Lìchéng” 《論馮友蘭的思想歷程》, *Qīnghuá xuébào* 《清華學報》 [Tsing Hua Academic Journal] 25(3) (1995): 227–72; ed., *Féng Yǒulán Yánjiù (dìyījì) – Jìniàn Féng Yǒulán Xiánshēng Dànchéng Yìbǎinián Guójì Xuéshù Tàolùnhuì Lùnwénxuǎn* 《馮友蘭研究 (第一輯) – 紀念馮友蘭先生誕辰一百周年國際學術討論會論文選》(Běijīng: International Culture Press, 1997); *Féng Yǒulán Xiánshēng Píngzhuàn* 《馮友蘭先生評傳》(Hong Kong: Sānlíán 三聯 Bookstore, 2005).

10. Characterized well by Jīn Chūnfēng 金春峰, *Féng Yǒulán Zhéxué Shēngmìng Lìchéng* 《馮友蘭哲學生命歷程》(Taipei: The Institute of Chinese Literature and Philosophy at Academia Sinica, 2003), 245–7.

11. For discussions of the compromises of those major German philosophers, see studies by Victor Fariás, *Heidegger and Nazism* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989); Tom Rockmore, *On Heidegger’s Nazism and Philosophy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992); George Leaman, *Heidegger im Kontext: Gesamtüberblick zum NS-Engagement der Universitäts-philosophen* (Hamburg: Argument Verlag, 1993); Rüdiger Safranski, *Martin Heidegger: Between Good and Evil*. Trans. Ewald Osers (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1999); and Richard Palmer, “A Response to Richard Wolin on

Gadamer and the Nazis,” *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* 10(4) (2002): 467–82.

12. Covered historically and interpretively in James W. Heisig and John C. Maraldo, eds. *Rude Awakenings: Zen, the Kyoto School, and the Question of Nationalism* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1994).

13. See the later Féng Yǒulán’s self-criticism in *Zhōngguó Xiàndài Zhéxuéshǐ*, 206–23.

14. Argued thoroughly in Lauren F. Pfister, “A Modern Chinese Philosophy Built upon Critically Received Traditions: Feng Youlan’s New Principle-Centered Learning and the Question of its Relationship to Contemporary New Ruist (‘Confucian’) Philosophies,” in John Makeham, ed. *New Confucianism: A Critical Examination* (Houndsmill, England: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 165–84; also addressed in Chūnfēng 金春峰, *Féng Yǒulán Zhéxué Shēngmìng Lichéng*.

15. As seen in Cài Zhōngdé 蔡仲德, *Féng Yǒulán Xiánshēng Niánpǔ chúbiān* and *Féng Yǒulán Xiánshēng Píngzhuàn* 《馮友蘭先生評傳》(2005).

16. See some of Chén Lái 陳來’s important contributions include “Lùn Féng Yǒulán Zhéxué zhōng dé Shénmìzhūyì” 《論馮友蘭哲學中的神祕主義》, in Cài Zhōngdé, ed., *Féng Yǒulán Yánjiū (dìyījì) – Jìniàn Féng Yǒulán Xiánshēng Dànchéng Yìbǎinián Guójià Xuéshù Tǎolùnhuì Lùnwénxuǎn* 《馮友蘭研究 (第一輯) – 紀念馮友蘭先生誕辰一百周年國際學術討論會論文選》 (Běijīng: International Culture Press, 1997), 294–312; and a volume where he develops what might be called Féng’s philosophy of culture: *Tradition and Modernity: A Humanist View*. Trans. Edmund Ryden (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

17. As seen in Jīn Chūnfēng 金春峰’s biographical study, *Féng Yǒulán Zhéxué Shēngmìng Lichéng* 《馮友蘭哲學生命歷程》 (2003).

18. That is, the six-volume work entitled *Zhōngguó Zhéxuéshǐ Xīnbīān* 《中國哲學史新編》 [A New Edition of a History of Chinese Philosophy] (Běijīng: People’s Press, 1979–1990).

19. For one account of the emergence of the modern discipline of philosophy in twentieth-century Chinese universities, see John Makeham, ed., *Learning to Emulate the Wise: The Genesis of Chinese Philosophy as an Academic Discipline in Twentieth-Century China* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2012).

20. For this interpretive angle, see the discussion in Lauren F. Pfister, “The Dynamic and Multi-cultural Disciplinary Crucible in which Chinese Philosophy was Formed,” *minima sinica* no. 1 (2015): 33–90.

21. See evidence for this in the chronology found in Shàn Chūn 單純 and Kuàng Xīn 曠昕, eds., *Jiědú Féng Yǒulán – Qīnrén Huíyì Juàn* 《解讀馮友蘭 – 親人回憶卷》 (Shēnzhèn深圳: Hǎitiān 海天Publishing House, 1998), 202–21.

22. Addressed by Féng in the second of six books in the two volume work, *Zhēn Yuán Liùshū: Liǎngcè* 《貞元六書 兩冊》 [Purity and Primacy: Six Books in Two Volumes] (Shànghǎi: East China Normal University Press, 1996), Vol. 1, 297–305. Noticed also very early by Michel C. Masson, *Philosophy and Tradition – The Interpretation of China’s Philosophic Past: 馮友蘭 Fung Yu-lan 1939-1949* (Taipei: Ricci Institute, 1985), 73–6.

23. His self-criticisms are manifest early in 1948 and more thoroughly in his post-humously published final volume. See Fung Yu-lan, *A Short History of Chinese*

Philosophy. Ed. Derk Bodde (New York: The Free Press, 1948), 332–42, and his *Zhōngguó Xiàndài Zhéxuéshǐ*, 206–23.

24. Alternative English renderings for these six volumes are found in works by Masson, *Philosophy and Tradition*, also Diane B. Obenchain, ed. and trans. *Feng Youlan: Something Exists – Selected Papers of the International Research Seminar on the Thought of Feng Youlan*. Special Issue. *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 21(3–4) (September/December 1994), and Lai, *Tradition and Modernity*.

25. Féng, *Zhēn Yuán Liùshū: Liǎngcè*, Vol. 2, 842–57, esp. 843.

26. See Lai, *Tradition and Modernity*, 164–5.

27. Discussed in a number of works, including Lai, *Tradition and Modernity*; Chūnfēng, *Féng Yǒulán Zhéxué Shēngmìng Lìchéng*; Dèng, Liánhé 鄧聯合, *Chuántǒng Xíngshàng Zhìhuì yǔ Shèhuì Rénsēng dé Xiàndài Kāizhǎn – Féng Yǒulán Xiánsēng “Zhēnyuán Liùshū” Yánjiū* 《傳統形上智慧與社會人生的現代開展 – 馮友蘭先生“貞元六書”研究》 [The Contemporary Launching of [a Synthesis of] Traditional Metaphysical Wisdom and Societal[-ly Based Life]—Studies about Mr. Féng Yǒulán’s *Purity Descends, Primacy Ascends: Six Books*] (Nánjīng: Nánjīng Normal University Press, 2003); Xiaoqing Diana Lin, “Creating Modern Chinese Metaphysics: Feng Youlan and New Realism,” *Modern China* 40(1) (January 2014): 45–73; Xiaoming Wu, “Philosophy, *philosophia* and *zhe-xue*,” *Philosophy East and West* 48(3) (July 1998): 406–52; Zhèng Jiāodōng, “*Xuéshù yǔ Zhèngzhì zhī jiān* .”

28. Dealt with in Pfister, “Von den ‘drei Lehren’ zur ‘chinesischen Philosophie,” 170.

29. See Féng Yǒulán, *Zhēn Yuán Liùshū: Liǎngcè*, Vol. 1, 15–20.

30. Consult Fung Yu-lan, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*, 328–30.

31. See Fung Yu-lan, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*, 334–42.

32. Discussed in Lin, “Creating Modern Chinese Metaphysics”; Masson, *Philosophy and Tradition*; Möller, Hans-Georg. *Die philosophischste Philosophie: Feng Youlans neue Metaphysik* [The Most Philosophical Philosophy: Féng Yǒulán’s New Metaphysics], (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2000); Hans-Georg Moeller, “Daoism as Academic Philosophy: Feng Youlan’s New Metaphysics (*Xin lixue*),” in John Makeham, ed., *Learning to Emulate the Wise*, 217–35.

33. Quoted from Fung Yu-lan, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*, 2.

34. As discussed in the fourth volume of his system, Féng Yǒulán, *Zhēn Yuán Liùshū: Liǎngcè*, Vol. 2, 552–67.

35. Consult Lauren F. Pfister, “Feng Youlan’s New Principle Learning and His Histories of Chinese Philosophy,” in Chung-ying Cheng and Nicholas Bunnin, eds. *Contemporary Chinese Philosophy* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002): 165–87.

36. See discussions of these technical terms in Féng Yǒulán, *Zhēn Yuán Liùshū: Liǎngcè*, Vol. 1, 32–59, 69–72, 186–95.

37. This very important concept is discussed in Féng Yǒulán, *Zhēn Yuán Liùshū: Liǎngcè*, Vol. 2, 849–50.

38. Dealt with in the second volume of the six book series, Féng Yǒulán, *Zhēn Yuán Liùshū: Liǎngcè*, Vol. 1, 221–68.

39. Elaborated in the third volume of the six book series, in Féng Yǒulán, *Zhēn Yuán Liùshū: Liǎngcè*, Vol. 1, 414–28 and 501–11.

40. Consult Moeller, “Daoism as Academic Philosophy.”
41. Mentioned in Fung Yu-lan, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*, 333.
42. As indicated in Standaert and Giever, “Feng Youlan (Fung Yu-lan)”]; and Pfister, “Von den ‘drei Lehren’ zur ‘chinesischen Philosophie.’”
43. See the full text of his PhD dissertation in Fung Yu-lan, *Selected Philosophical Writings of Fung Yu-Lan* (Běijīng: Foreign Languages Press, 1991), 1–189.

In the forthcoming article on Féng’s “philosophical journey,” I point out that though he chose to go to Columbia University because it was teaching “new philosophy,” that is, new approaches to philosophical questions, and not just rehearsing older philosophical methods and approaches (which clearly did include Dewey’s works at that time), Féng’s dissertation ironically dealt with none of those “new trends” in American, European, or Chinese philosophical traditions. Consult “Three Dialectical Phases in Feng Youlan’s Philosophical Journey,” in David Elstein, ed., *The Dao Companion to Contemporary Chinese Philosophy* (forthcoming).

44. Documented in Pfister, “Feng Youlan’s New Principle Learning,” 143.
45. As seen in Fung Yu-lan, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*, 329.
46. This occurred within his “Speech of Response delivered at the Convocation of September 10, 1982, at Columbia University,” found in Fung, *Selected Philosophical Writings of Fung Yu-lan*, 658–65. The reference to “my professors Dewey, Woodbridge, and Montague” and his explanation that he was “not a complete pragmatist,” but cited affirmatively claims found in Dewey’s volume, *How We Think*, appear on *Ibid.*, 658 and 661, respectively.

47. That is, the two volumes of Féng Yǒulán, *Zhēn Yuán Liùshū: Liǎngcè*.

48. As discussed in Chén Lái 陳來, “Lùn Féng Yǒulán Zhéxué zhōng dé Shénmì-zhǔyì” 〈論馮友蘭哲學中的神祕主義〉 [On the Mysticism in Féng Yǒulán’s Philosophy]. In Cài Zhòngdé, ed., *Féng Yǒulán Yánjiù (dìyījì) – Jìniàn Féng Yǒulán Xiánsēng Dànchén Yībǎinián Guójì Xuéshù Tāolùnhuì Lùnwénxuǎn* 《馮友蘭研究 (第一輯) – 紀念馮友蘭先生誕辰一百周年國際學術討論會論文選》 [Studies about Féng Yǒulán (Vol. 1)—Collected Essays from the Academic Conference Memorializing the Centennial of Mr. Féng Yǒulán’s Birth], 294–312.

49. As discussed in both “Guān yú Féng Yǒulán dé Guīshǔ Wèntí” 〈關於馮友蘭的歸屬問題〉 [Regarding the Problem of the Classification of Féng Yǒulán (’s Philosophical System)], in Chūn and Xīn. *Jiědú Féng Yǒulán – Qīnrén Huíyì Juàn*, 101–4, and Moeller, “Daoism as Academic Philosophy.”

50. Confirmed in Cài Zhòngdé, “Lùn Féng Yǒulán dé Sixiāng Lìchéng” and *Féng Yǒulán Yánjiù (dìyījì)*; Fāng Kèlì 方克立, “Quánmiàn Píngjià Féng Yǒulán” 〈全面評價馮友蘭〉 [Comprehensively Evaluating Féng Yǒulán], in Shàn Chūn 單純 and Kuàng Xīn 曠昕, eds., *Jiědú Féng Yǒulán – Xuézhě Yánjiū Juàn* 《解讀馮友蘭—學者研究卷》 [Interpretively Reading Féng Yǒulán – Scholars’ Studies] (Shēnzhèn 深圳: Hǎitiān 海天 Publishing House, 1998), 61–73; Gāo, Wàngzhī 高望之, “Zhuīyì Féng Yǒulán èr sān shì” 〈追忆馮友蘭二三事〉 [Recalling Several Issues [after] Féng Yǒulán (’s Death)], in Shàn and Kuàng, eds., *Jiědú Féng Yǒulán—Xuézhě Yánjiū Juàn*, 56–9; and Xiaoqing Diana Lin, *Feng Youlan and Twentieth Century China: An Intellectual Biography* (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

51. Described in Cài Zhòngdé, “Lùn Féng Yǒulán dé Sixiǎng Lìchéng,” *Féng Yǒulán Yánjiù (dìyìjì)*, and “Lùn Féng Yǒulán dé Sixiǎng Lìchéng” (論馮友蘭的思想歷程) [On the Course of Féng Yǒulán’s Ideas], in Shàn Chūn 單純 and Kuàng Xīn 曠昕, eds. *Jiědú Féng Yǒulán—Qīnrén Huíyì Juàn* 《解讀馮友蘭 – 親人回憶卷》 [Interpretively Reading Féng Yǒulán—Reminiscences of His Relatives] (Shēnzhèn 深圳: Hǎitiān 海天 Publishing House, 1998), 105–50; Fāng Kèlì 方克立, “Quánmiàn Píngjià Féng Yǒulán” (全面評價馮友蘭); Móu Zhōngjiàn 牟鍾豎, “Shìlùn ‘Féng Yǒulán Xiànxàng’” (試論‘馮友蘭現象’) [Attempting a Discussion of the ‘Féng Yǒulán Phenomenon’]. In *Jiědú Féng Yǒulán—Xuérén Jìniàn Juàn* 《解讀馮友蘭 – 學人紀念卷》 [Interpretively Reading Féng Yǒulán—Remembrances of Scholars] (Shēnzhèn 深圳: Hǎitiān 海天 Publishing House, 1998): 142–63.

52. Intriguingly, this has been a complicated debate, including among the most interesting and informed studies the following works: Cài Zhòngdé, *Féng Yǒulán Xiánshēng Píngzhuàn* 《馮友蘭先生評傳》 [A Critical Biography of Mr. Féng Yǒulán] (Hong Kong: Sānlián Bookstore, 2005); Chén, Lái 陳來, “Lùn Féng Yǒulán Zhéxué zhōng dé Shénmìzhǔyì” (論馮友蘭哲學中的神祕主義) [On the Mysticism in Féng Yǒulán’s Philosophy], in Cài Zhòngdé, ed., *Féng Yǒulán Yánjiù (dìyìjì)*, 294–312; Fàn Pēng 范鵬, “Sìtōng Bādá dé Féng Yǒulán” (四通八達的馮友蘭) [The Multifaceted Academic Achievement of Féng Yǒulán], in Shàn and Kuàng, eds. *Jiědú Féng Yǒulán – Xuézhě Yánjiū Juàn*, 237–51; Moeller, Hans-Georg). “Daoism as Academic Philosophy”; Obenchain, *Feng Youlan: Something Exists*; Pfister, “A Modern Chinese Philosophy Built upon Critically Received Traditions”; Yáng Dìshēng 羊滌生, “‘Chéng Bǎidài zhī Liú, èr Hui hū Dāngjīn zhī Biàn’ – Féng Yǒulán Xiánshēng Jiùjīng Shǔyú nǎi Yìjiā?” in (‘承百代之流，而會乎當今之變’ – 馮友蘭先生究竟屬於哪一家) [“Carrying on the Flow of a Hundred Generations, and Attentive to the Changes of Contemporary Times”—Which School does Mr. Féng Yǒulán Ultimately Belong to?], in Shàn and Kuàng, eds. *Jiědú Féng Yǒulán – Xuézhě Yánjiū Juàn*: 33–7; and Jiādōng, *Xuéshù yǔ Zhèngzhì zhī jiān*.

53. Mentioned in some detail in Xiaoqing Diana Lin, *Feng Youlan and Twentieth Century China*, 103.

54. This was a name given to the city known as Běijīng before the 1911 revolution and after the 1949 revolution.

55. This was confirmed in a conversation in 2016 with Dr. Shào Dōngfāng, a trained historian, former resident of Běijīng, and the current Chief of the Asian Division of the Library of Congress.

56. A recollection of one such public criticism that occurred in 1957 is presented in Gāo Wàngzhī 高望之, “Zhūyì Féng Yǒulán èr sān shì.”

57. As quoting from Lin, *Feng Youlan and Twentieth Century China*, 112 or some make the phrase simply “center right.”

58. As cited in Shàn Chūn 單純 1998. “Lǐjiě Féng Yǒulán” (理解馮友蘭) [Understanding Féng Yǒulán], in Shàn and Kuàng, eds., *Jiědú Féng Yǒulán—Xuérén Jìniàn Juàn*: 226.

59. See relevant sections of Féng Yǒulán 馮友蘭, *Zhōngguó Zhéxuéshǐ* 《中國哲學史》 [A History of Chinese Philosophy], vol. 1 (Shànghǎi: Commercial Press, 1931), and Yu-lan Fung, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, Vol. 1., trans. Derk Bodde (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952).

60. Elaborated in Jacques Ellul, *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes*, trans. Konrad Kellen and Jean Lerner (New York: Vintage Books, 1973), 9–17, 105–20.

61. Published articles by Féng that provoked further antagonistic events, all occurring in the mid- and late-1950s, include the following items: Féng Yǒulán, “Guānyú Kǒngzǐ Yánjiū dé Jìgè Wèntí” 〈关于孔子研究的几个问题〉 [A Few Problems about Research dealing with Master Kong (“Confucius”)], *Běijīng Guāngmíng rìbào* 《北京光明日报》 [The Běijīng Bright Light Daily Newspaper] 69 (November 1, 1956), 4; Féng Yǒulán, “Cóng Zhōngguó Zhéxué zhōng dé Jìgè Zhǔyào Wèntí Kàn Zhōngguó Zhéxuéshǐ zhōng dé Wéiwùzhǔyì yǔ Wéixīnzhǔyì dǐ Dòuzhēng” 〈从中国哲学中的几个主要问题看中国哲学史中的唯物主义与唯心主义底斗争〉 [Viewing Several Major Problems in Chinese Philosophy from the Conflict between Materialism and Idealism within the History of Chinese Philosophy], *Rénmín rìbào* 《人民日报》 [The People's Daily] (May 19, 1957), 7; Běijīng University's Third Year Philosophy Students 北京大学哲学系三年级学生, “Jiēchuān Zhìchǎnjiējìzhéxué dé Wèikēxué – Féng Yǒulán Xiānshēng duì Biànzhèng Wéiwùzhǔyì Jīběn Yuánlǐ hé Gāiniàn dé Wāiqū yǔ Xiūzhèng” 〈揭穿资产阶级哲学的伪科学 – 冯友兰先生对辩证唯物主义基本原理和概念的歪曲与修正〉 [Exposing the False “Science” of a Capitalist Class-inspired Philosophy: On the Distortions in Mr. Féng Yǒulán's Account of the Basic Principles and Conception of Dialectical Materialism and (its) Correction]. *Rénmín rìbào* 《人民日报》 [The People's Daily] (August 30, 1958), 7; (anonymous) “Chèdǐ Pīpàn hē Qīngchǔ Zhìchǎnjiējì Xuésù Sìxiǎng—Zhéxuéjiè Pīpàn Féng Yǒulán dé Wéixīnzhǔyì Zhéxué Guāndiǎn” 〈彻底批判和清除资产阶级学术思想 – 哲学界批判冯友兰的唯心主义哲学观点〉 [A Thorough Criticism and Purging of Capitalist Class Academic Thinking: The Philosophical World Criticizes Féng Yǒulán's Idealist Philosophical Viewpoint], *Rénmín rìbào* 《人民日报》 [The People's Daily] (November 11, 1958), 7; (anonymous), “Běijīng Zhéxuéjiè Zhǎnkāi Féng Yǒulán Zhéxué Sìxiǎng dé Tǎolùn” 〈北京哲学界展开冯友兰哲学思想的讨论〉 [The Beijing Philosophical World Opens up Discussions of Féng Yǒulán's Philosophical Ideas], *Rénmín rìbào* 《人民日报》 [The People's Daily] (March 14, 1959): 7.

62. Among those that are both representative and still accessible are the following, all published with Féng Yǒulán's name as the author: *Sìshínián dé Huígù* 《四十年的回顾》 [A Retrospective Look over [the Past] Forty Years], (Běijīng: Scientific Press, 1959); *Féng Yǒulán dé Dàolù* 《冯友兰的道路》 [Féng Yǒulán's Passage] (Hong Kong: Pángǔ 盘古 Newspaper Society, 1974), and the notorious *Lùn Kǒng Qiū* 《论孔丘》 [On Hillock Kǒng] (Běijīng: People's Press, 1975).

63. Details of those years and Féng's experiences can be understood from two sources: A specific recollection of one major public criticism of Féng in Gāo Wǎngzhī, “Zhuīyì Féng Yǒulán èr sān shì,” and a more extensive historical account in Xiaoping Diana Lin, *Feng Youlan and Twentieth Century China*.

64. That is, the infamous work entitled *Lùn Kǒng Qiū* 《论孔丘》 [On Hillock Kǒng].

65. As found in Ellul, *Propaganda*, 303–13.

66. Quotations and further elaborations of these points coming from passages in Ellul, *Propaganda*, 111, 80–4, 310–13, respectively.

67. As portrayed in Ellul, *Propaganda*, 74–9.
68. Cited from Ellul, *Propaganda*, 76.
69. As cited in Lin, *Feng Youlan and Twentieth Century China*, 112.
70. Cited in Lin, *Feng Youlan and Twentieth Century China*, 91.
71. Noted in Lin, *Feng Youlan and Twentieth Century China*, 92 and 108.
72. This is the basic argument of the vast majority of Féng Yǒulán, *Sishinián dé Huígù*, and is interpreted in Lin, *Feng Youlan and Twentieth Century China*, 98–115.
73. Also discussed in Lin, *Feng Youlan and Twentieth Century China*, 108.
74. As seen in sources cited in endnote #50 above and described in Lin, *Feng Youlan and Twentieth Century China*, 114.
75. Quoting in sequence from Lin, *Feng Youlan and Twentieth Century China*, 90, 110, 113, respectively.
76. Consult Gāo Wàngzhī, “Zhuīyì Féng Yǒulán èr sān shì.”
77. This is a main concern expressed in Fāng Kèlì’s article, “Quánmiàn Píngjià Féng Yǒulán.”
78. Made explicit in Lin, *Feng Youlan and Twentieth Century China*, 148–9.
79. As described also in Lin, *Feng Youlan and Twentieth Century China*, 151–4.
80. Quoted from Lin, *Feng Youlan and Twentieth-Century China*, 156.
81. Find details in Lin, *Feng Youlan and Twentieth-Century China*, 143–5.
82. A tragedy mentioned only briefly in Lin, *Feng Youlan and Twentieth-Century China*, 127.
83. Thoroughly discussed in Lin, *Feng Youlan and Twentieth-Century China*, 92–105.
84. Cited from Féng Yǒulán, *Sishinián dé Huígù*, i (this author’s translation).
85. The later Féng voices these criticisms in his *Zhōngguó Xiàndài Zhéxuéshǐ*, 208–19, 222–5. Two sources describing his system and these later criticisms of it are Vivienne Teoh, “The Reassessment of Confucius and the Relationship among Concepts, Language and Class in Chinese Marxism, 1947–1966: A Study of the Thought of Feng Youlan and Yang Rongguo on the Scope of Benevolence,” *Modern China* 11(3) (1985): 347–75, and Xiaoqing Diana Lin, “Creating Modern Chinese Metaphysics.”
86. Specifically the following three essays: Féng Yǒulán, “Guānyú Kǒngzǐ Yánjiū dé Jìgè Wèntí” 〈关于孔子研究的几个问题〉 [A Few Problems about Research dealing with Master Kong (“Confucius”) in 1956; “Cóng Zhōngguó Zhéxué zhōng dé Jìgè Zhǔyào Wèntí Kàn Zhōngguó Zhéxuéshǐ zhōng dé Wéiwùzhǔyì yǔ Wéixīnzhǔyì dī Dòuzhēng” 〈从中国哲学中的几个主要问题看中国哲学史中的唯物主义与唯心主义底斗争〉 [Viewing Several Major Problems in Chinese Philosophy from the Conflict between Materialism and Idealism within the History of Chinese Philosophy] in 1957; and a volume of essays entitled *Zhōngguó Zhéxuéshǐ Lùnwénjí* 《中國哲學史論文集》 [Collected Essays on the History of Chinese Philosophy] (Shànghāi: People’s Press, 1958).
87. See the following works all by Féng: *Zhōngguó Zhéxuéshǐ Shīliǎoxué Chūgāo* 《中國哲學史史料學初稿》 [An Initial Manuscript on the Study of Historical Materials in the History of Chinese Philosophy] (Běijīng: Universal Bookshop,

1962); *Zhōngguó Zhéxuéshǐ Lùnwén Èrjī* 《中國哲學史論文二集》 [Second Volume of Collected Essays on the History of Chinese Philosophy] (Shanghai: People's Press, 1962); *Zhōngguó Zhéxuéshǐ Xīnbīān Dìyì Cè (Xiūdìngběn)* 《中國哲學史新編第一冊(修訂本)》 [New Edition of the History of Chinese Philosophy: Volume 1 (Revised Version)] (Běijīng: People's Press, 1964); *Zhōngguó Zhéxuéshǐ Bǔ* 《中國哲學史補》 [Supplements for the History of Chinese Philosophy] (Hong Kong: Pacific Ocean Bookstore Ltd., 1968); *Zhōngguó Zhéxué Xiǎoshǐ* 《中國哲學小史》 [A Small History of Chinese Philosophy] (Hong Kong: Wen Han 文瀚 Press, 1969).

88. That is the most infamous and widely published work of this stage of Féng Yǒulán's philosophical career.

89. Located in Féng Yǒulán, *Lùn Kǒng Qiū* [On Hillock Kǒng], 99–105.

90. As claimed in Féng Yǒulán, *Lùn Kǒng Qiū* [On Hillock Kǒng], 102.

91. Quotes and summary of argument found in Féng Yǒulán, *Lùn Kǒng Qiū* [On Hillock Kǒng], 103.

92. Cited from Féng Yǒulán, *Lùn Kǒng Qiū* [On Hillock Kǒng], 105 (this author's translation).

93. For a general account of the nature of military revolutions based on studies of Eugen Rosenstock-Huussy, and its application to modern Chinese military and cultural revolutions, consult Lauren F. Pfister, "Distinguishing Spiritual Revolution from Military Revolution: Meditations on the Impact of Chinese Literature by Protestant Missionary-Scholars in Late Traditional China." *Ching Feng* n.s. 13 (2014): 3–34.

94. Suggested in Fāng Kèlì, "Quánmiàn Píngjià Féng Yǒulán."

95. This is the volume known as *Zhōngguó Xiàndài Zhéxuéshǐ* 《中國現代哲學史》 [A History of Contemporary Chinese Philosophy].

96. As presented in Yǒulán, *Zhōngguó Xiàndài Zhéxuéshǐ*, 253–62.

97. As documented in Lin, *Feng Youlan and Twentieth-Century China*, 157.

98. Recorded in in Féng, *Zhōngguó Xiàndài Zhéxuéshǐ*, ix.

99. This author's English rendering.

100. As claimed in Hú Jūn 胡軍, Wáng Zhōngjiāng 王中江, Zhūgé Yíntóng 諸葛殷同, Zhāng Jiālóng 張家龍, Liú Pěiyù 劉培育, *Jīn Yuēlín Sīxiǎng Yánjiù* 《金岳霖思想研究》 [Studies of Jīn Yuēlín's Thought] (Běijīng: Chinese Social Sciences Academy Press, 2004), 399–403.

101. These dimensions of Jīn Yuēlín's life have been documented in Wáng Zhōngjiāng 王中江 and Ān Jímín 安繼民, *Jīn Yuēlín Xuéshù Sīxiǎng Píngzhuàn* 《金岳霖學術思想評傳》 [A Critical Biographical Account of Jīn Yuēlín's Academic Thought] (Běijīng: Běijīng Library Publishing Society, 1998), 304–5; Dù Guópíng 杜國平, "Zhēn" dé Lìchéng – Jīn Yuēlín Lǐlùn Tǐxì Yánjiù 《“真”的歷程 – 金岳霖理論體系研究》 [The Course of "Truth" – Studies of Jīn Yuēlín's Theoretical System] (Běijīng: Chinese Social Sciences Academy Press, 2003), 10–3; and Hú Jūn et al., *Jīn Yuēlín Sīxiǎng Yánjiù*, 417–8.

102. As confirmed by Féng, Léi 馮雷, "Zhōngguóhuà Mākèsīzhǔyì Zǒuxiàng Shìjiè – Jìndài yǐlái Zhōngguó Zuidà Guīmó dé Duiwài Sīxiǎng Chuánbō" 《中國化馬克思主義走向世界 – 近代以來中國最大規模的對外思想傳播》 [Sinified Marxism Moves Worldwide – China's Largest Scale Projects of (Chinese Marxist)

Thought Propagation to Foreign Settings, from Modern Times until the Present]. Written in 2012. From the website of 中共中央編譯局 [The Central Compilation and Translation Bureau of the Chinese Communist Party], accessed September 24, 2016. http://www.ccb.net/topic/jd90/wjdt/201205/t20120529_284885.html

103. And so documented as well in Wolfgang Bartke, *Who was Who in the People's Republic of China* (Munich: K. G. Saur, 1997), 197.

104. As seen in Qiáo Qīngjǔ 喬清舉, *Jīn Yuēlín Xīnrú Tìxì Yánjiù* 《金岳霖新儒學體系研究》 [Studies of Jīn Yuēlín's New Ruist System] (Jinán 濟南: Qílǔ 齊魯 Bookstore, 1999).

105. Confirmed in a conversation with the Chief of the Asian Division of the Library of Congress, Dongfang Shao (邵東方), in personal conversation with this author on August 13, 2016.

106. See sources referred to in endnote #11 above.

107. For the sake of comparison, consult Palmer, “A Response to Richard Wolin on Gadamer and the Nazis.”

108. Identified and elaborated in Lauren F. Pfister, “Feng Youlan’s New Principle Learning and His Histories of Chinese Philosophy,” in Chung-ying Cheng and Nicholas Bunnin, eds. *Contemporary Chinese Philosophy* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), 165–87; and “The Creative Potential and Philosophical Importance of Going Beyond a ‘China-West’ Philosophical Focus in 21st Century Chinese Philosophy,” in Fāng Kèlì 方克立, ed., *Chinese Philosophy and the Trends of the 21st Century Civilization* (Běijīng: Commercial Press, 2003), 603–24.

Chapter 2

Aspects of a Relevant Philosophy of History for Chinese Philosophy in the Post-Secular Context of the PRC

INITIAL MUSINGS ABOUT A POST-MARXIST PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY IN CONTEMPORARY PRC

Ideological and cultural shifts during the last four decades have occurred in the PRC and have left their mark on the reflective records produced in broader ranges of “cultural China.”¹ Since the 1980s, the trends of a “self-transformation of Marxism” have advanced steadily,² so that the socialist intellectual Arif Dirlik lamented in 2008 that the current trends of “socialism” in China (by which he intends also to include Maoist and other forms of Chinese Marxism) are “likely to be socialism of a different kind from the one that was born of the struggles of a century or more of imperialism, nation-building and Euro/American cultural hegemony.”³ This is true even in spite of the more conservative trends of the regime led by Xǐ Jìnpíng 习近平 (1953–, in simplified Chinese his family name is written as 习), because the PRC continues to maintain stock markets and to allow private property rights (initiated once again in 2005), so that it has left behind some of the major features of a “communist” form of living. In addition, the signs of a “de-secularization” within larger PRC political and cultural contexts, which are also expressly found in the “plurality” evident in the blossoming of numerous philosophical trends⁴—some being neo-traditional in character, while others reflect influences from international philosophical works and figures⁵—illustrate the importance and widespread influences of these developments. By 2010, it can be stated that a post-secular climate reigned among PRC intellectuals and was manifestly at work especially among Chinese philosophers

within the mainland; though this has changed somewhat by 2020, the general state of affairs among Chinese philosophical circles remains in a slightly less robust diversity of philosophical issues and approaches. During the period from the year 2000 to as late as 2017 within the PRC, an ever-growing wider range of cultural, intellectual, and philosophical circles have been shaped by international as well as national trends reflecting critical post-Mao as well as post-Marxist interpretive trends, positions which bear the strong influence of a post-secular mentality.⁶

Once again let me underscore that this does not deny the continued political influence of the Chinese Communist Party and its institutions at all levels of society, including a significant minority among intellectuals within philosophical circles, but it does emphasize that the majority of them have moved away from being adamant doctrinaire Maoists or Chinese Marxists to take on at least a “strategic post-secular secularist” stance.⁷ This is still true in the period from 2018 to 2020, though ideological restrictions have been felt in some very concrete ways within those same circles during the past three years. In previous years, some have even gone so far as to renounce their Marxist training, adopting a wide variety of positions including a form of new Chinese “Enlightenment” rationality,⁸ various positions involving philosophical critiques (especially postcolonial and postmodern),⁹ as well as some traditional and new religious worldviews and values.¹⁰ In this way, even if they are not embracing some particular form of spirituality, they display all the characteristics of a more open, humane, critically reflective, and thoroughly incisive group of “engaged post-secular intellectuals.”¹¹

Conditions are still ripe for a new approach to writing the history of what now is called “Chinese philosophy” or “Chinese philosophical traditions,” one which develops a philosophy of history relying on indigenous sources for inspiration, but also providing justifications in its ability to reveal insightfully and in more accurate ways the diachronic connections in conceptual, theoretical, pragmatic, institutional, and cultural dimensions within philosophical traditions developed within China as well as in the wider ranges of cultural China. Undoubtedly, this concern has become a *leit-motif* within my own work as manifested in this volume, since the revisionary interpretations of some classical Ruist scriptures and new studies of Ruist works in later imperial China clearly suggest some ways and interpretive issues that could be integrated into such a new history of Chinese philosophical traditions. Nevertheless, the focus of this chapter will remain on both the need and the character of a new philosophy of history developed within Chinese philosophical contexts for the twenty-first century.

JUSTIFICATIONS FOR ASSERTING A POST-MARXIST PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY

Positing a Working Hypothesis for this Project

Ultimately, how one conceives of the history of philosophy within any specific cultural corridor will depend essentially on one's definition of what is philosophical.¹² Therefore, in developing a working hypothesis for establishing a philosophy of history for a creative history of Chinese philosophical traditions, we need to explain and delimit not only the nature of "philosophy" which is broad enough to engage many of the traditions and areas of concern associated with the traditional word *jiào* 教 or "teaching(s)," but also embrace the sophisticated technical developments which have blossomed in the PRC during the past four decades.¹³ Therefore, I am positing here a working hypothesis which relies on a basic definition of "philosophy" that embraces both *theoria* and *praxis*, both systematic thinking in abstraction and practical principles for action, and so allows for exploratory creativity while also engages in realms traditionally associated in many cultural modes of philosophical discussions as "practical wisdom."¹⁴ On this broad basis, then, I present the following "working hypothesis": if the study of philosophy is constituted by "the study of the general principles of reality and how they encourage a flourishing form of life," then a post-Marxist philosophy of history dealing with philosophical traditions both within the PRC and in cultural China should be able (1) to explain how theoretical creativity and practical wisdom within Chinese traditions (which we now associate at the beginning of the twenty-first century with "philosophical studies") would reveal insights into the nature of historical reality and (2) it should also reveal how any new history of Chinese philosophical traditions could be constructed on this basis. Here in this chapter, the second issue will be addressed.

Challenging a Basic Thesis of Historical Materialism *via* Max Weber

Why is there a need to develop a new history of philosophy for any project in the early twenty-first century dealing with historical accounts of Chinese philosophical traditions? The strong position I have adopted here in this working hypothesis¹⁵ suggests that the Chinese Marxist paradigm of historical materialism, which is the basis for the Chinese Marxist philosophy of history, has been rendered unjustifiable. Here I intend to make this claim explicit, based on more details related to the "self-transformation of Marxist traditions" within philosophical and political circles in the PRC noted by

Tongqi Lin (林同奇, 1923–2005), as well as the impact of recently “discovered” modern European criticisms of Marxist critiques of religious traditions.¹⁶

It is well-known that the Marxist critiques of culture and history are founded upon a principled critique of “religion,” claiming that any religious consciousness is a distortion of reality, and so could never be a source for any “constructive” or “liberating” form of life. This position was adopted within philosophical circles during the first decades of the PRC, when “Máo Zédōng Thought” became the equivalent of all that would be counted as “philosophical” and “true.”¹⁷ Nevertheless, these Marxist claims based on historical materialism were challenged in principle by the more dynamic account of the relationship between religious traditions and economic structures found in Max Weber’s sociology of religion. When Weber’s writings began to be published in Chinese versions in the late 1980s,¹⁸ it became clear that in his final work related to the sociology of religion, published originally in 1920, Weber had demonstrated that certain kinds of religious traditions were not only not completely determined by their economic environments, but also provided stimulation for new economic developments due to a special mixture of their motivations for work and their powers to produce creative breakthroughs.¹⁹ Though Weber argued that this was distinctively present in the “Protestant ethic,” other sociological studies have challenged the exclusiveness of these claims, demonstrating that other religious traditions, including some forms of Ruism within Chinese settings, also had similar cultural and economic impacts. As a consequence, the debate over the nature of humans or *rén* 人 in the humanistic debates of the late 1980s and early 1990s in the PRC, which Tongqi Lin describes in some detail,²⁰ were not only challenging particular claims related to Marxist historical materialism, but were also reasserting the creative and constructive roles of certain religious traditions within human history at large and modern Chinese history in particular. These were the justifications for a growing wave of new philosophical explorations, challenging secularization theses, and developing a plurality of philosophical studies previously unknown during the Maoist era. Post-secularity of this sort within the PRC has taken on these interpretive trends as liberating forces within ongoing research projects promoted in numerous Chinese philosophical circles.

Summarily speaking, there is no longer any acceptable justification for the claim that the means of production in the economic foundation of any society or culture determines the character and limits the functions of religious institutions or any other cultural traditions, including those associated with philosophical studies. Put very simply, economic and cultural developments are more complicated than the deterministic assumptions of Marxist historical materialism. Consequently, any account of the creative expressions of cultural life also needs to explain and underscore that some of these cultural institutions (including those found in religious and philosophical realms) can

stimulate new economic development, as Max Weber had demonstrated, even while they are also influenced more or less by the dynamics within economic structures. These new assertions have become one of the major reasons for justifying the development of an alternative form of philosophy of history which would offer more precise and revealing accounts of these mutually influencing and mutually enriching forms of cultural life.

Evidences of Post-Secular Trends in the Studies of the History of Chinese Philosophical Traditions in Contemporary China

In 2008, there was a flurry of activity in many sectors of Chinese publishing world reflecting on the previous thirty years, a period initiated by the demise of Chairman Máo and the Gang of Four and the beginning of reform. Realizing the opportunity it provided, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) in Běijīng also sought to document the development of various academic disciplines in the PRC during the same period of time. Among these various works was a volume edited by Lǐ Jǐngyuán (李景源, 1945-), academician in the Philosophy Division of the Chinese Social Sciences Academy in Běijīng, entitled *Thirty Years of Chinese Philosophy, 1978–2008*.²¹

As might be expected, the initial section of this volume of just over 400 pages of summaries of philosophical studies in mainland China was devoted to “The Principles of Marxist Philosophy” and “The History of Marxist Philosophy.”²² Notably, the summary of Chinese Marxism seeks to highlight the contributions of Chinese philosophers to the international development of Marxist theory, emphasizing their distinctions from other trends and traditions in Marxist thought.²³ The content of this section is strictly involved with Marxist philosophical traditions and their internal development, describing Chinese Marxist participation in these traditions as a creative and orthodox Marxist school, and so casting no doubt on its validity or authenticity. Nevertheless, these two chapters account for less than one-fifth of the whole volume, and so while the placement of these discussions in the volume undoubtedly give them the pride of place, the subsequent accounts in the rest of the volume are more varied.²⁴

Issues addressed in the rest of the volume include developments in the study of the history of Chinese and foreign philosophies, as well as sections summarizing work in both contemporary foreign philosophical traditions and “Eastern” philosophical traditions.²⁵ Following these realms of discussion, specific chapters are devoted to aesthetics, logical studies, ethics, philosophies of science and technologies, and philosophy of culture.²⁶ Notably, the section related to the study of the history of Chinese philosophy, while taking up a significant amount of space to explore the importance of textual discoveries in archeological digs, which have stimulated many new discussions

related to the understanding and assessment of ancient Chinese philosophical traditions,²⁷ also highlighted the works of three major philosophical figures who wrote “general histories” (*tōngshǐ* 通史) that fell more in line with Chinese Marxist principles. These included the works of the traditional philosopher who adopted Marxist categories to publish his final six-volume work in this area, Féng Yǒulán 馮友蘭 (1895–1990),²⁸ the traditional Chinese Marxist Intellectual and Librarian of the Beijing Library, Rèn Jìyú 任繼愈 (1916–2009), and the creative Marxist philosopher from Shànghǎi, Féng Qì 馮契 (1915–1995).²⁹

In dealing with these three major contributions by elderly philosophical statesmen in the academic sub-discipline of the history of Chinese philosophy, the volume focuses on all the elements which affirm the basic doctrines of Chinese Marxism. While noting the creative alternatives advanced by Féng Qì in his later years (what might even be considered as a development of a post-Chinese Marxist synthesis), there is no mention of Féng Yǒulán’s posthumously published seventh volume in his *New Edition of the History of Chinese Philosophy*, which dealt with *The History of Contemporary Chinese Philosophy*³⁰ and included a balanced critique not only of Féng Yǒulán’s own philosophical system but also a critique of Máo Zédōng’s revolutionary excesses from an explicit Ruist point of view, relying on teachings promoted by the Sòng Ru scholar, Zhāng Zài (1020–1077).³¹ In addition to this manifest neglect of important critical trends within Féng Yǒulán’s own work, it is notable that the pattern of the volume tends to emphasize the productivity and publications of the most elderly of philosophical scholars in China, often to the neglect of many other creative and alternative studies produced by younger and yet similarly productive Chinese philosophers.

When this volume is taken in this light, it is obvious that Lǐ and his censors were not willing to allow these elements directly critical of Chinese Marxist philosophical traditions within their accounts of the study of the history of Chinese philosophy. Nevertheless, the fact that the vast majority of the volume presents summaries of a large number of other areas of philosophical research and writing indicates precisely how even the resistant post-secular secularists represented here by Lǐ Jǐngyuán have had to move toward a strategic post-secular position. It is no longer possible for them to deny the diversity of philosophical studies which are actually taking place in numerous universities and research centers within the PRC. In fact, in many places, they highlight the fact that since the early 1980s that diversification has taken place to the benefit of philosophical studies in the PRC.

What I would like to do now is to explore the writings of two major philosophers’ accounts of the history of Chinese philosophical traditions in the early twentieth century, in order to illustrate how their works anticipated many questions we continue to ask in the twenty-first century but left much

to be desired regarding a suitable philosophy of history that should undergird a self-consciously post-Marxist and post-secular project of writing a new history of Chinese philosophical traditions.

Inadequacies of the Major Twentieth-Century Histories of Chinese Philosophy in Their Assumed Philosophies of History

According to one Chinese philosopher at the end of the twentieth-century, it was the writings of Hú Shì and Féng Yǒulán in the history of Chinese philosophy which set the standards for this sub-discipline within philosophy, standards which remain in force even at the end of the twentieth-century. These claims assert that Hú Shì's 胡適 (1891–1962) major work on a putative outline of the history of Chinese philosophy in 1919 and the methodological introduction of Féng Yǒulán to his first volume of a *History of Chinese Philosophy*, published twelve years later, are watersheds in setting the foundations for the study of the history of Chinese philosophy and for defining the nature of Chinese philosophy *per se*.³² In fact, however, these claims need to be questioned, especially in the light of the fact that the prolific and controversial Féng Yǒulán produced four different histories of Chinese philosophy during his long sixty year career as a philosopher,³³ employing three different sets of principles to undergird his philosophies of history for these works. The details are complicated and worth considering, something I will do in the following sections, since the works of Hú Shì and Féng Yǒulán also present the most significant paradigms for the philosophy of history as applied to the history of Chinese philosophy before the founding of the PRC in 1949; afterward, Féng produced his seven-volume set based on principles of Marxist historical materialism, and so has established a precedent which remains a major account of the history of Chinese philosophy on the putative basis of a Marxist philosophy of history. This last claim will be shown to be a simplistic generalization, but in demonstrating the nature of Féng's final work, it will also provide further justifications for the need of a new philosophy of history in the contemporary Post-Máo and post-secular PRC cultural context.

A MODERN VISION OF CHINESE PHILOSOPHY AND ITS HISTORY: HÚ SHÌ

While Hú Shì's (Hú Shìzhī 胡適之, 1891–1962) contribution in 1919 to the establishment of a critical historical method in his preface to *An Outline of Chinese Philosophy* (*Zhōngguó zhéxué gāngyào* 《中國足哲學綱要》)

should be underscored, particularly in his reliance on Wilhelm Windelband's (1848–1915) account of the tasks of any history of philosophy, what he counted as “philosophical” was too narrowly linked to his account of the “inner logic” of any particular text or school. In the light of what Hú Shì himself had written in his introductory chapter about the character of philosophy and the breadth of its inquiries, the emphasis on the “inner logic” or the “system” within a particular work or school appears reductionistic. Having already defined philosophy as the study which searches for a “fundamental resolution” (*yīgē gēnběn de jiějué*—一個根本的解決) of “human life’s vital problems” (*rénshēng qièyào de wèntí* 人生切要的問題), he went on to describe the areas of study within the philosophical ambit in an open-ended manner.³⁴ Basic questions could include inquiries into the origin of all things (cosmology or cosmogony), exploring logic and epistemology, ethics, pedagogy, and even political and religious philosophy.³⁵

Certainly, these kinds of questions might involve much more than an “inner logic,” depending on how the standards of this kind of “systematic” analysis were conceived.

Besides this kind of problem, Hú Shì did not offer any account about the inner relationship of these various questions beyond the fact that they were “fundamental” to human life. Neither was there any obvious linkage of his account of the nature of philosophy to its ancient history in Europe or elsewhere, though he did cite the text of Windelband's *A History of Philosophy* to support his claims.³⁶ What appears at the beginning of his introduction to his very influential work is a conceptual account of what is philosophical without offering much historical support beyond a modern German text to justify his claims.

In fact, later in the introduction to his groundbreaking work, Hú Shì does present an account of the history of “Eastern” and “Western” traditions of philosophy from an angle of what he called “world philosophy” (*shìjiè zhéxué* 世界哲學).³⁷ But here again suspicions rise regarding his generalizations. In terms of the “Western tradition,” the key sources are Greek and Hebrew, which flow into the later Roman tradition, producing the traditions of the European Middle Ages, which leads ultimately to the “modern period” (*jìnshì* 近世); in the case of the “Eastern tradition,” the key sources are ancient Chinese and Indian, which flow into the Six Dynasties and Táng periods, leading ultimately to the Chinese “modern period” which Hú identified with the Sòng, Yuán, Míng, and Qīng dynasties. While he wisely suggested that both of these traditions might coalesce and form a “future world philosophy,” readers may well be left with some major questions. How should religion and philosophy be distinguished, so that such a thing as “religious philosophy” could be explained? This arises in part because of the major role the Jewish tradition (which is essentially religious in orientation) is given in his account

of the origins of “Western philosophy.” Notably, a discerning reader from the twenty-first century might also ask, “Are there no other philosophical traditions in the world besides the ‘Western’ and the ‘Eastern’?”

If the coming world philosophy is to be a coalescing of different trends, will there still be identifiable traditions of “Western” and “Eastern” philosophy in the future?

Though Hú Shì goes on to provide some very stimulating discussion about the standards for writing any history, and some of the specific problems involved in writing a history of Chinese philosophy,³⁸ readers are still left without answers to these major questions.

What distinguished Féng Yǒulán’s account of Chinese philosophy and its history from precedents found in Hú Shì and others was that he took much more care to identify the standards of judgment which would help Chinese readers to identify what was “philosophical” within Chinese traditional writings and enlarged the range of philosophy itself to include sub-disciplinary topics which embraced logic and systematic argumentation, while also going beyond them to highlight other relevant areas of philosophical discussion. In this sense, Féng helped to increase the range, which the disciplinary grammar should articulate, and linked up a particular modern account of secular philosophy with precedents within Chinese traditions, so that the systematic identification of relevant texts was far more precise and justified, even while dealing with a far greater range of materials. Details about Féng’s hermeneutic achievement, which is still extremely influential in contemporary Chinese accounts of the disciplinary history of Chinese philosophy, and some of its “modern” and “secular” biases, will be described and assessed in what follows.

THREE DIFFERENT PHILOSOPHIES OF HISTORY IN FÉNG YǒULÁN’S WORKS DEALING WITH HISTORIES OF CHINESE PHILOSOPHY

Across more than seven decades of his prolific philosophical career³⁹ Féng Yǒulán (also known as Fung Yu-lan, 1895–1990) presented three different kinds of “philosophies of history” within four separately published histories of Chinese philosophy. In this regard, Féng created a remarkable legacy as well as a complicated series of interpretive positions which continue to be influential in contemporary Chinese philosophical circles. Nevertheless, I will argue here that what he relied upon as distinct philosophies of history within these works were more or less inadequate for a number of reasons. My intention in doing so is to further strengthen the claim that there is a need for a new philosophy of history to guide the production of a creative history

of Chinese philosophical traditions in the current post-secular era within the PRC.

The four sets of histories of Chinese philosophical traditions which Féng produced span across six decades from 1931 till 1992 (the last volume of the last set being published posthumously). Three were written in Chinese, and the one written and published in English in 1948 has been rendered into two Chinese versions.⁴⁰ All of these works have continued to be republished over the years, so that even twenty years after his death, one can find versions of all these works in print. The Chinese versions of his 1948 lectures have continued now to be used as primary readings for undergraduate students in philosophy, even though they are guided by a non-Marxist philosophy of history. In this light, Féng's influence within the subdiscipline of the history of Chinese philosophy within the PRC remains very significant, and so an analysis of the varying philosophies of histories undergirding these works is extremely relevant to any justification for producing a new philosophy of history to be applied to a creative history of Chinese philosophical traditions.

His first major work was a two volume set entitled *Zhōngguó zhéxuéshǐ* 《中國哲學史》 [A History of Chinese Philosophy], the two tomes being published in 1931 and 1934.⁴¹ In the introduction to the first volume, the 35-year-old Féng presented a progressive view of history, but his account included a number of inconsistencies which I will highlight in the subsequent discussion. Because this first set was rendered into English by Derk Bodde and published by Princeton University Press in 1952 and 1953, respectively,⁴² it has received an immense amount of attention by philosophers and other scholars, even though it appeared during the first years of the PRC and was not based upon a Marxist account of historical materialism. This English version has been republished numerous times and has been the basis for renderings in other European languages as well.

A second set of histories of Chinese philosophy were produced by Féng in 1944 and 1948, respectively, the first in Chinese and the second in English. These two works, each produced in relatively smaller single volumes, are entitled *Xīn Yuán Dào* 《新原道》 [New Discourses on the Dào]⁴³ and *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*,⁴⁴ respectively. What is significant for our purposes here is that even though both were oriented to very different audiences and contain different historical accounts, they both also employed the same basic standard for determining what is “relevant” for a history of Chinese philosophy. That standard was presented at the beginning of both volumes as the concern for achieving an “inward sageliness and outward regalness” (*nèisheng wàiwáng* 內聖外王). As will be indicated in the following discussion, exactly how well Féng employed this touchstone for revealing the historical flow and creative developments of philosophical traditions in

ancient and traditional China is a matter worth considering, because it is not always obvious within the texts themselves.

The final and largest work on the history of Chinese philosophical traditions produced by the senior Féng Yǒulán is his Marxist-inspired “New Edition.” The standard edition was published in six volumes from 1982 to 1990 as *Zhōngguó Zhéxuéshǐ Xīnbīān* 《中國哲學史新編》 [A New Edition of the History of Chinese Philosophy],⁴⁵ but a seventh volume extending this account of the history of Chinese philosophy well into the twentieth century was produced posthumously in 1992 as *Zhōngguó Xiàndài Zhéxuéshǐ* 《中國現代哲學史》 [A History of Contemporary Chinese Philosophy].⁴⁶ Studies of this period of Féng’s writings have shown that he initiated the series under much duress, writing several initial drafts under strict Marxist interpretations before beginning this larger series in earnest.⁴⁷ Nevertheless, the first four volumes of the *New Edition* are manifestly still guided by Marxist historical materialism, but following the death of Máo Zédōng in 1976 and Féng’s wife in 1977, his attitudes and values changed,⁴⁸ so that Féng developed a more complicated philosophy of history. While it still was governed by general principles of historical materialism, this new philosophy of history included at least five other philosophical factors: a renewed emphasis of a Zhuāngzǎn metaphysics, a Zhū Xī-inspired rationalism, standards drawn from modern logic, Féng’s own prescriptive account of human intellectual/spiritual realms or *jìngjiè* 境界, and his own preference for Sòng Ruist ethics (especially of Zhāng Zài 張載, as seen in the seventh volume published posthumously in Hong Kong in 1992). While these latter volumes present a form of historiography that is more complex and synthetic, clearly moving away from a simply Marxist-inspired interpretive foundation, there are still significant questions to raise regarding the shift from a strictly dialectical approach to historical developments to something less programmatic.

FÉNG’S IDENTIFYING “PHILOSOPHY” IN 1931: INSIGHTS, INCONSISTENCIES, AND INCOHERENCE

Like Hú Shì in 1919, Féng initiated his introductory essay with a definition of philosophy, but unlike Hú Shì, he did not simply quote a putatively suitable definition from a modern foreign source (in the case of Hú Shì, it involved a translation of a suitable passage from Windelband’s *History of Philosophy* in German) and then proceed to talk about “Chinese philosophy.” In this regard, Féng offered a far more carefully explained and rather insightful basis for his understanding of the nature of “philosophy.” Instead of simply making a citation and moving ahead on that basis, Féng explained that “philosophy” or *zhéxué* 哲學 had been given many definitions by persons in “the

West” (*xīyáng* 西洋), but what he intended to do was to describe what was “commonly recognized” (*pǔtōng suǒ rènwéi* 普通所認為) as philosophy, and then proceed from this to discuss what might be considered philosophical within Chinese traditional literature.⁴⁹ What follows is essentially Féng’s own summary of what the “commonly recognized” elements in the study of philosophy are and his definition of these elements on the basis of this approach.⁵⁰ Féng starts by indicating what “most” ancient “Greek philosophers” considered to be the three basic areas of philosophy, referring to them first in Chinese and then in English: (*wùlǐxué*) 物理學 or “physics,” (*lúnǐ*) 倫理 or “ethics,” and (*lùnǐ*) 論理 or “logic” (this last Chinese term being an older rendering no longer employed as a common term for logic). Though this historically describes the three basic fields of ancient philosophy, Féng immediately afterward explains that what is now (*xiànzài* 現在) understood to be philosophical is not as broad as what these three ancient intellectual fields involved. Instead, he divided contemporary twentieth-century philosophy into three main areas, each of these areas being divided into two subsets (and also presented first in Chinese and then in English): (*yǔzhòu lùn*) 宇宙論 “A Theory of the World,” (*rénshēng lùn*) 人生論 “A Theory of Life,” and (*zhīshí lùn*) 知識論 “A Theory of Knowledge.”⁵¹

While there is more that needs to be considered in this critical first passage, it is of interest to point out that Féng was writing out this basic orientation for his Chinese readers in the light of the historical “fact” that, as he mentions later in this same introduction, the understanding of philosophy that he was seeking to portray to them has arisen in academic discussions of “the West” within the “modern period” (*jìndài xuéwèn* 近代學問), and so especially involved the advent of “science” (*kēxué* 科學).⁵² In this regard, it is worthwhile to return to the initial passage described above and ask where Féng himself would place such areas as political or social philosophy, aesthetics (including philosophical discussions of painting, poetry, literature, drama, music another expressive arts of his day), religious philosophy and metaphysics, philosophical and textual hermeneutics, environmental ethics, and the philosophy of technology. Most of these realms of philosophy were explicit realms of discussion during the 1920s and 1930s, and so it is not unfair in principle to ask such probing questions. In fact, he might have considered political philosophy and environmental ethics as part of ethics, but this would be understood only in “a larger sense,” which apparently was not his intention.

Looking backward from the beginning of the twentieth century, one finds these lapses rather frustrating. For example, studies of aesthetics had their precedents in contemporary discussions within Chinese literary and artistic circles, to the point that some were even arguing from a modern secularist point of view that this realm of cultivation should replace the role of religious

experiences (as in the works of Cài Yuánpěi 蔡元培 (1868–1940) of that period).⁵³ Metaphysical positions which countered materialistic secularism popular in that period were not only available in traditional works by Ruist, Daoist, and Buddhist scholars, but also had major proponents in Platonic and Aristotelian writings (to which Féng referred in other parts of this introduction), not to mention those promoted in relevant Indian, Egyptian, and Latin sources. Even while various kinds of secularist and scientific materialisms were being promoted in the 1920s and 1930s, there were at the same time various attempts to promote a modern philosophy of religion which responded to skeptics' claims, including works inspired by the Buddhist monk, Tàixū 太虛 (1889–1947), and the Christian philosopher, Xiè Fúyǎ (謝扶雅, 1892–1991). Undoubtedly, the realm of aesthetics in both traditional and contemporary Chinese academic settings has stood as a major area of general study as well as of personal cultivation. Apparently aware of this particular oversight to some degree, Féng in a footnote to his initial discussion actually summarized an American philosopher's (W. P. Montague, 1873–1953) account of the content of philosophy, which did include aesthetics along with ethics under the "study of value."⁵⁴ One is consequently left with a sense of irony that this reference to Montague's account was not influential enough to bring Féng to change his own summary in this regard. When one considers this problem from Féng's basic outline of the nature of philosophy, however, there seems to be no easy way for him to fit aesthetics into his definition of philosophy, not to mention broader conceptions of metaphysics and its related topics, such as the philosophy of religion, or something as "modern" as the philosophy of science and technology.

When one further reflects on these matters, it is surprising to note that the younger Féng in 1931 had nothing at all to say about the traumatic historical events that led up to the 1911 revolution, for these were events in which many Chinese intellectuals dealing with what he referred to as "Chinese philosophy" were intimately involved. There is no account of the development of a new form of secular university in contrast to the twenty-one modern Christian universities that existed in China and other more traditional religious institutions at the time, nor of the May Fourth Movement in 1919 and its significance for promoting secularization, as well as the modernization and internationalization of university standards in China. Even more surprising is that there is no mention of the visits of four foreign lecturers to China in the early 1920s, three of whom were "modern philosophers" — the American pragmatist, John Dewey (1859–1952); the English nobleman and intellectual polymath, Bertrand Russell (1872–1970); and a German philosopher and biologist named Hans Driesch (1867–1941), who was a student of an older and notable German Christian philosopher named Rudolf Eucken (1846–1926).⁵⁵ On the other hand, though there is some reference to

two contemporary works in Chinese which included discussions of Chinese philosophy (one by a Chinese colleague, Lù Mào dé 陸懋德,⁵⁶ another by a Japanese sinologist, Takase Takejirō 高瀨武次郎⁵⁷), Féng does not refer to any of the other works in English (or other European languages) that had already also addressed some aspects of Chinese philosophy.

Speaking summarily, Féng's account in 1931 of the arrival of and interest in "philosophy" in the Republic of China is ironic, even as it is essentially *ahistorical*. On the one hand, his work intended to introduce Chinese readers to a modern account of "a history" of Chinese philosophy, but, on the other hand, it did not address the historic moments and historical tensions among intellectuals that had a major impact on the character of Chinese philosophy and the vision of history it would adopt. This same perspective he would continue to present in 1948, strengthened by the addition of a few explicit justifications. At that time in the 1940s, Féng explained that he had studied at Peking University and then later taught at Tsinghua University (清華大學),⁵⁸ which were considered to be the two most important and "strongest" Philosophy Departments in China at the time.⁵⁹ Nevertheless, as a consequence of Féng's adoption of this approach to his topic, one is left with the feeling that nothing relevant to the development of the study of philosophy or the study of Chinese philosophy occurred before the mid-1920s, after Féng received his doctorate from Columbia University and returned to China to teach. As has already been demonstrated above, the situation was in fact far more complicated and historically much more dynamic than the early Féng was willing to admit.

Féng's Historical Essentialism and the Aporiae within the Modernist Discourse Revealed in His View of History in 1931

One of the most intriguing sections of Féng's 1931 introductory essay, and one replete with problems that cannot be comprehensively addressed here, deal with the nature of history and historical writing. They were problematic enough that the English version produced in 1952 did not include a translation of that portion of the introductory essay.⁶⁰ The passages dealing with these problems constitute one-third of the whole length of the essay, and so must have been considered to be particularly important to Féng at that time.⁶¹ Here three problems related to Féng's discussion in this relatively lengthy passage will be explored, because they reveal what Féng's understanding of his own task of writing a "history of Chinese philosophy" actually was. In addition, they reveal how certain discursive elements appear within Féng's discussion and where there are obvious gaps in the coherence of his claims. These gaps, or aporiae, it will be shown, relate particularly to his account of "the nature of history" and his general account of the modern emergence

of a self-conscious “Chinese philosophy” within the cultural contexts of the late Qīng and early twentieth-century China. The contrasts these claims will have with Féng’s later works in the history of Chinese philosophy indicate just how much this historian of Chinese philosophy was self-conscious of the need to revise his approach and consider other ways of handling the historical dimension of his work. His conceptual standard for determining the “quintessence” of Chinese philosophy adopted in the 1940s, and the explicit adoption of historical materialism in the *New Edition*, reveal in several ways how restricted and problematic his earlier conception of the philosophy of history was. For these reasons, then, it is worth considering this early discussion of the philosophy of history in more detail.

Near the beginning of this section, Féng distinguished between history in-and-of-itself (*lishi* 歷史) and history that is written (*xiě de lishi* 寫的歷史).⁶² Stated briefly, Féng argued that “history” is eternally the same, but “written history” is only one part of this much bigger reality in the past. In the end, this assumption leads Féng into a major interpretive dilemma: on the one hand, he did not want to accept the skeptical claim that history in itself could never serve as the goal for historians (as asserted in the skeptical claims made by Max Nordau (1849–1923) in a Kantian fashion, which Féng noted),⁶³ and yet, on the other hand, he admitted straightforwardly that there were some particularly difficult problems of interpretation that any historian of Chinese philosophical traditions would have to face, especially with regard to ancient Chinese literature. Ultimately, it appeared that Féng submitted himself to the fact that there were always subjective and objective hindrances to the writing of any historical narrative, and all the more so when that narrative covered a period of time of more than two-and-a-half millennia (as in the case of the materials, he counted to be appropriate for writing a history of Chinese philosophical traditions).⁶⁴

Yet, having written all this, Féng went on to claim that “history is progressive.”⁶⁵ In the light of all his previous reservations regarding the limits of historical research and its truth claims, this assertion is doubly puzzling. On the one hand, it asserts a view of “written history” that appears to be for too simplistic in dealing with the historical facts related to the changes and developments within Chinese philosophical traditions; on the other hand, by claiming “history is progressive,” he trenchantly coalesces the differences between “history” and “written history” in a way that is nothing but incoherent with the previous distinctions by which he had marked those two realms apart. Yet, even in spite of these problems, Féng went on to insist that society and academic learning are both necessarily engaged in progressive development: the former always develops from the simple into the complex and the later from what is unclear to what is clear. Writing in a period after the Chinese Revolution of 1911 and the beginning of the warlord problems

of modern Chinese history, not to mention the intellectual debates following the May Fourth Movement, it would seem that Féng is being excessively willful here. He wanted to be modern, and he wanted “Chinese philosophy” to reflect modern trends in the international corridors of philosophy which he knew.⁶⁶ Yet in the end, his attempt to argue the case for “progressive history” became particularly twisted, not only because he only dealt with examples of “written history” rather than “history” in and of itself, but also because he ended up with analogies referring to the “natural growth” of human beings and animals, suggesting that his argument fell victim to involving a category mistake because of the inappropriateness of the “natural growth” analogy.

How the Later Féng Reveals the Early Féng’s Shortcomings

In fact, history may not be progressive, and even historical writing about intellectual trends may reveal that there are interpretive trends that can be quite opposed to each other and not lead to any new synthetic advance. Certainly, another way of seeing these historical matters is through Hegelian or Marxist dialectics, a pattern of interpretation that was already becoming influential in certain parts of China in 1931.⁶⁷ As I have already tried to suggest, much that had happened and was antecedent to the emergence of Chinese philosophy, as a modern academic discipline in the twentieth-century Chinese university settings should be located in materials that link up a dialectical tension within certain trends in Chinese intellectual developments. This is to say, those opposing or contrary writings and their inherent cultural influences were very significant in the formation of the discipline of philosophy in general and the subdiscipline of Chinese philosophy in a “nonprogressive” manner, and so add credence to the need to search for alternatives in a history of philosophy which could take account of these cultural tensions, philosophical debates, and institutional concerns.

In the light of the inconsistencies in the early Féng’s account of the nature of history and its inherent philosophy of history, his claim that “history is progressive” appears to be particularly obtuse. More of these inadequacies become evident when we compare the content and interpretations of his later histories of Chinese philosophical traditions with this earliest effort. For example, how were the historical events starting from the Opium Wars (1838–1840, 1858–1860), and then passing on to the Tàipíng Insurgency (1853–1864), the Japanese navy’s devastating victory over the Qīng naval forces in 1895, including finally the 1911 Revolution, revealing something that was historically “progressive” from a Chinese point of view? Even more pertinently, were the philosophical ideas promoted by Hóng Réngān 洪仁玕 (1822–1864), Zēng Guófān 曾國藩 (1811–1872), Kāng Yǒuwéi 康有為 (1858–1927), Liáng Qǐchāo 梁啟超 (1873–1929), and Sūn Zhōngshān

孫中山 (1866–1925) all linked together in a progression which made their ideas always “more clear and complex” than their antecedents? Was not the historical situation far more complicated and not at all so obviously uniform? In the fifth and sixth volumes of his “New Edition” Féng argued that all of these events and persons were in fact relevant to the historical conditions which shaped Chinese philosophical traditions at the time, and did so in terms of a “struggle between materialism and idealism” rather than a simple progressive model of history.⁶⁸

Inadequate Accounts Suggesting the Need for a New Philosophy of History

Intriguingly, in Féng’s last two works related to the history of Chinese philosophy, published in 1948 and from 1970 to 1992, a subtler understanding of these historical antecedents and, ultimately in the later work, the dialectical roles they played in shaping Chinese philosophical traditions, are made explicit. Only as Féng faced withering attacks against his earlier accounts of the history of Chinese philosophy and ultimately submitted to writing it all out again, living under ideological pressure that he did not feel free from until 1978,⁶⁹ was he able to see just how “cunning” history may be. Beyond what he himself could see in 1931, but ultimately saw before he died in 1990, it is possible now to extend the concept of “philosophy” itself and its subdiscipline of “Chinese philosophy” in ways that would enrich any new account of the history of Chinese philosophical traditions. It also necessarily would take some aspects of Féng’s philosophical claims more critically, viewing various texts and claims not only along the trajectory of his different accounts of the history of Chinese philosophical traditions from the 1930s to the 1980s but also taking the *New Edition* as a more mature statement that reveals something about his own self-conscious conclusions published much nearer to the end of his life. Especially in approaching these matters from post-secular perspectives, it is of particular relevance to note how Féng Yǒulán’s final accounts of Ruist, Daoist, Buddhist, and Maoist–Marxist philosophical traditions shifted during his post-Maoist later Féng phase. From these perspectives, it is possible to identify a number of revisionary options that could inform a new approach embodied in a philosophy of history that would further enliven new histories of Chinese philosophical traditions.

From a comparative perspective, it is certain that throughout his life Féng Yǒulán was far more engaged with Ruist teachings than those of Daoist and Buddhist teachings, though it is also undeniable and clear that he positively emphasized some aspects of classical Daoist teachings, while rejecting anything done that might be considered philosophically relevant within Daoist religious writings.⁷⁰ While remaining a self-conscious proponent of various

kinds of modern secularism throughout his life, the later Féng adopted a Marxist dialectical materialism that rejected the extremism of Maoist doctrines after the Cultural Revolution but continued to apply to his new history of Chinese philosophical traditions the lessons gained from that particular Marxist philosophy of history. In many ways, these were extremely controversial commitments for those studying twentieth-century Ruist traditions. For these reasons, then, some aspects of all of these four dimensions of his work deserve treatment here, but since the Maoist–Marxist phase has been addressed elsewhere in this volume,⁷¹ I will focus attention here on how he dealt with the first three Chinese philosophical traditions across the fifty years of his published works on the history of Chinese philosophical traditions, showing to some degree how they changed and what was left that was controversial, inadequate, problematic, or simply not addressed.

Féng’s own philosophical system, Xīn Lǐxué 新理學 (New Principle-centered Learning), was highly indebted to precedents set in Sòng Ruist texts, and so the fact that he referred to them in his final published volume to present a philosophically justified critique of Maoist extremism is profoundly important.⁷² Nevertheless, how Féng dealt with Master Kǒng in his final account offered in the first volume of the *New Edition* needs to be assessed, precisely because it failed to anticipate how others already in the 1980s began to reassert claims about one or more special forms of “Confucian spirituality” that regularly referred to Master Kǒng under the rubric of “Confucius” as a central touchstone in that post-secular reassertion of Ruist religiousness.

In fact, the contrasts between how early Féng and the later Féng addressed and elaborated the philosophical teachings and status of Master Kǒng are stark. In 1931, the early Féng had described “Confucius” as “the first man in China to make teaching his profession, and so popularize culture and education.”⁷³ Later in 1948, he described him as a person considered to be by his contemporaries “a man of very extensive learning,” accounting himself to be “the inheritor and perpetuator of ancient civilization,” so that “he was China’s first teacher.” Ultimately, as Féng emphasized at that time, Master Kǒng had earned the status of being taken to be “the Teacher” for nearly 2,000 years.⁷⁴ The later Féng, however, thoroughly rejected these accounts, demeaning “Hillock Kong” (Kǒng Qiū) in the first volume of his six-volume set of the *New Edition*⁷⁵ in ways that resembled his notorious critique of the man in 1975 in the small volume, *Lùn Kǒng Qiū*.⁷⁶ Spending nearly fifty pages to critique the man on the basis of a Marxist dialectical materialism,⁷⁷ Féng rather sarcastically ends the whole section with a discussion of “Hillock Kong’s” reflections on his own “intellectual/spiritual horizon” (*jīngshén jìngjiè* 精神境界).⁷⁸ The later Féng’s conclusion of that section is worth quoting, in order to indicate the nature of his philosophical assessment of the originator of Ruist philosophical traditions:

Basically, Hillock Kong was a reformer of the slave owning class. The impact of his thought during that time was conservative. Nevertheless, (from a historical perspective) he was China's first philosopher (*zhéxuéjiā* 哲學家). As the first philosopher, the influence of his ideas on the formation of the Chinese race (*Zhōnghuá mínzú* 中華民族) and also on the development of Chinese culture was deep and enduring, no matter whether it was positive and progressive or negative and passive.⁷⁹

Such a change seen above in the later Féng's general evaluation of Master Kǒng provoked bitter condemnations by those contemporary Ruist scholars who had left China and sought to uphold the traditions with which they associated Master Kǒng in one way or another.⁸⁰ But they also did not anticipate how others even during the 1980s would reaffirm the positive value of Master Kong's religiousness.⁸¹ Féng's resistant post-secular secularist's account of Master Kǒng's life and works could therefore offer no hints about the extensive reaffirmations of the spirituality of Master Kǒng and various other Ruist traditions that would be published within the next three decades.⁸² Certainly, there is much to be revised within the later Féng's historical account of ancient Ruist traditions from these perspectives.

In regard to the revolutionary "leveling" rhetoric employed by Féng in his elaborations of the pre-imperial Chinese philosophers—using their birth names rather than their preferred honorific names and titles, something he did quite regularly for all those figures, whether Ruist, Mohists, Daoists, or others—it is notable that this sarcastic and disrespectful attitude embodied in these forms of reference did *not* appear in the later volumes of Féng's *New Edition*. So, for example, when the Sòng dynasty Ruists of the Dào-xué 道學 tradition was presented and their works elaborated—what has been called "Neo-Confucianism" in most relevant twentieth-century Anglophone and European studies—the key figures were never referred to by that revolutionary rhetorical leveling strategy, but all were addressed by their well-known style names.⁸³ Such a change is of great interest from the angle of any historical account of Ruist philosophical traditions, since it was the Sòng Ruists, and particularly Zhū Xī (1130–1200), who created a new school of Ruist studies that was extolled, followed, and further elaborated by numerous scholars, their academies and institutions, and ultimately also imperial authorities in the Qīng dynasty.⁸⁴ If there was a Ruist tradition that thoroughly deserved the leveling rhetoric along with a revolutionary critique, it would seem that the Sòng and later Ruist debates would have been a very important place to apply it. Nevertheless, even though the later Féng did apply a Marxist dialectical materialism to those materials and debates, his discussions tended to take on more of a sympathetic tone, without any revolutionary leveling of their names. Whether this reflects a bias within Féng's own treatments,

or the development at that time within his own philosophical standards that were moving away from the earlier ideological influences that had manifestly shaped at least the first two volumes of the *New Edition*, is worth considering. But here I want to focus on these post-secular insights as they indicate the need to provide a new history of philosophy to undergird the reassessment of key Ruist texts and their related philosophical figures mentioned in the whole series of the *New Edition*.⁸⁵

In his approaches to Daoist traditions, the early Féng took a strong stand against mixing anything Daoist philosophically with what became Daoist religion in the second century CE. That there were, in fact, what could be counted as philosophical issues within Daoist religion, he simply refused to consider as part of his historical accounts of Daoist traditions, even though the early Féng had recognized in principle that this was true for all “great religion.” Instead, he drew a strong line already in the 1930s between Daoist philosophers (*Dàojiā* 道家) and those involved in Daoist religion (*Dàojiào* 道教), as he did similarly between Buddhist philosophers, but using the rubric of *Fóxué* 佛學, and Buddhist religion (*Fójiào* 佛教). Obviously, however, the situation with Buddhism and Chinese Buddhism was complicated by the fact that it was a foreign religion coming from Indian and Central Asian contexts in the post-Hàn dynasty period. Nevertheless, the distinction was still held in both cases within Féng’s writings throughout his philosophical career. In 1948, he justified these conceptual distinctions related to Daoism in the following manner:

It is interesting to note that Taoism [Daoism] as a religion . . . had its beginnings towards the end of the Han Dynasty [e.g., around 200 C.E.], and there are some who refer to this popular form of Taoism as new Taoism. The Old Text school purged Confucianism of its *Yin-Yang* elements, and the latter later mingled with Taoism to form a new kind of eclecticism known as the Taoist religion. In this way, while the position of Confucius was being reduced from that of a divinity to one of a teacher, Lao Tzu [Lǎozǐ] was becoming a founder of a religion which ultimately, in imitation of Buddhism, developed temples, a priesthood, and a liturgy. In this way it became an organized religion almost totally unrecognizable to early Taoist philosophy, which is why it is known as the Taoist religion.⁸⁶

Féng’s mention of the “Old Text” Ruist tradition in this context was to underscore not only what texts were considered canonical, but also to contrast its rejection of any divination of Confucius during the later Hàn dynasty with the subsequent divinization of Lǎozǐ. According to him, the “*Yin-Yang* elements” of one philosophical system of that day were joined with an expression of “Daoism” (presumably philosophical Daoism) that was to make Lǎozǐ its divinity. Whether twenty-first-century scholars of Daoist religion

would agree with this particular account of the emergence of Daoist religion is a matter of serious contention, but even more pertinent to the discussion here is whether or not such a Daoist religion could have philosophical elements within it that should be included in a history of Chinese philosophical traditions. As will be shown later, a good number of works published in the twenty-first century assert that there are indeed philosophical dimensions in Daoist religion as well, but the early Féng would have none of that.⁸⁷

In his various attempts to offer an account of the origins and historical representation of ancient philosophical Daoism, the early Féng offered a historical progression that moved from his depiction of the little-known Pre-Qín figure, Yáng Zhū 楊朱 (c. 440–c. 360 BCE), and then sought to link it to the main discussions in both the *Lǎozǐ* (or *Dàodéjīng*) and the *Zhuāngzǐ*. What was central to them all, stated Féng in 1931, is that they lived “for oneself” (*wéi wǒ* 為我) and “valued oneself” (*guī jǐ* 貴己).⁸⁸ Notably at that time the early Féng took the latter two Daoist works to represent ideas current only after the *Mèngzǐ* was published and before the *Xúnzǐ* was known, so that he dealt with Yáng Zhū’s ideas in an earlier setting, but only after the *Mèngzǐ* had been discussed.⁸⁹ By 1948, Féng moved his claims related to Yáng Zhū into a chapter of their own, placed before the *Mèngzǐ*, highlighting his role in what Féng considered to be the “first phase” of Daoism.⁹⁰ While this was historically more sensible, the claims about the origins of philosophical Daoism and the nature of their main concerns were not further justified. Nevertheless, under the inspiration of a Marxist philosophy of history, the later Féng redesigned his argument, demoting Yáng Zhū to only a portion of the last chapter in his first volume,⁹¹ admitting that his *wei wo* form of thought was a selfish and simplistic attitude that was transformed dialectically into the *wú wǒ* (“non-contrived self”) found in the *Lǎozǐ* and the *Zhuāngzǐ*—something previously unmentioned. Criticizing the latter two works as ultimately only exploring the “principles of dead humans” (*sǐrén dé lǐ* 死人的理), he rejected most Daoist claims of metaphysical awareness or transcendent transformative experience as utterly distorted and false. In this way, Féng ultimately, even though indirectly, admitted that his previous account of the development of pre-imperial Daoist philosophy was incorrect in both its portrayal of its origins and its main themes.⁹² Notably, after this general discussion, Féng surprisingly placed the *Lǎozǐ* historically before the *Mèngzǐ*, making a major change in his account of the progression of Chinese philosophical traditions.⁹³

All of these changes, however, in no way could anticipate the flurry of new discussions caused by the discoveries of earlier versions of texts in Mǎwángduī 馬王堆 and Guōdiàn 郭店 that were obvious predecessors to the *Dàodéjīng*, but took very different form and involved alternative accounts of life.⁹⁴ These discoveries have required the relegation of the *Lǎozǐ* or *Dàodéjīng* to a much later period, while the silk text and bamboo strip texts

have been identified as earlier texts and the production of many unnamed authors. Intriguingly, their creative efforts to reshape earlier textual traditions notably did not necessarily appeal to either the self-centered ethics of Yáng Zhū or the seemingly apolitical visions of the *Lǎozǐ* and the *Zhuāngzǐ*.⁹⁵

Noticeably, when Féng explored Daoist themes in the works of those associated with Abstruse Learning (Xuǎnxué 玄學)⁹⁶ during the post-Hàn dynasty period,⁹⁷ he did not analyze any Daoist religious texts or themes. In the representative texts he chose, there were discussions of some key metaphysical terms, elaborations of some basic ontological distinctions, explanations of some dimensions of philosophical anthropology, and what may be referred to as morality and ethics. None of these discussions explored other dimensions of the Abstruse Learning Daoist lifestyle in the earliest history volumes,⁹⁸ though two forms of life were addressed in the 1948 *Short History*, using the rubric of the “rationalists” and the “sentimentalists” among those “neo-Taoist” intellectuals.⁹⁹ No texts or figures representing religious Daoist works that contained other philosophical concerns, including their metaphysical debates with Buddhists during the early Táng dynasty, were even mentioned by Féng, though these have been addressed in prominent works produced by Chinese and other scholars since his death in 1990.¹⁰⁰

Another question of interest in this effort at comparing Féng Yǒulán’s later and earlier works in the history of Chinese philosophical traditions should deal with how the mysticism addressed in the *Zhuāngzǐ* by the early Féng is handled in the *New Edition*. In fact, the early Féng was much enamored with that text’s conceptualization of the “great whole” (*dàquán* 大全) as the highest philosophical horizon that a person could reach. Nevertheless, if we follow the claims of the later Féng as his more mature assessment, the *Zhuāngzǐ* is only dealing with “the principles of dead humans.” Put in other words, then, that vision of the “great whole” could not be of any great philosophical value in the history of Chinese philosophical traditions for the later Féng. And so it is that the later Féng does not even discuss the “great whole” in the appropriate section of the *New Edition*, categorizing the text of the *Zhuāngzǐ* as a “progressive development in the direction of Daoist philosophical idealism” with a “regressive” or “backward” (*dǎotuī* 倒退) vision of society couched within the “thoughts of a recluse” (*yǐnshì sīxiǎng* 隱士思想).¹⁰¹ Here there is much more work needed to indicate how such a Daoist concept became so important to Ruist traditions (especially as expressed in Féng’s own philosophical system), with their reinterpretation of the whole conception across a wide-range of philosophical history. Though the later Féng also admits that in the *Zhuāngzǐ* there are “many transcendent-like terms and sentences” (*xǔduō chāorán dé cí jǔ* 許多超然的詞句), that seem to promote an optimistic point of contention (*lèguān dé lùndiào* 樂觀的論調), ultimately he understood them critically only to be couched within the

repressed and hidden feelings that are pessimistic.¹⁰² This final word about the *Zhuāngzǐ* stands in stark contrast to those like Moeller who see Féng as promoting academic Daoism, or like Chén Lái as exploring how the early Féng supported a philosophical mysticism, when the later Féng was far more critical and unreceptive to that kind of worldview.

As far as I know, there is no major Chinese philosopher or historian of Chinese philosophical traditions that now advocates Yáng Zhū as the initiator or originator of ancient Daoist traditions, so that Féng's theoretical efforts in this regard have not gained warrant, even in its latest dialectical form.¹⁰³ More significantly, the textual studies of pre-imperial Daoist and Daoist religious philosophies have now gone far beyond Féng's own accounts, so that much more can be said particularly about the development before the *Dàodéjīng*, and the uses of those texts as sources for philosophical speculation within Daoist religious philosophical works.

Féng Yōulán's approach to Buddhism was primarily through what he referred to as Chinese Buddhist Learning (*Zhōngguó zhī Fóxué* 中國之佛學), a perspective that contrasted three basic orientations in Indian Buddhist and some Chinese Buddhist traditions with alternatives in Ruist and Daoist traditions.¹⁰⁴ These three orientations were the Buddhist concept of "emptiness" (*kōng* 空, in Japanese *sunyata*) of all things in contrast to the ontological realism of things in the world supported by Ruist and Daoist teachings; the "stillness" of *nirvana* (*nièpán* 涅槃) in contrast to the highest intellectual/spiritual horizon in both Ruist and Daoist traditions being in the midst of human living activity; and the claim that only certain persons could attain *nirvana*, while others must reincarnate, while in Ruist traditions all persons could become sages like Yáo 堯 and Shùn 舜. On this basis, the early Féng concluded, Chinese Buddhist Learning had to adjust, and so ultimately changed their positions to align with these "basic attitudes" of "Chinese people" (as if "all Chinese persons" held the same orientations, something that is highly questionable, since there were obviously Chinese Buddhist persons who did not hold those "basic attitudes"). Generally speaking, it is not unfair to claim that Féng maintained an interpretive bias against various kinds of Buddhist traditions, whether he considered them to be "Chinese Buddhist traditions" or simply "foreign Buddhist traditions," hinged on whether they addressed the three matters mentioned above. The consequences of these interpretive prejudgments led Féng to prefer Chán 禪 Buddhism above all other forms of Buddhist traditions, because, as he stated in 1948 in his *Short History*:¹⁰⁵

There is yet another common saying (of Chán Buddhists): "In carrying water and chopping firewood therein lies the wonderful *Tao* [Dào 道]." One may ask: If this is so, does not the wonderful *Tao* also lie in serving one's family and the state? If we were to draw the logical conclusion from the Chan doctrines

that have been analyzed above, we should be forced to answer yes. The Chan Masters themselves, however, did not give this logical answer. It was reserved for the Neo-Confucianists . . . to do so.

In other words, even though Féng admitted that Chán Buddhist teachers did not follow his modern logic in confirming that the Chán Buddhist Way and the Sòng Ruist Way were the same—a judgment that is highly controversial and would be disagreed with by many contemporary Chinese philosophers aware of Chán Buddhist claims and doctrines—he was adamant in asserting that the Sòng Ruist answers were what was important in the end for the history of Chinese philosophical traditions.

Here again, what the early Féng claimed was not confirmed by the later Féng, but in the case of Féng's own accounts of Chinese Buddhist philosophical traditions across more than fifty years of writing about these matters, there appears to be a retrograde descent across the decades, something that requires some brief synopsis. Ultimately, I would want to underscore even here, there is a need to revise and readdress numerous issues in Chinese Buddhist philosophical traditions because of Féng's interpretive bias.¹⁰⁶ Nevertheless, however, before addressing that in a more direct manner, I would want to summarize the nature of his “retrograde descent” in his account of Chinese Buddhist philosophical traditions across the various historical accounts he proffered.

In his first version of a history of Chinese philosophical traditions written in the early 1930s, the early Féng devoted three full chapters to the study of “Chinese Buddhist Learning.”¹⁰⁷ In spite of his explicitly stated interpretive bias that introduced Buddhist themes by means of comparison with Ruist and Daoist worldview claims—and so presented unconvincing arguments based upon overgeneralizations about the beliefs of “the Chinese people” that found Buddhist teachings “extremely strange” (*fěicháng kěguài* 非常可怪)¹⁰⁸—Féng went on to not only deal with the interpretive experiments in which some early Buddhist scholars borrowed Daoist terminology to expound and translate their own Buddhist conceptions (the so-called *géyì* 格義 methodology, or “borrowed meanings”)¹⁰⁹ but also developed various philosophical issues from the Consciousness Only (Wéishī 唯識), Huáyán 華嚴, Tiāntái 天台, and Chán schools. In this context, Féng noted that the Chán Buddhist tradition was “the most uniquely Chinese [Buddhist tradition] and probably the best known outside of China.”¹¹⁰ In fact, in his *Short History* of 1948, Féng reduced his discussion of Chinese Buddhist traditions to only two chapters: one being an introductory chapter and the other dealing with “Chanism.”¹¹¹ This reduction must have been stimulated by Féng's interpretive bias and his conviction that Chán was the most exemplary form of “Chinese Buddhist Learning” that relinked itself (in his mind) back into the mainline Chinese

philosophical traditions. Still, after his Marxist phase, the later Féng recalibrated his claims about Chinese Buddhist philosophical traditions once again, so that he devoted five chapters to the study, including an introduction to general Buddhist and Chinese Buddhist traditions, subsequently developing three stages of Chinese Buddhist philosophical development, and finally discussing some ways Chinese Buddhist ideas influenced later Ruist thinkers, but limited to those only in the Táng dynasty.¹¹² In this process, Féng was always inspired by a philosophy of history that was more Marxist than Hegelian but did deal with a number of early and relatively later Buddhist traditions, including one subsection devoted to Huáyán, but none explicitly explaining the Wéishī or Tiāntái philosophical traditions.¹¹³ His major emphasis, as in 1948, was on the Chán tradition.¹¹⁴ Though later philosophers and historians have explored how much Sòng Ruists were indebted to various Buddhist concepts and teachings, this was not developed at all by Féng.¹¹⁵

How have “philosophy” itself as well as “Chinese philosophical traditions” in China changed since Féng’s time? Here I can only just start to indicate the first of many options. There have been further Chinese Marxist developments, new developments in analytical and postmodern philosophical traditions, explorations of non-Marxist philosophies of religion and the phenomenological study of religious experience(s) and spirituality informed by such philosophies of religion, new explorations in the philosophy of sciences and technologies, and numerous comparisons, including those between feminist ethics and Chinese philosophical traditions, as well as studies in environmental ethics and aesthetics. Another new area of research has been Chinese medical principles in relation to their philosophical anthropologies, their account of illness, and the ethics of care, and the impact of foreign translations of Chinese canonical texts, both in their hermeneutic principles and their historical impact on the modernization of the Chinese academy. Philosophical comparisons in certain circles have now also reflected developments within Korean, Japanese, and Vietnamese contexts as they engaged, elaborated, and creatively extended Chinese philosophical themes and traditions over numerous centuries. These latter cross-cultural comparisons in East Asian and Southeast Asian contexts were never addressed in Féng’s work, though they now have been documented, studied, and developed by means of many important philosophical publications.¹¹⁶

As I have tried to indicate in part by various means in the preceding pages, much extra historical work on Chinese philosophical traditions has been done in the last seventy-five years, both inside and outside of China, by historians and specifically historians of Chinese philosophy, which helped to make these discursive elements manifest. What has made this particular exercise genuinely interesting are the contrasts found in writings on the history of Chinese philosophy by “early Féng” and “later Féng,” contrasts that in many

ways indicate all the more clearly the discursive elements that do exist in the document of 1931. As has been already seen above, Féng's work in 1948 was more self-conscious about the shortcomings of his previous effort at explaining the historical antecedents of "Chinese philosophy" in 1931, but still advocated positions that revealed his involvement in various discursive themes that camouflaged important historical factors which he either did not truly know or had refused to consider. Near the end of the 1948 volume Féng, while introducing the significance of "Western Philosophy" for the development of modern Chinese philosophy, wrote: "One cannot understand a philosophy unless one at the same time understands the earlier tradition which it either approves or refutes."¹¹⁷ What this statement suggests is that Féng was revealing the goals of a historical epistemology involving both constructive and antagonistic conceptual antecedents for his project of writing out a "history of Chinese philosophy," but as we have seen previously, the early Féng in 1931 did not himself fully comprehend all of these antecedents for the emergence of the modern academic discipline of Chinese philosophy in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the 1948 tome, Féng sought to correct that gap in his earlier account, but still was restricted by the limits of his prescriptive standard of "inward sageliness and external regalness," so that he could not fully address the cultural tensions and synchronic destructive and creative powers at work within the growing varieties of philosophical traditions within China during those periods. A richer account was presented in the sixth and seventh volumes of his *New Edition*, but it stretched its historical narrative only up till the period of Máo Zédōng's death, and could not embrace or understand the immense diversities within philosophical studies which began to take place in the 1980s, as we have documented here through various sources (especially those of Lǐ Jǐngyuán and Tongqǐ Lín). But in the final chapter of his 1948 work, Féng indicated how another dimension of his historical consciousness was also at work:

From the point of view of the pure philosopher, however, to clarify the ideas of the philosophers of the past, and push their theories to their logical conclusions in order to show their validity or absurdity, is certainly more interesting and important than merely to find out what they themselves thought about these ideas and theories. In so doing there is a process of development from the old to the new, and this development is another phase of the spirit of the [current] age . . . Such a work, however, is no longer the scholarly one of an historian, but the creative one of a philosopher.¹¹⁸

What Féng asserted to be separate realms of experience and professional concern in 1948, he coalesced in his Marxist-inspired *New Edition*. There he learned that one could think philosophically while being a historian, and

could write historically while being a philosopher, but he did so under the ideological guidance of historical materialism, and so felt restricted and untrue to himself until he could gain the strength and creativity to go beyond those limitations in 1978, after the death of Máo.

If my critical claims drawn from reflections of how the “later” or “elder” Féng offered critical insights into the “earlier” Féng are justified, and if my awareness of how Féng did not overcome some interpretive errors and historical misjudgments in his various accounts of the history of Chinese philosophical traditions ring true, then I would argue that I have therefore provided a strong argument for justifying and working out a positive alternative in the academic realm of the philosophy of history that would serve as the standard interpretive model for a new and creative history of Chinese philosophical traditions at this point of time in the twenty-first century.

MAPPING CREATIVITY INTO A COHERENT PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY

Any account of history must provide insight into both the forms of generative creativity and the powers of stagnancy and destruction which influence different levels of human experience within the spaces and times which constitute cultural reality.¹¹⁹ As a consequence, this account of philosophical creativity includes not only the deepening of personal and shared human consciousness over time—which confirms received wisdom in five conceptual dimensions (starting with aesthetics, and moving through epistemology, ethics and cosmology, until it achieves insight into onto-generative visions of reality)—but also may generate vital and sometimes new understandings. These changes occur because a loss of justification for previous understandings arises, and there may also be discoveries of new awarenesses in these realms which were previously unknown.¹²⁰ Historical time, then, is not simply a mathematically extended period of chronology but is constituted inherently as cultured and cultivated forms of humanly enriched times, expressed in timely events framed by creativity, stagnancy, and destructiveness which change the values and institutions by which people live. To discuss any conception of “time” without including these cultured and cultivated awarenesses of human experiences within different times and their “timing” (historical eventfulness), including both synchronic and diachronic dimensions of those times, is to approach history from an angle which is informed more by physics and empirical methods rather than by philosophical self-consciousness and a fully orbed array of cultural experience.¹²¹

Any assertion of a new matrix which includes a philosophy of history within its interpretive framework should provide better explanations of

historical events, not only in their diachronic linkages but also in their generative, stagnate, and destructive tendencies. The creative philosophy of history I am presenting here (and deeply indebted to conversations held on this topic with Prof. Chung-ying Cheng) consequently requires much testing and critical refinement, but I would like to suggest that it does offer better accounts of three historical epochs and diachronic movements within the history of Chinese philosophy than those philosophies of history presented previously in the twentieth century, especially in contrast to accounts made under the inspiration of dialectical materialism and a Marxist vision of historical dialectics. These three epochs and diachronic movements include accounts of the origins of Chinese philosophical traditions, the hermeneutic dynamics between canon and commentary created by the changing of scriptural standards and deepening of philosophical consciousness, and the philosophical profundity of the synchronic cross-cultural challenges and synthetic transformations involved in the encounters with European, North American, and other East Asian foreign cultures during the last two centuries.

In what follows, I will only sketch out specific claims in a brief manner, but the intention will be to indicate how the employment of a philosophy of history based on Chinese insights into creativity and transformation can offer better explanations and provide philosophically significant insights into these three historical questions than what has been previously presented or claimed.

Accounting for the Origins of Chinese Philosophical Traditions

What accounts of the origins of Chinese philosophical traditions have been offered previously? Traditionally, it was claimed that the reign of various sage kings led the ancient way toward wisdom for a flourishing human life, and so the systematization of their teachings was highlighted particularly among Ruist writings in the pre-Qín or pre-imperial period. This account, however, does not give historical credence to the reclusive tendencies of Daoist writings, the populist activism of Mohist ethics, or the emergence of a more trenchant form of hegemonic rulership associated with the political guidance presented in portions of the works of Master Hánfēi 韓非子. Does the vision of a dialectical materialism provide a feasible diachronic account of these transitions which leads to greater philosophical insight into these differences without distorting the historical data? For example, were there significant differences in the means of production or in the forms of societies across the periods of time from the Western Zhōu to the Warring States Period, which essentially determined the emergence of these different forms of thought in a dialectically emerging cultural development?

An alternative approach would focus on the dynamics of cultural changes which was already being reflected upon through the use and interpretations of the divinatory texts of the *Book of Changes* (*Yijing* 《易經》). An indigenous vision of personal and cultural changes as well as decisive transformations and destructions was available in these texts and guiding the actions of ancient Chinese nation-states before the emergence of reflective texts in Chinese that we now associate with philosophical teaching. Rather than assuming a deterministic development initiated by sagely wisdom or by some agent of historical materialism, these ancient approaches to change within different levels of cultural life provided heuristic guidance as well as affirmation of both the creative possibilities and existential indeterminacy within any decisive (and possibly historic) moment.¹²² There is in any opposition the possibilities not only for adamant rejection but also interaction, mutual enrichment, and even synthetic integration.¹²³ These various accounts of philosophical responses to the teachings of sage kings can then be weighed not only in their account of the nature of the sagely way but also in their interactions with each other and with the prevailing cultural and political values and institutions of their times. Though they did posit certain oppositions, some were stronger than others, and so there were philosophical alternatives worked out before the imperial era which included mutual interactions between Daoists and Mohists, oppositions between Ruists and these two schools, and efforts by both Daoists and Ruists to consider ways to integrate certain elements of the hegemonic rulership into their own worldviews. This being the case, a history of philosophy which accounts for these subtleties on the basis of an understanding of the creative and destructive potentials of cultural changes is more effective in explaining these historical interactions and those syntheses which did emerge diachronically.

Accounting for Diachronic Dynamics between Canon and Commentary

Much of the historical changes within various philosophical traditions involve the influence of a creative dynamic produced by the establishment of canonical literature and the flourishing of the institutions nurturing immense amounts of scholastic commentaries. This was also the case in Chinese history and was marked by a special flexibility within Ruist traditions, due in a large degree to the openness and development of the Ruist canon across dynastic histories.¹²⁴ A similar openness and dynamic development occurred within both Daoist and Chinese Buddhist canonical traditions in Chinese imperial history, due to other factors in their communities including the influences of new revelations from Daoist deities and the claims made by enlightened monks who were considered to be living Buddhas. The creation

of new standards and new canon for particular Chinese teachings stimulated new hermeneutic projects in providing systematization, while also provoking new insights into basic theoretical and practical questions.

For example, there were developments from “the debates over the Dao” in pre-imperial times to the construction of the Five Ruist Scriptures during the Hàn Dynasty (second century BCE to second century CE), and subsequently as many as Thirteen Ruist Scriptures revered during the Sòng Dynasty; subsequently, the creation of the Four Books, as the standard for Ruist learning and the core texts for whole person cultivation, were initiated by Zhū Xī in the late twelfth-century and started to have broad cultural impact within the Yuán dynasty (c. thirteenth to fifteenth centuries CE). All these changes in the canonical literature created a host of opportunities for new synthetic understandings of the nature of the Ruist tradition in-and-of-itself, so that many schools emerged that were based on new epistemological awarenesses (such as the Jīrǎng 擊壤 school of Ruist poetry during the Sòng dynasty), a more embracing form of ethics (such as the “broad love (*bóài* 博愛)” expressed in the *Western Inscription* (*Xīmíng* 西銘) of Zhāng Zài produced in the eleventh century CE), new cosmologies (such as Zhōu Dūnyí 周敦頤 (1017–1073) account of the Great Ultimate (*Tàijí* 太極) and its subsequent commentaries, also produced in the eleventh century CE) not to mention new conceptions of the nature of reality (as in Zhū Xī’s *lǐ-qì* 理氣 dualism and Wáng Yángmíng’s 王陽明 (1472–1529) Heart–mind Learning or *Xīnxué* 心學).

Similarly, there are dimensions within Chinese Buddhist developments which defy any progressive or dialectical accounts: new epistemological accounts of the nature of enlightenment and human experience moved both in the direction of spontaneity (*Chán* 禪) and systematization of grandiose visions of the universe (*Huáyán* 華嚴 and *Tiāntái* 天臺).¹²⁵ There are also the interactions of Daoist goals for immortality and changes in the interpretations of ancient Daoist scriptures that led not merely to “progress,” but also to claims of supercession in contrast to the revelations of the Celestial Masters (*Tiānshī* 天師) Sect by those in the *Shàngqīng* 上清 and *Língbǎo* 靈寶 traditions within the Daoist Canon.¹²⁶ The employment of a philosophy of history informed by the vision of unceasing changes, which may include adamant rejections, selective mutual adjustments, and harmonized integrations, can provide better explanatory accounts of how these interactions between canonical texts, epistemological developments, meta-physical claims, and integrative interpretive syntheses came about.

Accounting for the Profundity of Modern Cross-Cultural Encounters

One of the largest challenges for our own age is to offer a systematic and insightful account of the cross-cultural impact of both intrusive and engaging

cultural challenges within modern China. These came in diverse forms of Western and Eastern European, North American and Japanese values and institutions, shaping, inspiring, and catalyzing vast cultural developments during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Notably, not only was interest in contemporary philosophical schools of thought from these sources introduced into China during this period, but major revolutionary changes came about which moved the whole empire into a post-imperial age. A second wave of new cross-cultural encounters have created an even more complex setting for contemporary philosophical studies, starting in the 1980s and continuing to the present.

Once again I would argue that we who are interested in the history of Chinese philosophical traditions must ask ourselves: Are the dynamic powers of destruction, opposition, adaptation, and synthesis experienced and documented during these periods adequately described by a progressive vision of history? Can they be easily subsumed under a dialectical account based on historical materialist principles? Or are they more readily explained by a creative engagement of different possibilities of philosophical consciousness which are realized through the historic courage and timely justifications of determined persons working within and sometimes innovatively creating their own values and institutions in the process?

My own sense of the matter is that a new philosophy of history based on a basic phenomenological account of the indeterminate nature of cultural changes and the creative as well as destructive possibilities in cultural transformations can in fact offer a more insightful and interesting account of these complicated affairs. The proof will be in its realization as it embodies such an interpretive productivity, and so I would argue that we who will take up this major task should intend to move onward toward that challenging goal.

NOTES

1. See, for example, the articles by Tongqi Lin, Chung-ying Cheng, and Vincent Shen covering “recent trends” within different realms of “cultural China”—that is, wherever Chinese philosophy is discussed in China or abroad. Their articles are published in sequence and entitled “Philosophy: Recent Trends in China since Mao,” “Philosophy: Recent Trends Overseas,” and “Philosophy: Recent Trends in Taiwan,” all being found in a truly monumental work for Chinese philosophical studies: Antonio S. Cua, ed., *Encyclopedia of Chinese Philosophy* (New York and London: Routledge, 2003), 588–97, 598–608, and 608–13, respectively.

2. Summarized by Lin in “Philosophy: Recent Trends in China since Mao,” 588–9, 592, and 596–7. These include not only philosophers promoting critical forms of Chinese Marxism but also a “New Left” which was manifest in the late 1990s. Lin’s article reflects philosophical developments in the last two decades of the

twentieth century in the PRC, and so did not discuss further developments in the first decade of the twenty-first century.

3. Cited from Arif Dirlik, “Socialism in China: A Historical Overview” in Kam Louie, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Chinese Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 170.

4. These are two international cultural trends described in a volume written by the sociologist, Peter Berger, with a Dutch philosopher, Anton C. Zijderveld, *In Praise of Doubt: How to Have Convictions without Becoming a Fanatic* (San Francisco: Harper One, 2009).

5. The neo-traditionalists involve mostly Ruist (“Confucian”) and Daoist scholars, while those overseas Chinese philosophers who have had an impact on the plurality of philosophical developments within Neo-Ruist, Neo-Daoist as well as Western European and American philosophical trends are explicitly named by Tongqi Lin. Many of them have made numerous personal visits to the PRC during the last two decades of the twentieth century, even while they have been living and teaching overseas; some others have emigrated out of the PRC during the last two decades of the twentieth century and wrote from afar. Key figures Lin discussed include Tu Weiming 杜維明, Cheng Chung-ying 成中英, Li Zehou 李澤厚, Antonio S.Cua 柯雄文 (1932–2007), Chang Hao 張浩, Charles Fu Wei-hsun 傅偉勳 (1933–1996) and Lin Yusheng 林毓生, among others. See Tongqi Lin, “Philosophy: Recent Trends in China since Mao,” 590-9-2.

6. Described in greater detail in Lauren F. Pfister, “Post-secularity in Contemporary Chinese Philosophical Contexts,” *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 39(1) (March 2012): 121–38.

7. The phrase “strategic post-secular secularist” refers to those who refuse to change their secularist ideological positions but are willing to work “strategically” with those who are involved in post-secular cultural settings, including those who are religiously affiliated. This perspective for Chinese communist cadre is justified in arguments presented by a major Chinese religious studies intellectual in 2010 and has been illustrated in Pfister, “Post-secularity in Contemporary Chinese Philosophical Contexts.” It refers specifically to a recent essay written by Zhuō Xīnpíng 卓新平 in *Cào Zhōngjiàn* 曹中建, ed., 2007–2008 *Zhōngguó Zōngjiào Yánjiù Niánjiàn* 《2007–2008 中國宗教研究年鑑》 [2007–2008 Annual of Religious Studies in China] (Beijing: Religious Culture Press, 2010). The article is entitled “Lùn ‘Zhèngjiào Guānxì – ‘Quánqíhuà de Zōngjiào yu Dǎngdài Zhōngguó’” 〈論“政教關係” – “全球化”的宗教與當代中國〉 [On “the Relationship Between Government and Religion”—“Globalized” Religion and Contemporary China], and is found in *Cào Zhōngjiàn*’s edited volume, 2007–2008 *Annual of Religious Studies in China*, 19–44. Notably, the ideological restrictiveness of the Chinese Communist Party manifest since the affirmation of the new Religious Affairs Regulations and the troubles of the Covid-19 pandemic have increased the cultural pressure within philosophical circles, but I am still arguing that this is done within the context of a continuing post-secular cultural milieu.

8. In this regard, Lin refers specifically to the Shanghai intelligent, Wáng Yuánhuà 王元化 (1920–2008), whom he describes as a “veteran communist with a

strong intellectual commitment” who went through a “tortuous intellectual ‘metamorphosis’” during the last two decades of the twentieth century, moving him from being “a sincere Marxist” to becoming “an adamant advocate of western Enlightenment and finally to being a scholar who is also deeply sympathetic to certain core values of traditional Chinese culture.” See these quotations in Lin, “Philosophy: Recent Trends in China since Mao,” 589.

9. Highlighted in Lin, “Philosophy: Recent Trends in China since Mao,” 591 and 596.

10. Lin particularly notes the roles of the Ruist “spirituality” of the overseas scholar, Chang Hao, as well as those in the PRC including Chén Lái 陳來 and Guō Qíyǒng 郭齊勇. He also mentions the influences of the Buddhist interests of the overseas scholar, Charles Fu Wei-hsun, the Daoist interests of Chén Gǔyīng 陳鼓應 and Liú Xiàogǎn 劉笑敢 (misspelled as “Lin Xiao-gang”), and the Christian assertions of the mainland philosopher and literary critic, Liú Xiǎofēng 劉小楓. Consult Lin, “Philosophy: Recent Trends in China since Mao,” 590–1.

11. “Engaged post-secular intellectuals” are the third of four categories in the overview of post-secularity in Pfister’s article, the last being “engaged post-secular religious intellectuals.” This last group of intellectuals (who are not only philosophers, but are also found among philosophical circles in the PRC) are those who adopt specific spiritual orientations or religious commitments within the cultural pluralities in which they work and live. Consult Pfister, “Post-secularity in Contemporary Chinese Philosophical Contexts.”

12. I have been greatly helped in my efforts to handle these questions as I discussed them at length with Prof. Chung-ying Cheng, and later presented them in a reduced form at the jointly sponsored international conference organized by the Asian Studies Association and the International Congress of Asian Studies, held in Honolulu, March 31–April 3, 2011. This chapter is a greatly enhanced version of that initial study.

13. The hermeneutic questions related to the transition from traditional “teachings” into the realms of “philosophy” and “religious studies” has been addressed from the angle of the different histories of “Chinese philosophy” promoted by Féng Yǒulán 馮友蘭 in Lauren Pfister, “From the ‘Three Teachings’ to ‘Chinese Philosophy’,” in Hú Jūn 胡君 ed., *Chuántǒng yǔ chuāngxīn: Dì sì jiè Féng Yǒulán xuéshù sīxiǎng yántāohuì lùnwénjí* 《傳統與創新：第四屆馮友蘭學術思想研討會論文集》 [*Tradition and Creativity: Collected Essays from the Fourth Research Conference on Féng Yǒulán’s Academic Ideas*] (Beijing: Beijing University Press, 2002), 137–66, and was produced in a German version as “Von den ‘drei Lehren’ zur ‘chinesischen Philosophie’: Die moderne konstruktion des Grundkonzeptes der ‘chinesischen Philosophie’ in Féng Yǒulán’s verschiedenen chinesischen Philosophiegeschichten” (“From ‘The Three Teachings’ to ‘Chinese Philosophy’: The Modern Construction of the Basic Concept of ‘Chinese Philosophy’ in Féng Yǒulán’s Different Histories of Chinese Philosophies”), trans. Jari Grosse-Ryken, *minima sinica: Zeitschrift zum chinesischen Geist* (Fall 2002), 28–66.

14. In this sense, I am presenting a relatively traditional definition for “philosophy” which I find is very helpful in revealing diachronic developments within a wide

range of philosophical sub-disciplines. These subdisciplines and their internal dimensions have been worked out into the form of a disciplinary matrix, but I have not added it here. It is also notable that the diversity of definitions of the term “philosophy” has been highlighted in more recent standard articles in major encyclopedias. See the articles on “Philosophies” and “Philosophy” by multiple authors in Maryanne Cline Horowitz, ed., *New Dictionary of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 4 (Farmington Hill: Thomson and Gale, 2005), 1761–83. Notably the articles on “Philosophies, Eastern” in this work appear under the national titles of “Chinese Thought,” “Japanese Philosophy,” and “Japanese Thought” (see *Ibid.*, 1775). For further discussions see Joan Stambaugh’s “Philosophy: An Overview” in Lindsay Jones, ed., *Encyclopedia of Religion*, Vol. 10 (Farmington Hills: Thomson and Gale, 2005), 7108–13. Notably, one major and current encyclopedia of philosophy refused to offer a definition for the term but guides readers to search for “Philosophy of X” instead. See Edward Craig, ed., *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Vol. 7 (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), 378.

15. Once again, I would want to emphasize that this study was initially explored in collaboration with Prof. Chung-ying Cheng, and so though I am responsible for the writing of this chapter, his involvement in its conception and development is hereby gratefully recognized.

16. Whether this has been a “discovery” or “re-discovery” of Max Weber’s works might be debated by some, but I assume that before there were Chinese translations of the major works of any figure from outside of China, they have not yet been truly “discovered” by Chinese intellectuals, even though they may have been major influences within other cultural and linguistic traditions for many previous decades (or, pending on the figure and the work, even centuries). Here my own research has come up with a different diachronic account of these matters than Tongqi Lin, which will become evident in the following discussion.

17. See an account of the influence of Marxist critiques of religion and their philosophies of religion during the last half of the twentieth century in Lauren F. Pfister, “20th Century Contributions in Chinese Philosophy of Religion(s): From Deconstructive Contradiction to Constructive Reconsideration,” *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 30 (3–4) (September/December 2003): 541–53.

18. In his account of these matters, Tongqi Lin claims that “works of Kant, Max Weber, and Habermas have aroused great interest and have exerted an unabated influence on [Chinese] intellectuals ever since their introduction (or reintroduction) into China in the early 1980s.” He later claims that those philosophers and other intellectuals involved in the “new [Chinese] Enlightenment” were involved with a “quest for modernity as depicted by Max Weber and further specified by Talcott Parsons.” See Lin, “Philosophy: Recent Trends in China since Mao,” 591 and 594. My own research into evidence of wider Weberian influences within late twentieth-century China has revealed that the first Chinese versions of Weber’s works were only available in the latter part of the 1980s. For details about these matters, see the initial discussion in Lauren F. Pfister, “Protestant Ethics among Chinese Missionaries, Problems of Indigenization, and the Spirit of Academic Professionalization,” *Journal of Classical Sociology* 2(1) (March 2005): 93–114.

19. Notably, Tongqi Lin does not explain the interpretive significance of Weber's claims for Chinese intellectuals, but this influence started in the late 1980s, grew in intensity in the 1990s, and has become a matter of systematic analysis among Chinese philosophers and other intellectuals since that time. One reason why he may not have done so is that Max Weber is normally associated with the modern discipline of sociology, and not with philosophy. What has been argued above, however, is that Weber's sociological studies had a philosophical impact by falsifying specific Marxist materialist claims about the economic creativity and cultural status of religious traditions in various societies. See a more critical account of these matters from developments within Chinese interpretive accounts of Weber's sociological claims, especially as they relate to his famous thesis about the "Protestant ethic," in Pfister, "Protestant Ethics among Chinese Missionaries."

20. See these discussions in Lin, "Philosophy: Recent Trends in China since Mao," 592–6. He refers to these trends as a "humanist quest" which took on various interpretive directions in three phases during the 1980s and 1990s.

21. Having previously published a volume on Chinese Marxism and edited a three-volume work of over 2,200 pages of collected essays in 2005 dealing with *Fifty Years of Philosophical Studies in the New China* (*Xīn Zhōngguó Zhéxué Yánjiū 50 Nián* 新中國哲學研究50年), Li Jingyuan 李景源 is a senior academician who had appropriate credentials and so could be named as the chief editor of this further summary published in 2008. The title of the work in Chinese is *Zhōngguó Zhéxué 30 Nián, 1978–2008* (中國哲學30年, 1978–2008) and was published by the Chinese Social Sciences Press in Běijīng.

22. Found in Li Jingyuan, *Zhōngguó Zhéxué 30 Nián, 1978–2008*, 1–82.

23. Two sections in the first chapter are devoted to these themes. The first is entitled "The Sinification of Marxist Philosophy" (*Mǎkèsīzhǔyì Zhéxué de Zhōngguóhuà* 馬克思主義哲學的中國化) and the latter is involved in a broader discussion of "Discussions and Comprehensive Harmonies [Achieved] between Chinese and Western Marxist Philosophies" (*Zhōng Xī Mǎ Zhéxué zhī jiān de Duìhuà yǔ Róngtōng* 中西馬哲學之間的對話與融通). See Li Jingyuan, *Zhōngguó Zhéxué 30 Nián, 1978–2008*, 23–7 and 30–5, respectively.

24. Though this does not mean that Chinese Marxist or other Marxist philosophical themes were not addressed elsewhere in the volume, it is notable that the editor obviously sought to keep a balance for all eleven sections found in the volume, so that each section was about forty pages in length. The total length of the work is 418 pages, and so the pages strictly devoted to Marxist philosophical themes is just a little less than one-fifth of the tome.

25. The longest of these sections deals with "the history of Western philosophy" (46 pages) and the shortest with "Eastern philosophy" (33 pp.). Notably, in the former there are sections devoted to ancient Greek philosophy, the philosophical traditions of the European middle ages, early modern European philosophies, and then fairly lengthy accounts of eighteenth-century French philosophical traditions and "German classical philosophy" (*Déguó Gǔdiǎn Zhéxué* 德國古典哲學), without mention of Marxist traditions in this section. Under the rubric of "Eastern philosophy" there are discussions of Indian, Korean, and Japanese philosophical traditions. Consult Li

Jingyuán, *Zhōngguó Zhéxué 30 Nián, 1978–2008*, 124–70 and 209–43, respectively. Though the coverage of “contemporary foreign” philosophical traditions deals with Anglophone, European, and Soviet Union/Russian developments in philosophical traditions, including a section on political philosophy, it is notable that there is no recurring reference to earlier Marxist traditions anywhere in the globe within this section. I would argue that this should be taken as a clear sign of the recognition of the “plurality” of philosophical traditions which a post-secular understanding of the current intellectual climate in the PRC would have to confirm.

26. These appear in the last five chapters of the volume, and so are found in Li Jingyuán, *Zhōngguó Zhéxué 30 Nián, 1978–2008*, 244–418.

27. As found in Li Jingyuán, *Zhōngguó Zhéxué 30 Nián, 1978–2008*, 90–5.

28. For documentation and clarifications of the fact that Féng actually produced a seventh volume that was published posthumously in Hong Kong, so that this “six-volume” set should actually be understood as a “seven-volume” set, see the discussion in chapter 1 of this volume. My suspicion is that because that final volume involved an explicit critique of Máo Zédōng’s “leftist extremism,” the editor of this later volume published in 2008 simply refused to mention the existence of that seventh volume, even though it had been published and republished in the PRC before this book was published. This will be elaborated below in more detail. Notably, then, in this way the editor was functioning as a “resistant post-secular secularist.”

29. See these summaries and discussions in Li Jingyuán, *Zhōngguó Zhéxué 30 Nián, 1978–2008*, 86–91.

30. This was the volume entitled in Chinese as *Zhōngguó Xiàndài Zhéxué Shǐ* 中國現代哲學史, which was first published in Hong Kong in 1992, and then was later republished in Shànghǎi and elsewhere in 1996, with other republications occurring in subsequent years.

31. Find these sections in chapter 7 (Máo Zédōng) and chapter 9 (Féng Yǒulán), as well as in the final pages of the volume where Féng employs Zhāng Zài’s teachings that “enemies must be resolved through harmony” (*chóu bì hé ér jiě* 仇必和而解) to reject Máo Zédōng’s extreme leftist teachings and practices. Consult Féng Yǒulán, *Zhōngguó Xiàndài Zhéxué Shǐ* ([Guǎngzhōu]: Guǎngdōng People’s Press, 1999), 136–72, 199–217, and 249–54.

32. This is the central claim of the article by Chén Shǎomíng: 陳少明著 “Zhīshì Pǔxì de Zhuǎnhuàn – Zhōngguó Zhéxuéshǐ Yánjiū Fānlìè Lùnxī” 〈知識譜系的轉換 – 中國哲學史研究犯列論析〉 [“Paradigmatic Shift in the Genealogy of Knowledge—A Case Study in the History of Chinese Philosophy”] in *Xué Rén* 《學人》 [*Studying Humans*] no. 13 (March 1998): 155–78. The dominance of these two philosophers’ paradigmatic status in the study of the history of Chinese philosophy is affirmed once more in Zhongjiang Wang’s article, “Paradigms, In-Depth Viewpoints, and Research Model of Chinese Philosophy,” *Contemporary Chinese Thought: Translation and Studies* 37(1) (February 2005): 50–9, where in addition to these two monumental figures, the work of Zhāng Dàinián 張岱年 is also addressed.

33. As explained in some detail in chapter 1 of this volume.

34. Quoted from Hú Shì, *Zhōngguó zhéxué gǎngyào* (Běijīng: Commercial Press 商務印書館, 1919), 1.

35. A list of six questions with the area of inquiry summarized in parenthesis appears in Hú Shì, *Zhōngguó zhéxué gǎngyào*, 1–2. Here our own summary is presented.

36. Two references to Windelband's volume appear at the end of the chapter. See Hú Shì, *Zhōngguó zhéxué gǎngyào*, 33.

37. Here we are referring to the text and chart found in Hú Shì, *Zhōngguó zhéxué gǎngyào*, 5–6.

38. These discussions continue for many pages. See Hú Shì, *Zhōngguó zhéxué gǎngyào*, 10–33.

39. Here I am starting from the time he entered into the Philosophy Department in Beijing University in 1915 as the equivalent of an MA student, to the time of his death in 1990, and so a period spanning seventy-five years. In chapter 1, I discussed his life from the perspective of his professional philosophy career as a teacher, researcher, and writer, which began only after his graduation with his PhD from Columbia University and return to China in 1923.

40. Details about these two volumes are found in chapter 1, endnote 7.

41. As mentioned already, this volume is still republished in Chinese and is available in traditional Chinese script in versions produced by the Taiwan Commercial Press 臺灣商務印書館.

42. See Fung Yu-lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, in two vols., trans. Derk Bodde (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952–1953). As will be seen, Bodde did not always translate this text into English, but at times made judgments about the suitability of materials (whether for an Anglophone audience rather than a Chinese audience, or because he thought the account provided by Féng was inadequate or flawed), and so provided some of his own synopses and materials from later works produced by Féng and rendered into English (by himself or others).

43. The version I have access to is produced as the fifth in a six-volume presentation of Féng Yǒulán's own system of philosophy, one which he called "New Principle-centered Learning" (*Xīn Lǐxué* 新理學). The six tomes are produced in a two-volume set published in Shànghǎi in 1996 by the East China Normal University Press. Because the work considered here is produced in the second volume, its page numbers continue to run in sequence with the first volume. Consequently, I will simply refer to it as Féng Yǒulán, *Xīn Yuán Dào* (1996) using the pagination of this version of the work.

44. The version of this English volume I am employing here is found in *Selected Philosophical Writings of Fung Yu-Lan* produced by the Foreign Languages Press in Běijīng in 1991. The whole work stretches from pages 191 to 567. Subsequently, it will be referred to as Fung Yu-lan, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy* within the *Selected Philosophical Writings of Fung Yu-lan*. There are at least two Chinese versions of this work, and two bilingual versions using both English and Chinese texts on opposite sides of an opening. These bilingual versions are produced with the Chinese translation of the English original prepared by Zhào Fùsān 趙復三. For publication details about one of those bilingual versions, see chapter 1, endnote 7.

45. All these volumes were produced by the People's Press in Běijīng.

46. This volume was initially produced in Hong Kong in 1992, but was already available in both the mainland and Taiwan in other versions published in 1996.

47. See the essay by Diane B. Obenchain, "Continuity—Guo Xiang, Chan, Cheng-Zhu Lixue, New Realism, and Marxism—Feng's Discernment of the Way" in Diane B. Obenchain, ed., *Feng Youlan: Something Exists*, produced as a special edition of the *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 21(3–4) (September/December 1994): 481–519. The bibliography to this volume offers details about the volumes and other articles produced by Féng during this Marxist period (see *Ibid.*, 555–63). For other helpful accounts see Nicolas Standaert, "The Discovery of the Center through the Periphery: A Preliminary Study of Feng Youlan's History of Chinese Philosophy (New Version)," *Philosophy East and West* 45(4) (October 1995): 569–89, and Chunfeng Jin, "The Course of Feng Youlan's Philosophical Life," *Dao: A Journal of Comparative Philosophy* 5(1) (January 2005): 176–80. My own account of the impact of Maoist propaganda on Féng's life during the decades from the late 1950s to the late 1970s, relying on the classical study of propaganda techniques produced by Jacques Ellul, has been offered in chapter 1.

48. This period of Féng's later years has been described and interpreted in detail within the latter sections of chapter 1 of this volume.

49. See Féng Yǒulan 馮友蘭著 *Zhōngguó zhéxuéshǐ* 《中國哲學史》 Vol. 1, Introduction 第一冊, 〈緒論〉, 1. Subsequently, I will refer only to Féng Yǒulan, *Zhōngguó zhéxuéshǐ*, "Introduction."

50. The following summary and comments refer to the discussion found in Féng Yǒulan, *Zhōngguó zhéxuéshǐ*, "Introduction," 2–3.

51. At this point, some inconsistencies begin to trouble the thoughtful reader of early Féng (who at the time of writing was in his mid-30s). Is the term *yǔzhòu* 宇宙, which is normally translated as "universe," equivalent to *shìjiè* 世界 or "world"? Does Féng really mean "life" in the largest sense of the English word or only "human life" as his Chinese phrase suggests? In discussing the subsets related to each major field, Féng reveals that the second field is clearly related to humans in his understanding of "philosophy," and so involved psychology and ethics ("in the narrow sense of the term") as its subsets. Unfortunately, Féng's rigor in defining the subsets in the first field of philosophy is lost: both ontology and cosmology are involved in "A Theory of the World," but the term in Chinese that he uses for "cosmology" is the very same term used to name the whole field. While no such confusion bothers his description of the subsets for the third area, these definitional inconsistencies do not help his readers identify precisely what are the "commonly recognized" elements within the study of "philosophy."

52. Cited from Féng Yǒulan, *Zhōngguó zhéxuéshǐ*, "Introduction," 8. What Féng means by 科學 in this context is clearly a reference to "natural sciences," but in an earlier section of his introduction, he employs the term with the meaning of the German *Wissenschaft* or French *science*, and so intended to refer to a systematically ordered and rationally articulated form of knowledge. Find this other use of the term in the same work, Féng Yǒulan, *Zhōngguó zhéxuéshǐ* "Introduction," 5.

53. The older Féng was very much aware of Cài's claims, developing them in detail within the third chapter of his posthumously published volume, *Zhōngguó xiàngdài zhéxuéshǐ*. Notably and unfortunately, for those interested in Cài's writings and influences, there is no major article on Cài as a philosopher in either Cua's *Encyclopedia of Chinese Philosophy* or in C. Y. Cheng and Nick Bunnin's volume on *Contemporary Chinese Philosophy* (2002).

54. See the citation in Féng Yǒulán, *Zhōngguó zhéxuéshǐ*, "Introduction," 4. So self-conscious was Féng was about the difference that he wrote out in detail how W[illiam] P[epperell] Montague, in the first page of his book, *The Ways of Knowing*, linked up aesthetics with ethics, but then added no explanation for his own lack of reference to aesthetics, and never again mentioned that area of philosophical study in this introductory essay.

55. Féng never mentioned either Driesch or Eucken, and so avoided the connections they had with Christian philosophy and reflections that directly discussed topics in the philosophy of religion. While Féng did later mention the Dutch philosopher and historian of philosophy, Harald Høffding [Høffding] (1843–1931), especially in the context of the study of the history of philosophy, he did not indicate how much this Dutch philosopher was also involved with writing about various religious themes, and in particular, about his interest in Kierkegaard. Intriguingly, the orientation of these European philosophers does not seem to match up with Féng's own account of the twentieth-century and its philosophical trends as "non-religious."

56. This is the book published under the title *Zhōu-Qín Zhéxuéshǐ* 《周秦哲學史》 [The History of Philosophy in the Zhou and Qin Periods]. It was published in Běijīng at the Jīnghuá yīnshūjú 京華印書局 in both 1923 and 1929, but the printing I have seen is the earlier one. Lù Mào dé argued for a conception of philosophy which was based on intuition and insight rather than on rationalization and logical thinking, and so received criticism from the younger Féng on this account. See the comment made by the early Féng in the endnote found in Féng Yǒulán, *Zhōngguó zhéxuéshǐ*, "Introduction," 11. The later Féng argued for a more mystical form of philosophical achievement in his conception of the highest intellectual/spiritual realm, and so reversed his opposition to this approach only later in the mid-1940s.

57. Originally entitled *Shina tetsugakushi* 《支那哲學史》, translated by Zhào Lánpíng 趙蘭坪 (and not Zhào Zhèngpíng 趙正平 as Féng states in an endnote). A copy was found for me in the Běijīng Library, one published by Tàipíngyáng yīnshūā gōngsī 太平洋印刷公司 in 1925. It is discussed once more in an endnote found in Féng Yǒulán, *Zhōngguó zhéxuéshǐ*, "Introduction," 25.

58. Here I am using the transcriptions for these university's names found in the 1948 publication. Now "Peking University" is generally written as "Beijing University" (without the tonal accent marks) and "Tsinghua (or Tsinghua) University" in the standard Pinyin is written as "Qinghua University" (without the tonal accent marks).

59. See this comment in Fung Yu-lan, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy* within the *Selected Philosophical Writings of Fung Yu-lan*, 557.

60. Though Bodde suggested that this was arranged under an agreement with the author, the actual reasons for dropping any references to these historical reflections by

Féng would be interesting to know. As will be seen in the following discussion and endnotes, it was not a small section of the introductory essay, but quite a substantial part of it.

61. The relevant passages occur in Féng Yǒulán, *Zhōngguó zhéxuéshǐ*, “Introduction,” 16–25.

62. This section begins at Féng Yǒulán, *Zhōngguó zhéxuéshǐ*, “Introduction,” 18.

63. See Féng’s account of Nordau’s position and his hesitation in accepting it in Féng Yǒulán, *Zhōngguó zhéxuéshǐ*, “Introduction,” 19–20.

64. His rather dispirited response to these problems is that “the only thing once must do is to continually (lit. “eternally”) rewrite [these histories], and that is all [anyone can do].” Find this conclusion in the last line of that page of Féng Yǒulán, *Zhōngguó zhéxuéshǐ*, “Introduction,” 20.

65. This section starts at Féng Yǒulán, *Zhōngguó zhéxuéshǐ*, “Introduction,” 22, though the title of this section appears as the very last line of the previous page.

66. This concern for “wanting to be modern” is a main interpretive thread in my forthcoming article, “Three Dialectical Phases in Feng Youlan’s Philosophical Journey.”

67. In 1982, Féng did claim that he was inspired by a Hegelian dialectical account of the meaning and development of history and that this was guiding his rewriting of the history of Chinese philosophical traditions at that time. He refers directly, but only briefly, to the German term, *Aufheben*. Nevertheless, what is found generally throughout the whole of the *New Edition of the History of Chinese Philosophy* is the rigorous application of a Marxist dialectical materialism based on discerning the class consciousness of ancient and imperial-age Chinese philosophers, and not merely a pattern of a “dialectical pattern of the development of ideas.” See mention of these matters in Fung, “Speech of Response,” 662–3.

68. That Féng was debating these basic Marxist categories from a dialectical historical point of view during the late 1960s can be seen in his article entitled “The Struggle between Materialism and Idealism in the History of Chinese Philosophy in terms of Several Major Problems in Chinese Philosophy,” *Chinese Studies in History and Philosophy: A Journal of Translations* 2 (July 1959): 3–27.

69. As described in detail in chapter 1 in this volume, with the commitment to write out a new historical account as a mission for his later years being made explicit also in Fung, “Speech of Response,” a public presentation made in September 1982.

70. As described from the classical Daoist philosophical perspective in Obenchain’s essay, “Continuity,” and interpreted with some special emphasis in Moeller’s “Daoism as Academic Philosophy.” As a committed secularist, Féng showed no interest in or any awareness of philosophical issues within Daoist religious texts, something that has been explored by a number of different scholars in China and abroad during the past three decades, as will be seen below.

71. Particularly at the end of chapter 1.

72. For accounts of that final criticism see not only the end of the first chapter in this volume but also the forthcoming article by Pfister, “Three Dialectical Phases in Feng Youlan’s Philosophical Journey,” in David Elstein, ed., *Dao Companion to Contemporary Chinese Philosophy*.

73. Quoting from Bodde’s translation, Fung, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, vol. 1, 48.

74. All quotations taken from Fung Yu-lan, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy* within the *Selected Philosophical Writings of Fung Yu-lan*, 244.

75. In 1982, Féng explained that he had written out the first two volumes of the series twice, all due to vacillations related to his understanding of the philosophy of history, before it was actually published as part of the post-Mao series in 1982. (Consult Fung, “Speech of Response,” 661–2.) So, even in the publishing notice of that volume in 1982, it referred to the “first edition” as being published in 1964, and the 1982 version as the “third edition.”

76. A summary of arguments and description of the character of this small but rigorously contentious work is provided in Pfister, “Three Dialectical Phases in Feng Youlan’s Philosophical Journey.” Only recently had I noticed that in the most recent version of Féng Yǒulán’s fourteen volume collected works (*Sānsōngtáng Quánjí* 《三松堂全集》) published in 2000, this small tome was not included, even though it was published under Féng’s name and was notoriously well known.

77. Found in Féng Yǒulán, *Zhōngguó Zhéxuéshǐ Xīnbīān* 《中國哲學史新編》 (subsequently referred to as *New Edition*) Vol. 1 (Běijīng: People’s Press, 1982), 124–72.

78. Located in Féng, *New Edition*, Vol. 1, 166–72.

79. The following text is my rendering of that concluding statement, including parenthetical references for those who would be interested in the Chinese terminology he employed. It is found in Féng, *New Edition*, Vol. 1, 172.

80. See discussion of this and related matters in Zhèng Jiǎdōng, *Xuéshù yǔ Zhèngzhì zhī jiān: Féng Yǒulán yǔ Zhōngguó Mǎkèsīzhūyì* [Between the Academic and the Political – Féng Yǒulán and Chinese Marxism].

81. Already in 1985, three years after Féng had published his first volume of the *New Edition* with its critique of “Hillock Kǒng,” the notable historian and president of Nánjīng University (also nearly 80 years old), Kuāng Yà míng 匡亞明 (1906–1996), crashed into the mainland Chinese public arena with his arresting study entitled *Kǒngzǐ Píngzhuàn* 《孔子評傳》 [A Critical Biography of Master Kong] (Jinán 濟南: Qílǔ 齊魯 Book Society). Kuāng not only refused to employ the revolutionary leveling rhetoric sustained by Féng, but also argued that Master Kǒng was a man of his times, had a religious worldview, and sincerely participated in religious activities of his day. So significant was this volume that it went through two other republications, the first by the Qílǔ Book Society in 1988, and the third by Nánjīng University Press in 1990.

82. As asserted in the whole of the two-volume work edited by Tu Weiming and Mary Evelyn Tucker, *Confucian Spirituality* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 2003–2004), and numerous articles in Xinzhong Yao, ed. *RoutledgeCurzon Encyclopedia of Confucianism* (London: Routledge, 2003), 2 vols.

83. Consult Féng, *New Edition*, Vol. 5, published in 1988.

84. For another post-secular critique of the impact of Zhū Xī’s philosophical heritage, from the particular angle of the creation of two new canonical works, see Chapter 5 in this volume.

85. Whether there are also some new accounts that could apply here from a recently published four-volume set of research articles on Ruist traditions I have not been able to confirm, but it is worth noting the source for this possibility. Consult

Xinzhong Yao and Weiming Tu, eds., *Confucian Studies: Critical Concepts in Asian Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 2011).

86. Cited from Fung, *A Short History*, 423. All parenthetical comments are added by this author for the sake of clarification.

87. For example, major works in Chinese published since 1990 that address philosophical issues within writings by Daoist religious figures include those by Lú Guólóng, Lǚ Pěngzhì, Lǐ Dàhuá and Lǐ Gāng. See Lú Guólóng 盧國龍, *Dàojiào Zhéxué* 《道教哲學》 [The Philosophy of Daoist Religion] (Běijīng 北京: Huáxià 華廈 Press, 1997) with a second edition published in 2007; Lǚ Pěngzhì 魯鵬志, *Dàojiào Zhéxué* 《道教哲學》 [The Philosophy of Daoist Religion] (Taipei 台北: Wen Chin 文津 Press, 2000); Lǐ Dàhuá 李大華, *Suí Táng Dàojiā yǔ Dàojiào* 《隋唐道家與道教》 [Daoist Scholars (as Philosophers) and Daoist Religion during the Suí and Táng Dynasties] (Guǎngzhōu 廣州: Guǎngdōng 廣東 People's Press, 2003); and three volumes by Lǐ Gāng 李剛, *Hàndài Dàojiào Zhéxué* 《漢代道教哲學》 [The Philosophy of Daoist Religion during the Hàn Period] (Chéngdū 成都: Bā Shǔ 巴蜀 Book Society, 1995); *Chóngxuǎn zhī Dào Kāiqī Zhòngmiào zhī Mén: Dàojiào Zhéxué Lùngǎo* 《重玄之道開啟眾妙之門: 道教哲學論稿》 [The Way of the Doubled Abstruseness Reveals the Gate to Many Wonders: Draft Essays on the Philosophy of Daoist Religion] (Chéngdū: Bā Shǔ Book Society, 2005); and *Hé yǐ "Zhōngguó Gēndī Quán zài Dàojiào": Dàojiào Zhéxué Lùngǎo zhī Èr* 《何以“中國根柢全在道教”: 道教哲學論稿之二》 [Why Claim that “The Roots of China All are Present in Daoist Religion”: Second Book of Draft Essays on the Philosophy of Daoist Religion] (Chéngdū: Bā Shǔ Book Society, 2008). Several unusual works in English should also be added to this already impressive list, because they tend to counter what have been standard accounts in Féng's various histories. Consult Alan Kam-Leung Chan and Yuet Keung Lo, eds., *Philosophy and Religion in Early Medieval China* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010); Brook Zyporyn, *The Penumbra Unbound: The Neo-Taoist Philosophy of Guo Xiang* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003); Hans-Georg Moeller, *The Philosophy of the Daodejing* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), *The Moral Fool: A Case for Amoralism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), and *Genuine Pretending: On the Philosophy of the Zhuangzi* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017).

88. In this context Bodde rendered the first phrase in a very modern mode as “each one for himself,” but there is nothing “for himself” made explicit in this phrase (especially in the modern sense of self-identity). See Bodde, trans., Fung, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, vol. 1, 133.

89. So, in Féng Yǒulán's *Zhōngguó Zhéxuéshǐ*, Vol. 1, the Yáng Zhū section appeared in ch. 7 immediately after the Mèngzǐ, while the Lǎozǐ and the Zhuāngzǐ were discussed in chs. 8 and 10 respectively.

90. In Fung, *A Short History*, the sixth chapter was devoted to Yáng Zhū, while the other two texts of philosophical Daoism were only discussed in chs. 9 and 10 respectively.

91. Consult Féng, *New Edition*, vol. 1, 243–8.

92. Review the whole discussion in Féng, *New Edition*, vol. 1, 239–51.

93. In this case, then, the elder Féng discussed the *Lǎozǐ* and *Mèngzǐ* in Féng, *New Edition*, vol. 2, chapters 11 and 12 respectively, with the *Zhuāngzǐ* being found in chapter 14.

94. A massive amount of literature in Chinese has been created on the studies of all of the texts found in these two places, with those related to the Daoist tradition being part of that literature. Möller produced a German version of the silk text at Mǎwángduī in 1995, recognizing and elaborating how it differed substantially from the standard text of the *Dàodéjīng*. D. C. Lau 劉殿爵 (1921–2010) compared the standard text with the Mawangdui version in a bilingual format to indicate the differences, but did not explore their philosophical significance. A later translation in English based on the Guōdiàn text is by Henricks. See Hans-Georg Möller, trans. and comm., *Tao Te King [ou] Daodejing: Die Seidentexte von Mawangdui, 500 Jahre ältere als andere Ausgaben* [Tao Te Ching or Daodejing: The Silk Manuscripts from Mawangdui, (being) 500 Years Earlier than any other Version] (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1995); D. C. Lau, trans. and comm., *Tao Te Ching: A Bilingual Edition* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1982); Robert G. Henricks, trans. and comm. *Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching: A Translation of the Startling New Documents Found at Guodian* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).

95. Another study that discusses those implications is Michael LaFargue's relatively early work, *Tao and Method: A Reasoned Approach to the Tao Te Ching* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994).

96. Bodde referred to that Daoist school as “Mysterious Learning,” but its connotations are not necessarily positive, so that this alternative rendering has been used by others including myself.

97. In his English rendering, Bodde referred to this historical period as “the period of disunity,” but being put in the singular makes it a misleading rendering. In fact, there have been many periods of disunity within what is referred to generally as “Chinese history,” such as the Warring States Period (475–221 BCE), with intermittent periods of disunity during the relatively longer period between the Hàn and Suí dynasties (220–581 CE), as well as periods where different political states shared overlapping periods during the Sòng and Yuán dynasties (907–1279 CE), and a similarly overlapping period between the Míng and the Qīng periods (1616–1644 CE). In Chinese Féng uses a more precise reference term for the period: the Southern and Northern Dynasties, Nán Běi Cháo 南北朝 (420–589 CE).

98. As seen in Fung, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, vol. 2, chs. 4 and 5.

99. Seen in Fung, *A Short History*, chs. 19 and 20, 430–56.

100. It is remarkable to discover that those works that develop philosophical themes within Daoist religious texts and figures found in endnote 87 above almost never include persons addressed in any of Féng's work dealing with the history of Daoist traditions.

101. Quotations and interpretations here drawn from Féng, *New Edition*, vol. 4, published in 1986, 135–41.

102. Citations from Féng, *New Edition*, vol. 4, 140.

103. This is true from any more recent relevant studies in any languages I have seen so far. For examples in English, consult Karyn L. Lai, *An Introduction to Chinese Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), a second revised edition, the first edition having been published in 2008; and JeeLoo Liu, *An Introduction to Chinese Philosophy: From Ancient Philosophy to Chinese Buddhism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006).

104. The following summary related to Féng Yǒulán, *Zhōngguó Zhéxuéshǐ*, vol. 2, 661, this being part of a section that Bodde did not translate in the English version. See Bodde's justification for doing so in Fung, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, vol. 2, 240, endnote 1.

105. Cited at the very end of the chapter on “Chanism,” found in Fung, *A Short History*, 482–3. Parenthetical comments and ellipses are added by this author for the sake of clarification.

106. Once again, the host of relevant works in Chinese that deal with Buddhist philosophical themes nearly defies one's imagination, and requires extensive research to be able to indicate all the various ways Féng's positions could be qualified, critiqued, and transcended. Here I will only refer to some works that indicate some of the philosophically rich options that could be addressed to overcome the negative precedents set by Féng's work in the history of Chinese philosophical traditions. Consult several works by Brook Zyporyn, *Evil and/as/or Good: Omnicentrism, Intersubjectivity and Value Paradox in Tiantai Buddhist Thought* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2000); *Being and Ambiguity: Philosophical Experiments with Tiantai Buddhism* (Chicago: Open Court, 2004); *Emptiness and Omnipresence: An Essential Introduction to Tiantai Buddhism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016); *Beyond Oneness and Difference: Li and Coherence in Chinese Buddhist Thought and its Antecedents* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2013). See also John Makeham, ed., *Transforming Consciousness: Yogācāra Thought in Modern China* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

107. Amounting to nearly 140 pages in the Chinese version (Féng Yǒulán, *Zhōngguó Zhéxuéshǐ*, Vol. 2, 661–799), and just over 270 pages in Bodde's English version (Fung, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, vol. 2, 237–406).

108. Cited from Féng Yǒulán, *Zhōngguó Zhéxuéshǐ*, vol. 2, 661.

109. Bodde translated this phrase as “the method of analogy,” a rendering that is not so easily understood in this context. See Fung, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, vol. 2, 242.

110. Cited from Fung, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, vol. 2, 386–7. This claim, however, was made by Féng in 1946 and not in 1934, as Bodde clarifies in his footnote to that section. The endnote goes as follows: “Beginning with subsection i below, this entire section has been revised so that it now follows Fung Yu-lan's *Spirit of Chinese Philosophy* (transl. of E. R. Hughes, 157–74 – Tr.” (See Fung, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, vol. 2, 386–7, endnote 4). Why was this done? Because Bodde felt Fung handled the Chán School better in the later document, even though he did not state that explicitly, and he apparently offered his own introductory paragraph (that included the statement above), so that readers might not know that

this was not Féng's own words. As has been seen now several times in dealing with Féng Yǒulán's first history of Chinese philosophy, Bodde was not at all translating the Chinese philosopher's original work at points where he felt there were problems, but simply added his own preferred texts and perspectives in the name of Féng, oftentimes also underscoring the fact that he had done this with the acceptance of Féng himself. Noticeably, Bodde did not mention that he had done so on the basis of a mutual agreement with Féng here.

111. That is, chs. 21–22 in Fung Yu-lan, *A Short History*, 457–83.

112. As found in Féng, *New Edition*, Vol. 4 (published in 1986), chs. 44–8, 208–349.

113. For the later Féng's elaborations of Huáyán Buddhism, see Féng, *New Edition*, Vol. 4, ch. 46, sec. 4, 252–7.

114. As developed in Féng, *New Edition*, Vol. 4, ch. 47, 258–77.

115. For a representative work, see John Makeham, ed., *The Buddhist Roots of Zhu Xi's Philosophical Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018). This is in reference to Féng, *New Edition*, vol. 5 (published in 1988), devoted to the Dào xué 道學 (Sòng Dynasty “Neo-Confucianism”) and later Ruist traditions.

116. The number of these works are growing exponentially, but can be identified and have been elaborated to some degree with regard to the Ruist traditions in Xinzhong Yao, ed., *RoutledgeCurzon Encyclopedia of Confucianism*. Many other works should be consulted and integrated into a comprehensive account of Chinese philosophical traditions that are truly international, and so participate in different eras in the realm of what some are now calling “world philosophy.”

117. Quoted from Fung Yu-lan, *A Short History*, 553.

118. Quoted from Fung Yu-lan, *A Short History*, 557.

119. Here I assume a definition of culture which informs this statement, adopted in the following terms: Culture is “the dynamic and tensed time-space unity constituted by the values and institutions by which people live.” Quoted from Lauren F. Pfister, “Philosophical Explorations of the Transformative Dimension in Chinese Culture,” *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 35(4) (December 2008): 666.

120. These previous claims and assertions have been worked out in dialogue with Prof. Chung-ying Cheng, and so I want to thank him and give him appropriate credit for the comprehensive discussions that we engaged in related to these matters of forming and articulating a “creative history of philosophy.”

121. This is not to deny the value of such an exercise, but to distinguish the differences in the projects involved with considering the nature of time from a cosmological point of view and the nature of historical time as a cultural product. See in this light the work by Chun-chieh Huang and John B. Henderson, eds., *Notions of Times in Chinese Historical Thinking* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2006).

122. These accounts of the *Yijing* are presented in Jesse Fleming, “A Set Theory Analysis of the Logic of the *Yijing* 《易經》” and Peter D. Herschok, “The Structure of Changes in the *Yijing* 《易經》,” both found in Chung-ying Cheng and On-cho

Ng, eds., *Philosophy of the Yi 易: Unity and Dialectics*, the Supplement for the *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 36 (2009).

123. Discussed in Chung-ying Cheng, “On Harmony as Transformation: Paradigms from the Yijing 《易經》” and “Li [理] and Qi 氣 in the Yijing 《易經》: A Reconsideration of Being and Nonbeing in Chinese Philosophy,” the former offering an account of the potential for mutual enrichment and harmonious integration, while the latter bases its claims on Sòng Ruist reflections on the nature of onto-generative changes and their development of an alternative onto-generative worldview contrasting to other visions of reality which posit an eternal unchanging substance as reality. Both are found in Chung-ying Cheng and On-cho Ng, eds., *Philosophy of the Yi 易: Unity and Dialectics*, the Supplement for the *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 36 (2009).

124. As described, elaborated and evaluated by John B. Henderson in his volume, *Scripture, Canon, and Commentary: A Comparison of Confucian and Western Exegesis* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991).

125. See accounts of these matters in the issue devoted to “Chinese Buddhist Philosophy: Concepts and Issues,” *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 37(2) (June 2010).

126. See relevant works discussing these matters and mentioned in endnote 87 above.

Part II

**POST-SECULAR INSIGHTS
INTO RUIST STUDIES**

Prefatory Note

One of the more controversial issues raised particularly in contemporary North American philosophical circles in the late twentieth century has been whether or not a particular form of “religious Confucianism” (which I prefer to call “religious Ruism”) exists. By the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, a broader consensus within international philosophical circles including some philosophers within North American settings was that religious dimensions in Ruist traditions did exist, but there was still significant debate about what kind of religious expression(s) and worldview(s) those might involve. Some following Tu Wei-ming 杜维明 (1940-) have argued for a “humanist spirituality,” whether accompanied by a metaphysical undergirding or not. Others have noted the inherent concerns for filial reverence for deceased parents and ancestors (included within the broader rubric of “ghosts and spirits” (*guǐshén* 鬼神)) as decisively religious. Still others have argued that there have been various accounts of religious Ruism, sometimes mixing worldviews with specific Daoist and Buddhist traditions and in another mode adopting a theistic worldview that included a deity known by various names/concepts as *tiān* 天, *dì* 帝, *shàngdì* 上帝, or even *huángtiān shàngdì* 皇天上帝.

In the chapters constituting the second part of this volume, I document in the first of three chapters how one Ruist theist, the imperial tutor to the Wànlì 萬曆 emperor during the Míng dynasty, Zhāng Jūzhèng 張居正 (1525–1582), elaborated his own theistic worldview several decades before any Jesuit scholars had visited the imperial residence in Běijīng. Based on his elaborations written for the young Chinese emperor from the Confucian Analects and The *Zhōngyōng* (*The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*),

I explore how he articulated his particular approach to Ruist theism and the polypneumatic universe in which he thought and lived. On this basis, I am asserting that it is historically undoubtable that a Ruist theism existed before the advent of any form of modern European Christian religious traditions had been transplanted into the Chinese mainland within the imperial era. What is particularly notable within Zhāng's works is that it presents a worldview that is generally theistic—and in this regard, neither a Muslim monotheism or a Christian trinitarian account of deity, but an indigenous Ruist-based theism—one which included within it other kinds of lower spiritual beings as well.¹

A shift in interpretive focus begins in the second chapter, starting from an analysis of the textual history of two canonical works—*The Dàxué* or *The Great Learning* and *The Zhōngyōng* or *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*—as they had an impact on the development of Ruist philosophical traditions from the Sòng to the Qīng dynasties (from the twelfth to the twentieth centuries CE). Here I develop an argument based on how the textual complexities of two of the scriptures in the Sòng dynasty Ruist canonical work created in the twelfth century by Zhū Xī 朱熹 (1130–1200), *The Four Books Sishū* 四書, have provoked the emergence of significant alternative Ruist philosophical traditions in the Míng and Qīng periods, some of them also appealing to other accounts of Ruist sagely and spiritual/intellectual options. In order to indicate just how complex and interesting these philosophical alternatives are, I explore a number of texts that are too rarely taken up by those studying philosophy in its Chinese expressions—the works of nineteenth and twentieth century missionary-scholars who handled the textual and interpretive problems related to this complicated textual history in their translations of these texts, and did so with some unusual insights in their preferred languages (English, French, Latin, Portuguese, and Russian). Subsequently, I refer to three major Chinese Ruist philosophers' works recently published in Chinese—works that are almost completely unknown in Anglophone worlds, to indicate how the philosophical issues related to whole person cultivation and becoming a sage within those alternative Ruist philosophical traditions are still vital questions that need to be addressed philosophically in our current age.

Notably, some North American philosophers, and in particular Roger T. Ames 安樂哲 (1947-) and David L. Hall (1937–2001), have argued against any theistic or spiritual reading of any Ruist historical tradition, claiming that any account of this sort involved an inherent “Christianization” of those texts, skewing the actual “non-theistic” nature of any Ruist worldviews. Nevertheless, this interpretive position requires advocates of a “non-theistic” Ruist humanism, such as Ames and Hall, to offer alternative accounts for obvious metaphysical concepts and mystical phenomena found in some ancient Ruist scriptures that lead to some strange and ultimately unwarranted

claims. To demonstrate how this particular American secularist interpretive perspective ends up distorting their translation and interpretations of a Ruist canonical scripture, I address, in the third and final chapter of this section, the problematic justifications offered by Ames and Hall in their “philosophical translation” of the *Zhōngyōng*. By means of a close reading of both their translation and their interpretations of key concepts and passages within the *Zhōngyōng*, I seek to show how their modern American secularist hermeneutic prejudice has been eisegetically read into their interpretations and justifications for their own “philosophical” account of this seminal Ruist metaphysical scripture.²

On the basis of this summary of issues being addressed in this second section of this volume, one sub-theme that is being elaborated throughout this section is the history of the interpretations of the Ruist canonical text, *The Zhōngyōng*. In this regard, then, it offers another example and perspective by which the history of Chinese philosophical traditions can be addressed from a post-secular interest in such questions.

In this light, then, a post-secular account of these various texts involving Ruist interpretations of their own traditions over a period of nearly 500 years suggests that there is still much more that can be done to correct contemporary secularists’ interpretive biases (that have been particularly dominant in various university settings and philosophical circles during the latter half of the twentieth century) in interpreting Ruist philosophical traditions. In this sense, I am illustrating within these chapters a need to “return to the sources” once again in order to challenge claims about Ruism, in general, as well as claims related to some of its sub-traditions across the centuries that are not true to either the canonical traditions or their subsequent interpretive developments. That those contemporary secularist interpretations stand as one part of a much more complicated set of traditions should be confirmed, but also they should be reconsidered in the light of demonstrable arguments that reveal that some of them are driven by ideological interests stemming from sources outside of Ruist traditions themselves.

The three chapters in this section of the volume suggest some fruitful approaches for rewriting histories of Chinese philosophical traditions on the basis of post-secular insights. These can be done by re-addressing the significance and problematics inherent in current secularist interpretations of canonical works; they can also be pursued by reconsidering historical connections between various Ruist scholars and later developments within Ruist sub-traditions, as well as reintegrating into accounts of classical Ruist philosophical claims and their subsequent interpretations relevant post-secular emphases related to their metaphysical conceptions and spiritual (or explicitly religious) orientations and practices.

NOTES

1. In this, there are parallels to a Roman Catholic worldview that include a hierarchy of spiritual beings beneath the Deity, but that hierarchy is distinct from what is found in Zhāng's Ruist spiritual worldview. In another article written about one portion of a nineteenth-century work discovered in James Legge's personal library more than two decades ago, a nineteenth-century Cantonese Ruist presented within his published works another expression of a "Ruist monotheism." For those interested, please consult Lauren F. Pfister, "Discovering Monotheistic Metaphysics: The Exegetical Reflections of James Legge (1815–1897) and Lo Chung-fan (d. circa 1850)" in Ng On-cho, et al., eds., *Imagining Boundaries: Changing Confucian Doctrines, Texts and Hermeneutics* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1999), 213–54.

2. An initial argument showing how this was done in the "philosophical translation" of the *Zhōngyōng* 《中庸》 by Ames and Hall had been written for a special volume composed of essays of former students of Roger Ames a few years ago but has not yet been published. The essay here is a significantly extended version of that article, though it uses the same title, and is published with the permission of the editors of that forthcoming volume. Consult "On the Demystification of the Mysteries in Classical Ruism: Post-Secular Musings on The *Zhōngyōng*," in Ian Sullivan and Josh Mason, eds., *One Corner of the Square: Forward Looking Reflections from the Students of Roger T. Ames* (University of Hawai'i Press, forthcoming).

Chapter 3

Pre-Established Harmonies?

Zhāng Jūzhèng 張居正 (1525–1582) and the Jesuit Rendering of “Confucianism”

PRE-ESTABLISHED HARMONIES?

Zhāng Jūzhèng’s 張居正 (1525–1582) teachings represented a form of authoritarian Ruism (“Confucianism”) that could be typified as “semi-Ruist and semi-Authoritarian”¹ (*bàn Rú bàn Fǎ* 半儒半法), a form of governance that in some ways paralleled the more disciplined structures and values inherent in the hierarchy and spiritual interests of the Jesuit Order that entered into the late Míng dynasty during the 1580s. What I intend to explore in this chapter is an account of how his teachings found in the *Sishū zhíjiě* 四書直解 (*The Straightforward Explanations of The Four Books*)²—completed during the last decade of Zhāng’s life while he served as the chief grand secretary of the teenage Wànlì 萬曆 emperor—suggests a cross-cultural worldview alignment that became manifest to Jesuits by the mid-seventeenth century. This gave those Jesuit missionary-scholars an opportunity to rework their own Chinese expressions of Roman Catholic faith in a Chinese language medium, and also provided the groundwork for their first major publication in Latin of three of the four texts in the Ruist canonical collection of *The Four Books*, entitled *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus* (published in 1687).³

One advantage in taking up such a major research task at this time has been the insights that can be gleaned from the 2011 publication of a multilingual Chinese–Latin–English version of the “Prolegomena” and *The Great Learning* 大學 belonging originally to that seventeenth-century work prepared by Thierry Meynard. That volume includes an extensive and scholarly introductory essay to the whole volume, as well as detailed explanatory footnotes to the modern renderings of those two parts of the seventeenth-century work.⁴

Historically speaking, due to the shift in imperial interests that occurred after the Manchurian take-over of the Chinese empire in the mid-seventeenth century, when the Manchu emperor affirmed Zhū Xī's 朱熹 (1130–1200) Sòng Ruist commentaries to *The Four Books* as the imperially authorized interpretations of those canonical texts, I will suggest how the early Jesuit connections with Zhāng Jūzhèng's semi-Ruist and semi-authoritarian interpretive position may have obstructed some of their further engagements with Qīng dynasty literati and the new Manchurian-led imperial leadership. Ironically, then, what had appeared as something like a “pre-established harmony” of worldviews ultimately led to unforeseen cultural tensions during the later modern Jesuit project⁵ that began in the mid-nineteenth century within the Qīng dynasty (1664–1911) and lasted until the second modern Chinese revolution in 1949. This became one of the very important reasons for requiring new translations of these same works to be prepared by competent Roman Catholic scholars in both Latin and other European languages during the modern era.⁶ It also helps to cast some important critical insights into the cross-cultural strengths and significant interpretive limits of those first major sinological Latin canons-in-translations⁷ within the early Jesuit-inspired translations of *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus*.

INTERPRETIVE STRATEGY: TRACING SEMI-RUIST SEMI-AUTHORITARIAN IDEOLOGY

Though a good number of works have been written in Chinese, and some in English, to deal with the historical details about Zhāng Jūzhèng's rise in the Míng official hierarchy, I will refer only briefly to some of these accounts.⁸ My purpose here is only to indicate certain aspects of Zhāng's later historical roles and actions in order to typify his semi-Ruist semi-Authoritarian policies, so that they can then also be identified within the commentaries on *The Four Books* that he wrote for the young Wànlì Emperor during the last few years of his life as the chief grand secretary. A number of the key passages I will explore primarily in Zhāng's commentaries to the *Zhōngyōng* and the *Lúnyǔ* (the Confucian Analects).⁹ Nevertheless, the main point of this exercise will be to indicate the strong and consistent Ruist theistic humanism and other spiritual affirmations that permeate Zhāng Jūzhèng's commentaries, accompanied by his positive assertion of the value of laws and other forms of public punishments. These, I will argue, are more easily aligned to a specific Jesuit-inspired Christian worldview, one that included worship of the Heavenly Lord (*tiānzǔ* 天主) and reverence of various saints, as well as their support for a law-abiding and disciplined form of social order. Still, there are historical and cultural complications to this alignment, all of which will

be explained briefly before I explore Zhāng's commentaries to those classical Ruist texts, in order to understand how and why it would only be in the mid-seventeenth century that these alignments could be clearly affirmed just a few years before the Míng dynasty would fall to the military prowess of the Manchurian military hordes.

There is no question that by 1572, when Zhāng Jūzhèng at age 47 became the leader of the Grand Secretariat, he was at the apex of his political power.¹⁰ Filled with concern for reforms within the Míng bureaucracy¹¹ that would ultimately enhance its efficiency as well as the autocratic power of both the emperor and his own official authority, he was “loyal to his ruler” and was intensely concerned for the welfare of the empire.¹² Those who continue to hold a high regard for Zhāng's leadership refer to him as “shrewd,” “talented,” and employing “superb political finesse,”¹³ a “reformer” working under inauspicious circumstances,¹⁴ and so a courageous hero fighting against the odds;¹⁵ others who are more critical refer to him as being “arrogant” and “rapacious,”¹⁶ as well as “haughty” and stern to the point—especially when a “personal affront” was felt—of dispensing violent punishments “with flogging, exile, and imprisonment” on those who disobeyed laws and offended him.¹⁷ Almost all of these historical studies focus on his policies, patterns of governance, and ways of handling lower officials and those literati not in office, affirming the emphasis Zhāng Jūzhèng clearly had on the rule of law in a manner that displayed “obsessive efficiency.”¹⁸ Nevertheless, we learn next to nothing from these sources about his vision of reality, particularly in its spiritual or metaphysical dimensions, because the focus remains rooted to political policies. As we can all imagine, however, Zhāng's understanding of the nature of all things was something that would be of great interest to Jesuit missionaries residing in the Míng empire, and so I will highlight this dimension as it appears within the “straightforward” commentaries the imperial tutor prepared for his 7-year-old imperial student and presented to him in 1573, that is, during the last decade of Zhāng's life. Exactly when the whole work was first published and made public has not been adequately confirmed, but probably it appeared within the decade after it was first taught to the Wànlì child emperor.¹⁹ Its influence can be discerned by the fact that it was republished four times during the nineteenth century²⁰ and has more recently been once more republished in an attractive contemporary version in 2007.²¹ Still, I would not want to get ahead of myself at this point; there is more to learn about the man and scholar-official, Zhāng Jūzhèng, as well as the fate of his reforms after his death in 1582.

Notably, though Zhāng Jūzhèng was undoubtedly a “scholar-official” of great prestige and authority, and a scholar with an impressive record of official and unofficial writings to his credit, he is not included in Huáng Zōngxī's 黃宗羲 (1610–1695) *Míng rú xué'ān* 明儒學案 [Case Studies of

Ming Ruists].²² One can suspect that this has much to do with what Yu Ying-shih Yu Ying-shih 余英時 (1930-) refers to as the “anti-intellectual” trend found in Zhāng’s policies,²³ but also to his apparent preference for Zhū Xī’s rationalistic interpretations of *The Four Books*,²⁴ in contrast to the then very popular alternatives promoted by Wáng Yángmíng 王陽明 (1472–1529) and the subsequent generations of disciples extending and spreading his doctrines.²⁵ So Zhāng was opposed to the teaching of those more liberal Ruist scholars, so that he attempted to close down all non-authorized Ruist academies across the empire during the latter years of his life.²⁶ Here again, I cannot but underscore the authoritarian model of leadership that was embodied by Zhāng Jūzhèng, especially during the last years of his career.

Once Zhāng Jūzhèng died during the summer of 1582, it was not long before many who had suffered under his regime sought to accuse him of excessive intolerance and cruelty.²⁷ Consequently, when the still relatively young and far less disciplined Wànlì emperor heard of one claim that his former tutor had ultimately intended to take over the throne for himself, he responded with harsh censorships. By the end of 1587, only two years after his death, the emperor’s vengeful attitudes resulted in the revocation of all of Zhāng Jūzhèng’s previous and substantial honors, the confiscation of his properties from family members, and harsh penalties for his relatives and those who followed him, ultimately leading to the death of a number of his family members. Almost to the person, Chinese historians see this as an immense tragedy, not only for Zhāng Jūzhèng and those associated with him but also for the Míng empire.²⁸ It augured great problems for the imperial house, which would fall to its destruction under the attacks of Manchurian armies less than seventy years after Zhāng’s death.

Ultimately, Zhāng Jūzhèng’s name and honor were returned to him by a later Míng emperor in 1622,²⁹ a fact that could explain, at least in part, why Matteo Ricci 利瑪竇 (1552–1610) never appears to mention Zhāng’s name in any of his extant correspondence.³⁰ Only those who followed Ricci’s lead would begin to have access to these materials and receive their influences.

Whatever the status and character of Zhāng Jūzhèng’s political ideology has been—and I have argued here that it was historically significant as an expression of a semi-Ruist and semi-Authoritarian ideology that heightened the autocratic nature of the Míng imperial government—it is another matter to consider whether or not this form of governance was being promoted in his commentarial works related to *The Four Books*. It is intriguing to note that the first modern studies in English to address Zhāng’s influences upon the early Jesuit Latin translation project found in *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus* did not seriously consider this possibility, but did at least indicate that there was a self-conscious effort on the part of the four Jesuit missionary scholars who prepared that work to point out their reliance on his *Sishū zhǐjiě*.³¹ What

Thierry Meynard has done more recently in 2011 is to qualify that reliance in a far more explicit manner, by providing historical explanations of how the Belgian Jesuit, Philippe Couplet, and the three other Jesuits argued that the autocratic vision of the ruler in their *Magna Scientia* (their Latin version of the title of *The Great Learning*) had been “fully achieved and realized” under the ruling of the French Roman Catholic king, Louis XIV.³² Here we can see how the semi-Ruist and semi-Authoritarian interpretation reliant at least in part on Zhāng Jūzhèng’s commentaries³³ had a particular resonance with political concerns that the Jesuits could apply directly to their contemporary European context. Nevertheless, there are more aspects and subtleties to be mentioned here about the trends of their interpretive reliance related to the Míng scholar, Zhāng, and his Sòng Ruist foundation set upon Zhū Xī’s commentaries, for which Meynard provides further resources, a matter which I will pick up subsequently. Here I would want to add another cross-cultural note of interest, one that indicates how the hermeneutic model of the “Straightforward Commentary” became a matter of wider application beyond the rendering of Chinese canonical texts.

During the final decades of the Míng empire, and notably more than a dozen years after Zhāng Jūzhèng’s honors and reputation had been imperially reaffirmed, a selected set of New Testament texts and commentaries, arranged in the chronological order of the Roman Catholic liturgical year, was prepared in Chinese for priests officiating in worship services. This work was prepared particularly for the sake of the priests who offered Chinese homilies during those services. Entitled briefly as the *Shèngjīng zhíjiě*, its full title was *Tiānzhǔ Yēsū Qīlīsīdū zhōusuì zhǔrì Shèngjīng zhíjiě* 天主耶穌契利斯督週歲主日聖經直解 or rendered in a more fluent English version as *Straightforward Commentaries on the Sacred Scriptures of the Heavenly Lord Jesus Christ for Sundays throughout the Whole Year*. Perhaps one of the first of its kind as a Chinese commentary to selected portions of the New Testament’s four Gospels, it was a carefully compiled commentary reliant on Roman Catholic biblical interpretations in Chinese, and so was exploring some of the first official and systematic ways to refer to Christian names, titles, and doctrines found in the Bible and expressed within a Chinese language medium.³⁴ Due to the careful analysis of this work presented by Chén Yānróng 陳妍蓉,³⁵ we know that this fourteen volume work was created and first published between 1636 and 1642, if not even later,³⁶ and had been primarily organized (and perhaps also authored, at least in part) by a Portuguese Jesuit, Manuel Dias jr. 陽瑪諾 (1574–1659). This work continued to be used by Roman Catholic priests well into the nineteenth century, with at least one revised edition being mentioned by a later Roman Catholic Jesuit historian, Louis Pfister (1833–1891).³⁷ Nevertheless, what is of interest here is that Chén recognizes four possible precedents for the *zhíjiě* or “direct explanation” form

of commentarial texts; two of them are works on Ruist canonical texts by Zhāng Jūzhèng and one of them is a Buddhist work that explicitly refers to Zhāng's precedent as its own model.³⁸ She apparently was unaware of the fact that Zhāng's commentary had been so fundamentally important for the interpretive justifications of the Latin renderings of the canonical works presented in *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus*.³⁹ What this all suggests, then, is that the general interest in preparing "straightforward" interpretations of canonical works in various scholarly and religious traditions in seventeenth-century China had become a standard model for presenting authorized texts with perceptive and authoritative commentaries, a form of publication probably taking Zhāng Jūzhèng's works as its precedent.

COMMENTARIAL COMPLEXITIES AND WORLDVIEW IN ZHĀNG JŪZHÈNG'S SÌSHŪ ZHÍJĚ

It was not easy for many readers of the *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus* in the late seventeenth century to recognize the name of Zhāng Jūzhèng, even though he was mentioned on the first page of the *Magna Scientia* (the Latin version of *The Great Learning*) as "the teacher of the King" (*Magistri Regii*).⁴⁰ There his name is presented in the Latin transcription of the day as "Cham Colai" or what now would be transcribed as Zhāng Gélǎo 張閣老. Even a well-informed sinologist today may not be able to recognize this single reference to Zhāng Jūzhèng, as one whose explanations and interpretations were particularly appreciated.

Nevertheless, in spite of this note of appreciation appearing at the very beginning of the Jesuits' Latin renderings, there has been some disagreement among contemporary scholars about how much emphasis should be put on the influence of Zhāng Jūzhèng's commentaries and their interpretations on subsequent Jesuit scholarship coming from the Míng dynasty. One important reason why it may have been that few studies of Zhāng Jūzhèng's commentaries to *The Four Books* have been prepared in European languages over the past three decades is that David Mungello (1943-), in his seminal work, *Curious Land*, asserted in 1985 more than once that "the differences of interpretation between [Zhū Xī] and [Zhāng] are not substantial."⁴¹ In what follows, I will present evidence that counters this claim, manifesting that there are in fact significant interpretive differences found within the commentaries to various passages within *The Four Books* that, considered as expressions of a specific worldview, do in fact bear out important contrasts with the Sòng Ruist standard commentary by Zhū Xī.

Some initial evidence regarding these matters can be gleaned from a careful reading of the footnotes in Thierry Meynard's recent translation of the

Magna Scientia.⁴² Out of 172 references to commentarial sources in those footnotes, I have documented the following details:

- Twenty-four times citing Zhū Xī's commentaries alone (just less than 14%)
- Eighty-six times citing Zhāng Jūzhèng's commentaries alone (exactly 50%)
- Thirty-seven times citing both scholars' commentaries together, generally to indicate that they share the same interpretive angle but have different insights into these shared claims (just over 21%)
- Fourteen times the citations refer to neither of these two scholars (just over 8%)
- Four times Zhāng's commentaries are explicitly preferred to Zhū's commentaries (amounting to just over 2%)
- Another four times there is simply a statement opposing Zhū's commentaries (again, amounting to just over 2%)
- Two times the footnote indicates that Zhāng opposed Zhū's interpretations (just over 1%)
- Only once was it mentioned that Zhāng held a "different" interpretive position (about 0.5%)

On the face of this evidence, all of which is highly dependent on Meynard's own choices about what should be placed in the footnotes, I have gained some fairly obvious impressions. The commentaries of Zhāng Jūzhèng stand alone 50 percent of the time, and when we add all the other times they are mentioned, they are mentioned in about 75 percent of all the footnotes. Notably, and here apparently offering some kind of numerical evidence in support of Mungello's claims, there are not many obvious points where Zhāng's commentaries to *The Great Learning* take positions opposing those of Zhū Xī, amounting at most to only 5 percent of those footnotes. Yet here we have no qualitative information about whether the 50 percent of the footnotes where Zhāng Jūzhèng's commentaries are cited alone also contain any opposing views. Nevertheless, we should also be aware that *The Great Learning* was not the text where worldviews would be most manifest. It is the *Zhōngyōng* that was and is regularly cited as being the most metaphysical of all the canonical works in *The Four Books*, and next to it would come the *Lúnyǔ* and the *Mèngzǐ*. Significantly, *The Great Learning* is the least often cited for the sake of revealing a Ruist worldview or metaphysics.

So, on the basis of what I have cited above in these footnotes prepared by Meynard, I believe I am justified to at least point out that there is a clear emphasis on the interpretive value of Zhāng Jūzhèng's commentaries. Nevertheless, I do not believe that there is here enough quantitative or qualitative information to assess whether there are any significant metaphysical or worldview differences found between the two Chinese scholars' commentaries.

When I have looked further into the details of Zhāng Jūzhèng's metaphysics as expressed in his commentaries to the *Zhōngyōng* and the *Lúnyǔ*,⁴³ I have found that Zhāng promoted a vital and dynamic spiritual realm integrated more or less consistently with the mundane realm of human beings. The passage that is most prominent within Zhāng's commentaries related to the spiritual realm, in general, is the sixteenth chapter of the *Zhōngyōng*, a canonical paean to the nature and efficacy of spiritual beings (*guǐshén* 鬼神).⁴⁴ Unlike more rationalistic Ruist scholars during imperial periods or some secularized Ruist scholars in the twentieth century, Zhāng Jūzhèng takes the metaphysical presence and concrete functions of these spiritual beings seriously, but also cautiously. Here below I will provide many details from his commentaries to verify these claims.

According to his normal practice in writing his commentaries to these Ruist canonical texts, Zhāng Jūzhèng first defines key terms. So, too, in the sixteenth chapter of the *Zhōngyōng*, he initiates his commentarial comments by defining the *guǐshén* as “the spiritual beings addressed in major sacrifices and ancestral rites of reverence (*jìsì* 祭祀), such as heavenly spirits (*tiānshén* 天神), terrestrial deities (*dìqí* 地祇), and spirits of departed humans (*rénguǐ* 人鬼).”⁴⁵ The fact that all these spiritual beings, unlike everything else in reality, have no physical form that is visible and make no noise that is audible—as is stated clearly in the canonical text and elaborated by Zhāng⁴⁶—puts them in a category of metaphysics that is difficult for humans to comprehend. Nevertheless, they are able to move humans to perform acts of reverence as they participate in appropriate sacrificial rituals, no matter whatever social class those humans belong to or cultural roles they take up (*zūnbèi shàngxià* 尊卑上下). So, in spite of the fact that spiritual beings are imperceptible to all senses, they are able to

cause [all] people under the heavens to experience sober respect and reverent awe (*sùgōng jìngwèi* 肅恭敬畏), solemnly performing [the rites] as if they are visibly present among them (*yānrán rúzài rúcǐ* 儼然如在如此).⁴⁷

The last phrase is a gloss of a famous phrase found in the Confucian *Analects*, where Master Kǒng encourages his disciples to participate in sacrifices to the spirits “as if the spirits are [visibly] present” (*jìshén rú shén zài* 祭神如神在).⁴⁸ In the context of that passage within his commentaries to the *Lúnyǔ*, Zhāng Jūzhèng elaborates this phrase by reference to the passage quoted above in the *Zhōngyōng*, chapter 16.

Spiritual beings (*guǐshén* 鬼神) have no physical form or audible expression, so how could one truly see them?! Still, because the heart-mind [of the sage] expresses its sincerity to the uttermost (*xīn jí qí chéng* 心極其誠), then it is as if [the spirits] are seen (*gù rú yǒu suǒ jiàn ěr* 故如有所見耳).⁴⁹

All this is to say, then, that Zhāng Jūzhèng takes these metaphysical encounters as realities that are part and parcel of the vision of reality any informed scholar should consider. The phrase “as if they are [visibly] present” is not the expression of a skeptical doubt but reflects the state of mind of a sagely person who acts reverently within the sacrificial rites before imperceptible spiritual powers. We will see later on how he links these metaphysical claims to specific dimensions of moral cultivation and political wisdom.

Already manifest in the listing of the three different kind of spiritual beings seen above in Zhāng Jūzhèng’s definition in his comments on the sixteenth chapter of the *Zhōngyōng*, there is an inherent hierarchy descending from the heavenly, to the earthly or terrestrial, and ultimately to the human realm. Notably, nothing of this sort is found in Zhū Xī’s commentary to the same passage; instead, following patterns of the metaphysical dualism that permeated his view of reality, Zhū simply explained that *guī* are spiritual powers of the *yīn* force (*guī zhě yīn zhī líng yě* 鬼者陰之靈也), while *shén* are spiritual powers of the *yáng* force (*shén zhě yáng zhī líng yě* 神者陽之靈也).⁵⁰ Such a difference is not insignificant and will become all the more distinct as the metaphysical hierarchy Zhāng supports is worked out more plainly.

Clarification of the nature of metaphysical hierarchy Zhāng supports appears in his commentary to the nineteenth chapter of the *Zhōngyōng*. When the canonical text refers to the two sacrificial rites of *jiào* 郊 and *shè* 社 as “serving *shàngdì*” (*shì shàngdì* 事上帝), Zhāng Jūzhèng is quick to clarify and highlight the fact that *shàngdì* is *tiān* 天, that is to say, the Supreme Lord is another way to refer to Heaven,⁵¹ another clarification not explicitly made in this context by Zhū Xī.⁵² Nevertheless, and in the subsequent note following Zhū Xī (and numerous other commentators before and after him), Zhāng does explain that the *jiào* rite is a sacrifice to Heaven, and the *shè* rite is a sacrifice to Earth, and so in this context, the mention of *shàngdì* should also include reference to the “royal Earth” (*hòu tǔ* 后土). Certainly it is right to ask, then, if there is ever any unambiguous reference to the equivalence of *shàngdì* and *tiān*, and any other clarification about the status of such a spiritual being. In fact, Zhāng Jūzhèng does provide these elaborations elsewhere.

The first place I have located this metaphysical clarification is in the very last section of the *Zhōngyōng*. There, in the 33rd chapter, a citation from a passage in the *Shījīng* is made,⁵³ referring to *shàngtiān* 上天; however, in his commentary to the passage, Zhāng Jūzhèng repeatedly refers to *shàngdì*, indicating that the two phrases are equivalent.⁵⁴ Where in the 19th chapter, he had identified *shàngdì* as *tiān*, here he qualifies *shàngtiān* as *shàngdì*. Logically speaking, it could be argued that this is not a perfect match, but I would argue that there are already some good reasons to hold that this is at least consistent with a vision that *tiān* is the supreme being within Zhāng’s

worldview.⁵⁵ Fortunately, a more firm and explicit confirmation of this conclusion is offered from another of Zhāng Jūzhèng's commentaries.

That further clarification is obtained from a passage in the *Lúnyǔ*, where Master Kǒng explains that when one “sins against *tiān*,” there is no use in seeking to pray, because (it is intimated) there will be no means to rectify the situation.⁵⁶ Zhāng Jūzhèng's commentary confirms this intimation by means of a definition of *tiān* in this immediate context:

That which has no partner and is most esteemed under all the heavens is only *tiān*” (*tiānxià zhī zhìzūn ér wúduì zě, wéi tiān ér yī* 天下之至尊而無對者，惟天而已).⁵⁷

While this definition offers a particularly surprising statement in claiming that *tiān* has no equal or “partner”—it is “matchless” precisely in the sense of being a supreme deity—a twenty-first century reader and any seventeenth-century Jesuit could be less satisfied by Zhāng's “location” of *tiān* as being found somewhere within the terrestrial realm (*tiānxià* 天下 or “all under the heavens”). Here we appear to have a form of Ruist theism that “places” its supreme deity within the scope of the phenomenal world, rather than a spiritual being that is both within and above, or beyond, or perhaps even interactively engaged with some larger conception of the universe. Nevertheless, however we might conceive this claim, what we can now affirm is that Zhāng Jūzhèng conceived of some spiritual being “residing” at the top of a hierarchy of the myriad things—a hierarchically discernible and dynamically engaged “polypneumatism” with a supreme being at its apex.⁵⁸ This ultimate “thing” that is described in Zhāng Jūzhèng's expositions, as seen in other commentaries previously cited, has no physical form or audible trace. Here, then, I confirm that we are confronted with a Ruist form of theism, replete with a cosmic host of other spiritual beings ranked beneath this “most esteemed” *tiān*. Even one of the most recent accounts of Zhu Xi's “religious philosophy” would refer to his concept of *tiān* as something close to being panentheistic,⁵⁹ but not theistic in the sense that we find here in Zhāng Jūzhèng's worldview. Certainly, then, this is a matter of immense significance, a metaphysical difference that prompted admiration and appreciation from the seventeenth-century Jesuit missionary-scholars who studied Zhāng's commentaries.

Most scholars of Zhū Xī's metaphysics find it difficult to relate his concept of *tiān* to anything like a supreme deity, in spite of the highly qualified argument presented by Hoyt Tillman asserting that there is at least some form of consciousness found in Zhū Xī's conception of *tiān* in certain texts.⁶⁰ Nevertheless, what I have demonstrated through this basic reconstruction of the spiritual dimension of Zhāng Jūzhèng's vision of reality from within his

commentaries is a hierarchy of spiritual beings where *tiān* is found at the top of this conception of all that is—alone, matchless, and most highly esteemed.

If Zhāng Jūzhèng is truly the Ruist theist that I have argued he must be, how does his worldview differ from a Christian theism that the Jesuits supported? First of all, there is nothing like Trinitarian theology in Zhāng’s theism; his is a simple theism, what some have called “henotheism” or “strictly one God,” and so it is more like an orthodox Jewish or Muslim vision of the deity rather than a Christian account of the Trinity. Second, although he confirms the actual presence of spiritual beings in a hierarchical theism, where *tiān* is the most esteemed and there are many subordinate spiritual beings—a polypneumatism, spread out in various ranks underneath *tiān*—Zhāng Jūzhèng did not promote a life of prayerful fellowship with this supreme being that Christians would take as a standard form of their relationship with the divine. Instead, he had a different perspective on the nature of prayer and argued that there was a strict moral relationship working between spiritual beings and humans on earth, one that portrayed a rather tightly knit form of moral responsiveness between the spiritual realm and humans.⁶¹ How that responsiveness was to be managed by a Ruist-oriented person would, within his worldview, require the setting up of a moral framework and political strategy. By this means, Zhāng Jūzhèng’s worldview was enriched as a morally emphatic and more or less rational form of Ruist theism; it led to a properly cultivated person being able to obtain blessing, avoid disasters, and refuse to be involved with what he considered to be unjustified and immoral forms of superstition.

While it is undoubtedly true that Zhāng Jūzhèng affirmed the positive reality of the spiritual realm, he did not hold its value within the life of cultivated persons to be of the highest order. Unlike the “greatest commandment” promoted in the Bible, requiring a person to “love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and with all your strength,”⁶² Zhāng never writes about the possibility of this kind of intimate and emotionally affirming relationship between *tiān* and humans, or for that regard, between any spiritual beings and humans. How he describes those relationships will now be the focus of the following discussion.

Unlike a number of Chinese scholars of Ruist canonical teachings, especially those who focused only on the mundane world in traditional contexts, or had become strictly secular in the post-traditional settings of twentieth-century China, Zhāng Jūzhèng evaluated the spiritual realm with a positive but qualified affirmation. In a famous passage that indicates four topics that Master Kǒng did not discuss,⁶³ Zhāng’s places the first three—“mysteries, feats of strength, disorderly conduct” (*guài lì luàn* 怪力亂)—as incorrect and unacceptable for rational discussion (*fēi lǐ zhī zhèng* 非理之正) but the latter dealing with “the supernatural” or “spirits” (*shén* 神)⁶⁴ are qualified as

being not constant enough to warrant rational discussion (*fēi lǐ zhī cháng* 非理之常).⁶⁵ So, what does it mean to be “not constant enough”? In this regard, Zhāng links together other claims already described above and comes to an important set of conclusions that reveal more of the subtleties within his worldview.

Because spiritual beings are by their nature imperceptible to eyes and ears, they are “hidden” (*yōu* 幽 or *yōumèi* 幽昧),⁶⁶ “hard to know” (*nánzhī* 難知),⁶⁷ and “difficult to discern” (*náncé* 難測).⁶⁸ Consequently, it is right first to serve humans and to learn about life before diving into the more subtle and difficult issues related to the spirits of departed ancestors and the unavoidable fact of death.⁶⁹ This is not because the latter issues are inherently incomprehensible, but only because there is more certainty in dealing with humans and their affairs than with spiritual beings and their affairs. In fact, Zhāng concludes in this context, “the way of serving humans is the way of serving the spirits of departed ancestors” (*shì rén zhī dào jí shì shì guǐ zhī dào* 事人之道即是事鬼之道) and “the principle of life is the principle of death” (*shéng zhī lǐ jí shì sǐ zhī lǐ* 生之理即是死之理). They all deal with matters that must be handled by wise persons, but the former are more accessible than the latter, and so they should be handled first. The attitude that should be maintained by humanely cultivated persons toward spiritual beings is “reverence” (*jìng* 敬) and strictly limited to this ritual attitude.⁷⁰ To emphasize the nature of this level of reverent awe, Zhāng describes it twice as “making every word and action” so that one does not “sin against spiritual beings”⁷¹ and acts “constantly as though *shàngdì* is overseeing” one’s life.⁷² If this attitude is maintained without any inconsistency, there will be no need to appeal to spiritual beings in prayer, because there is no need to rectify some lingering shame or problem if one’s moral sincerity is unquestionable.⁷³ Any pursuit of other spirits for the sake of extra blessings or benefits, and so not strictly expressing an attitude of reverential awe, is either superstitious or immoral.⁷⁴

In this way, the spiritual realm in Zhāng’s Ruist theism can be linked to both a person’s humane cultivation and the principles of governance. According to Zhāng Jūzhèng, all spirits function in providing blessing to the morally and nobly upright or dispensing disasters to those who are immoral, petty, or cruel.⁷⁵ Nevertheless, it is *tiān* that holds the final judgments related to life or death, blessing, or calamity,⁷⁶ and so one should approach that most esteemed and matchless being with proper reverential awe.⁷⁷

While more could be elaborated about Zhāng Jūzhèng’s theistic Ruist worldview and its connection to whole person cultivation as well as governance, I would only want to underscore here that he supported the use of proper punishments but never elaborated on them at length in any context within the *Lúnǚ*,⁷⁸ even though this was a major emphasis of his own pattern of governance as the Chief Grand Secretary.

CULTURALLY TRANSFORMATIVE POSSIBILITIES AND THE LIMITS OF Zhāng's IDEOLOGY

There appears something like a “pre-established harmony” between Zhāng Jūzhèng's worldview—grounded in its theistic Ruist understanding of *tiān*, an openness to the polypneumatic powers of various spirits, and a relatively quiet affirmation of the rule by law to support authoritarian forms of governance. All these elements of his worldview, I have suggested above, would be received by those early Jesuit missionary scholars as a cross-cultural bridge that aligned well their own missionary interests and reformist cultural strategies both in the China and Europe of their day. From the comparative religious point of view, they could use Zhāng's worldview and ideology to justify their own more elaborate form of Christian Trinitarian theism and their Jesuit-inspired and disciplined expression of spirituality.

From the point of the history of Chinese philosophical traditions, the realization that Zhāng Jūzhèng was one among a number of Ruist theists who based his account of a theistic and polypneumatic metaphysics on citations related to ancient Ruist canonical literature is unexpected by Chinese secularists and those who are resistant post-secular secularists.⁷⁹ Other Ruist theists existed before and after Zhāng, including among the most notable Masters Kǒng and Mèng (“Confucius” and “Mencius”), as well as Zhū Xī, and also including Xú Guāngqǐ 徐光啟 (1562–1633),⁸⁰ Luó Zhòngfān 羅仲藩 (c. 1800–c. 1850),⁸¹ and Kāng Yǒuwéi 康有為 (1858–1927).⁸² They did not share the same worldview or justify their claims in the same ways when they described and elaborated their understanding of the supreme being, but they could be still be counted as theists, much as Christians, Jews, and Muslims can all be called “theists,” even though their understanding of the ultimate deity differs. Notably, most of their justifications come from the earliest canonical Ruist texts, so that there were even earlier theistic conceptions found in the *Shījīng* 詩經 (*The Book of Odes*) and *Shàngshū* 尚書 (*The Book of Historical Documents*), among other texts that could also be underscored in this light. Obviously, then, these realizations should require a number of new revisionary accounts of the sub-tradition of Ruist theism and its varying expressions across the long history of classical, imperial, modern, and post-traditional Ruist traditions.

Precisely within the light of my highlighting this sub-tradition of Ruist theism found in these various Ruist scholars' works and their canonical literature, there is an interpretive challenge to be made to counter certain claims made by some that those who translate certain terms in classical Chinese literature as “God” are engaged in reading their own “theistic biases” into these texts. In fact, as has been documented in great detail within this chapter, Zhāng Jūzhèng's Ruist theism was conceived completely independently from any foreign theistic

influences and was published at least a decade before the first Jesuits landed on the Chinese mainland in the late sixteenth century. Put in other words, if there is strong justification for identifying an indigenous Ruist theism within traditional Chinese texts before there was any encounter with European Christian missionaries, then the argument that any translation of Chinese terms that asserts that they are equivalent to “God” should not be seen merely as an act of “cultural imperialism” or an unwarranted “Christianization” of those terms,⁸³ but has historical precedents within Ruist canonical and commentarial texts that need to be taken seriously and integrated into a more complex vision of Ruist worldviews.

As I have suggested above, Zhāng’s semi-Ruist and semi-Authoritarian ideological position and its attendant theistic metaphysics did not always parallel or support Zhū Xī’s more rationalistic interpretations of *The Four Books*. In fact, it provided an alternative account of metaphysical reality that did not rely on the dualistic *lǐ-qì* 理氣 categories that dominated Zhū Xī’s metaphysical discussions. This indicates one reason why, after the Jesuits were forced to leave China and ultimately were also disbanded as an order in the late eighteenth century under papal dictates, their alignment with Zhāng Jūzhèng’s ideology and worldview may have become something of a cultural hindrance when they returned to China during the mid-nineteenth century of the Qīng empire.

By that time, Zhū Xī’s commentaries to *The Four Books* had received Qīng imperial support as the orthodox Ruist interpretation of those works, making it more necessary for anyone who sought to support the ruling ideology to change their interpretive reliance on at least some parts of Zhāng Jūzhèng’s commentaries. On reflection, it may be seen as a matter of the “cunning of history” that even as Zhāng Jūzhèng’s commentaries to *The Four Books* had served as a creative bridge for cross-cultural understanding and even a proto-evangelistic intellectual foothold within elitist forms of Ruist culture during the late Míng empire, two centuries later, it could end up as a cross-cultural and intellectual hindrance to achieving those same kinds of interpretive and missiological advantages.

In fact, then, from a historical perspective, we can understand how in the modern Jesuit project within China that began in 1850, it was necessary once more to retranslate *The Four Books* in both Latin and French. This was done by two other Jesuits in that later period: the first was a Latin rendering in an antiquated style produced by the Italian Jesuit living in Shànghǎi, Angelo Zottoli 晁德蒞 (1825–1902), and the second was rendered into a more modern form of Latin and contemporary French by the French Jesuit residing in Xiànxian 獻縣 within what is now Héběi province, Séraphin Couvreur 顧賽芬 (1835–1919).⁸⁴

What has been important for my own effort here, however, was to demonstrate convincingly that the commentaries Zhāng Jūzhèng produced of

The Four Books were far more significant for the seventeenth-century Jesuit missionary-scholars who produced *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus* than has been previously recognized. If that has been achieved, then I believe a more accurate picture of the achievements and tensions inherent in the interpretive approaches expressed through the cross-cultural engagements of those Roman Catholic scholars as they studied the texts produced by the Wánli emperor's imperial tutor can now be grasped.

NOTES

1. My use of the terms “Ruism” and “Authoritarianism” and their cognates for what has regularly been referred to as “Confucianism” and “Legalism” are neologisms I have adopted for different reasons. “Confucianism” tends to suggest there is some form of worship of the person “Confucius,” a person the early Jesuits introduced into Western European languages through their Latin renderings of his name. I prefer to refer to him by a more meaningful title along with his family name, “Master Kǒng.” Since *Rú* scholars (or “Ruists”) were devoted to a number of sage kings and other worthy figures who both pre-dated and post-dated Master Kǒng's life, I have preferred to follow other recent precedents in using the term “Ruism” to identify their multiform cultural tradition (whether within China or elsewhere, but particularly in the East Asian and Southeast Asian contexts of Japan, Korea, and Vietnam). With regard to the term “Legalism” there is a continuing debate about its suitability, but it is clear to me (at least at this point in time) that those associated with this other Chinese trend of interpretation are all supporters of authoritarian forms of governance represented by a singular ruler, whose life and actions are, in fact, “above the law.” For this reason, then, I will employ “Authoritarianism” and its related terms to refer to this particular political perspective and its advocates.

2. Thierry Meynard prefers to render this title as *The Colloquial Commentaries to The Four Books*, which portrays another general sense of the meaning of the title.

3. That is, the work translated and commented on by a team of Jesuits: Philippe Couplet, Prospero Intorcetta, Chrétien Herdrich, and Françoise de Rougement, *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus: sive Scientia Sinensis Latine exposita* (Paris: Daniel Hortmels, 1687). Besides extensive essays put into the beginning of the work, there are renderings in Latin of the *Dàxué* 大學 (*The Great Learning*), the *Zhōngyōng* 中庸 (*The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*), and the *Lúnyǔ* 論語 (the Confucian *Analects*).

4. See Thierry Meynard, S. J., trans. and comm., *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus (1687): The First Translation of the Confucian Classics* (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 2011). It should be noted that there are multiple and extensive essays in the “Prolegomena,” so that the rendering of that portion of the work is a major scholarly task. Since that time, Meynard has also presented in trilingual format (Latin, English, Chinese) the Confucian *Analects* from this volume. Up to this point in time, he has not completed the same work for the *Zhōngyōng* or *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*. In that sense, then, this chapter contributes to some perspectives

related to the interpretation of the *Zhōngyōng* from Zhāng Jūzhèng's work, and can indicate how it may have influenced the seventeenth-century Jesuit translation into Latin. For the second volume by Meynard, consult *The Jesuit Reading of Confucius: The First Complete Translation of the Lunyu (1687) Published in The West* (Leiden: Brill, 2015). I have presented references to Zhāng's commentary to the Analects in this chapter without having seen relevant passages in Meynard's work of 2015.

5. By the phrase, "the modern Jesuit project," I am seeking to highlight the historical and cross-cultural differences between "the early Jesuit project" in China, dated by Liam Matthew Brockey as occurring from 1579 to 1724, and the later or "modern Jesuit project" that became a living option from about 1850 until its demise around 1950. For the use of the earlier term, see Liam Matthew Brockey, *Journey to the East: The Jesuit Mission to China, 1579–1724* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Harvard University Press, 2007).

6. For those interested in these works, consult the Latin renderings produced by two other later Jesuits: Angelo Zottoli (Cháo Déli 晁德蒞 (1826–1902)) from Shànghǎi (1879–1882) and versions in both a modern church Latin and modern French by Séraphin Couvreur (Gù Sàifēn 顧賽芬 (1835–1919) produced in the French mission located in the relatively small town of Xiànxian 獻縣 from 1895 to 1917).

7. The technical phrase, "canon-in-translation," I developed to describe the impact of scholarly translations of canonical literature from one culture and rendered in another language medium for a second culture, so that those works became canonical in their own right in the target culture. Consult relevant passages in Lauren F. Pfister, "Classics or Sacred Books? Grammatological and Interpretive Problems of Ruist and Daoist Scriptures in the Translation Corpora of James Legge (1815–1897) and Richard Wilhelm (1873–1930)" in Max Deeg, Oliver Frieberger, and Christoph Kline, eds., *Kanonisierung und Kanon-bildung in der asiatischen Religionsgeschichte* (Canonization and Canon Formation in the History of Asian Religions) (Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences, 2011), 421–63.

8. As will be seen in what follows, I have been very selective in the Chinese sources I have explored, because there are many that are more popularly written, but I have wanted to focus on those that would carry more scholarly clout or offered important overviews that confirm the general scholarly account of Zhāng Jūzhèng's life and works.

9. More than a decade ago, I had become aware of the importance of Zhāng Jūzhèng's precedent for the translation and cross-cultural interpretive project embodied in *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus*, and wrote about what I had found at that time in several lengthy endnotes found in the second volume of my study on James Legge. For those who might be interested in this particular point of departure within my own studies, I refer here to endnotes #425 and #426 in Lauren F. Pfister, *Striving for "The Whole Duty of Man": James Legge and the Scottish Protestant Encounter with China* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2004), Vol. 2, 343–44.

10. This claim can be documented from many historical sources, but I have relied in particular on the finely worked out historical account found in the article by Sun Weiguo, "Different Types of Scholar-Official in Sixteenth-Century China:

The Interlaced Careers of Wang Shizhen and Zhang Juzheng.” *Ming Studies* Vol. 53 (2006), 4–50, here at 20–1. Another modern standard historical source in English about Zhāng succinctly states that at the time, when Zhāng replaced the previous Grand Secretary, there was no doubt that “his ambition” was “to reach the top.” Consult Robert B. Crawford and L. Carrington Goodrich, “Chang Chū-cheng 張居正 (T. 叔大, H. 太岳),” *Dictionary of Ming Biography, 1368–1644* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), *Volume 1, A-L*, 53–61, quotation from 56.

11. Sun Weiguo summarizes the general situation of the form of governance dominating throughout the Ming dynasty as “an extreme sort of autocracy,” and “in the sixteenth century the government had evolved into its most autocratic form, both politically and intellectually.” Consult Weiguo, “Different Types of Scholar-Official in Sixteenth-Century China,” 7.

12. About the reforms I will have more to say in what follows. Here I am following a famous evaluation of Zhāng Jūzhèng’s career by one of his contemporaries, the historian Wáng Shìzhēn 王世貞 (1526–1590), one who himself endured difficulties under Zhāng’s leadership, but outlived him so that his own historical evaluation of Zhāng’s career would have an immense impact on later Qīng historical scholarship about the Ming dynasty, particularly with regard to their evaluation of Zhāng Jūzhèng’s support for an authoritarian and legalistic form of governance. See this famous text quoted in Sun Weiguo, “Different Types of Scholar-Official in Sixteenth-Century China,” 38.

13. Quoting from Sun Weiguo, “Different Types of Scholar-Official in Sixteenth-Century China,” 10 and 15.

14. As in the study by Suí Shūfēn 隋淑芬 entitled *Zhāng Jūzhèng píngzhuàn – qǐ shuāi zhèn huī de gǎi gé jiā* 張居正評傳 – 起衰振隳的改革家 [A Critical Biography of Zhāng Jūzhèng – A Reformer During Declines Leading to Destruction] (Nánjīng 南寧: Guǎngxī jiàoyù chūbǎnshè 廣西教育出版社, 1995).

15. As portrayed in the study by Féng Yìyuǎn 馮藝遠 and Dài Jiérú 戴潔茹 entitled *Huánguáng zhìguó mèng – Zhāng Jūzhèng zhuàn* 惶惶治國夢 – 張居正傳 [Terrified and Yet Dreaming of Ruling the Country – A Biography of Zhāng Jūzhèng] (Tiānjīn 天津: Bǎihuā wényì chūbǎnshè 百花文藝出版社, 1999).

16. Quoting from the evaluation by his Ming Ruist contemporary, the historian Wáng Shìzhēn, rendered into English by Weiguo, “Different Types of Scholar-Official in Sixteenth-Century China,” 38.

17. Citing from Crawford and Goodrich, “Chang Chū-cheng,” 55 and 57.

18. Quoted from Weiguo, “Different Types of Scholar-Official in Sixteenth-Century China,” 37. Citing in this context the posthumous evaluation of Zhāng’s career by the contemporary historian, Wáng Shìzhēn, Sun offers one particularly poignant summary from Wáng’s writings in the following English translation (found in the same place in his article): “In his time in office [Zhāng Jūzhèng] respected the power of the emperor above him, and in his dealings with those below him, he supervised them and encouraged them to keep the laws, with clearly defined rewards and punishments. As soon as any law was issued, everybody in the nation had to follow it at once, like a thunderstorm or a gale, nothing could stand in its way.”

19. According to David Mungello, though there is a bibliographic note in Chinese indicating that “the first edition” of the work was dated 1573, nevertheless librarians from the National Library of China in Běijīng wrote a letter cautioning anyone that though this manuscript was “presented to” the emperor in that year, “it is difficult to state exactly when it was printed.” Based on other factors within the document, they had “estimated the date of printing of the commentary to have been sometime between 1574 and 1584.” Still, as we have already learned, Zhāng Jūzhèng died in 1582, and then soon afterward was placed under imperial censorship for his alleged treasonous intentions. This being the case, we can imagine that the work was probably published sometime before his death in July 1582. Consult David E. Mungello, *Curious Land: Jesuit Accommodation and the Origins of Sinology* (Weisbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1985), 269, esp. endnote 80.

20. According to Mungello, other editions of the work were published later in 1651, 1672, 1677, and 1683. See Mungello, *Curious Land*, 269.

21. This Chinese edition is produced in four handsomely bound modern volumes and published first in January 2007, involving one volume devoted to the *Dàxué* and *Zhōngyōng*, one volume for the *Lúnyǔ*, and two volumes for the *Mèngzǐ*. In its presentation, the standard canonical text is first presented, followed by a twenty-first century Chinese rendering, and then containing a copy of the commentary written by the sixteenth century Chief Grand Secretary, Zhāng Jūzhèng. Unlike modern versions of these texts, the divisions between paragraphs or sayings are not numbered, and sometimes involve splitting what is now considered to be one passage into two or more parts. Notably, though all the volumes were published in January 2007, the volume on the *Lúnyǔ* had already gone into its third printing by March 2007, and the volume with the two smallest works in one tome was in its third printing by April 2007. This indicates something about the general interest that an educated Chinese audience still has with regard to Zhāng Jūzhèng’s life and works. Further bibliographic details about these volumes will be provided in the fourth section of this paper, when we look in detail into the various commentarial texts written by Zhāng.

22. This can be confirmed by reading through the table of contexts of the whole work, and also by reviewing the passages that do happen to mention Zhāng Jūzhèng in the translation of the edited version of that work by Julia Ching and Chaoying Fang. No single case study is devoted to Zhāng, even though there is a section for “other” or “miscellaneous” Ruists in Huáng’s work; in the selective presentation of the work within the English translation, Zhāng (“Chang Chū-cheng”) appears only eleven times, and always as a person in power who had to be obeyed or who threatened the person being described. I have reviewed the republication of this Chinese work produced in two volumes in 1985 by the Běijīng office of the Zhōnghuá shūjú 中華書局, and have checked all relevant passages in Julia Ching and Chaoying Fang, trans. and eds., *The Records of Ming Scholars by Huang Tsung-hsi* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987).

23. Described at some length in endnote 8 of Weiguo, “Different Types of Scholar-Official in Sixteenth-Century China,” 44–5.

24. A trend hinted at in Meynard’s *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus (1687)*, but one I will seek to qualify more carefully in our subsequent discussions.

25. Notably, the emphasis on Wáng Yángmíng's many followers is one of the major elements in Huáng Zōngxī's account. The *Wángmén xuéān* 王門學案 or "case studies of the Wáng School" start in the tenth *juàn* and continue through the 30th *juàn*, amounting to 21 of the 62 *juàn* in the whole work, or just over one-third of the whole text. Comparatively speaking, Julia China and Chaoying Fang's English version was very selective in its account, so that these schools of scholars following Wáng Yángmíng are not clearly marked out (as they are in Chinese) as Wáng's disciples, but appear in sections 6–11, appearing on pages 107–59. That amounts to only 23 percent of their selectively chosen English version, and so readers should be made aware of this difference.

26. This was decreed in a pronouncement "banning all private academies" made on February 17, 1579 (as cited in Crawford and Goodrich, "Chang Chū-cheng," 58). The same edict is mentioned by Sun Weiguo, but also linked to the popularity of Wáng Yángmíng's influences. Consult Weiguo, "Different Types of Scholar-Official in Sixteenth-Century China," 34.

27. All historical accounts of Zhāng Jūzhèng's life deal with this matter, but perhaps the most concise account is found in Crawford and Goodrich, "Chang Chū-cheng," 59–60. What follows is a summary of some of the harshest reactions to his governance, and the restitution that ultimately came to rectify those over-reactions 40 years later.

28. So, for example, Wáng Chūnyú devotes his penultimate record about Míng and Qīng history to "the revelation of Zhāng Jūzhèng's tragedy." Consult Wáng Chūnyú 王春瑜, *Míng Qīng shǐ sānlùn* 明清史散論 (Shànghǎi上海: Dōngfāng Chūbǎn Zhōngxīn 東方出版中心, 1996), 303–5.

29. As underscored in Crawford and Goodrich, "Chang Chū-cheng," 60.

30. A fact that deserves more research but is based on an English version of five of Matteo Ricci's letters. See Gianni Criveller, ed., *Matteo Ricci: Five Letters from China* (Beijing: The Beijing Center for Chinese Studies, 2011).

31. These two articles appeared in sequence within a single issue of an early journal focused on the study of early Roman Catholic missions in China. They are Knud Lundbaek's "Chief Grand Secretary Chang Chū-Cheng and the Early China Jesuits" and David Mungello's "The Jesuit's Use of Chang Chū-Cheng's Commentary in their Translation of the Confucian Four Books (1687)," *China Mission Studies (1550–1800) Bulletin* Vol. 3 (1981), 2–11 and 12–22.

32. This point is emphasized in the book review written about Meynard's monograph by Bernhard Fuehrer in *The Bulletin of the School of African and Asian Studies* 76(2) (June 2012): 420–22, citation found on 421.

33. There was another Chinese commentarial source related to their translation of the *Dàxué* that Meynard also highlights, one by a literatus named Qiū Jùn 邱 [or 丘] 濬 (1420–1495), that also deserves mention here.

34. So it can be seen that the title "Christ" had not yet been given its more standard rendering in what would become its normal Roman Catholic Chinese rubric, and the reference to "Sacred Scriptures" here is probably not a reference to what Chinese Roman Catholics or Protestants in our twenty-first century context would recognize as "The Bible," even though the Chinese reference term uses the same two Chinese

characters, since it only (or primarily) refers to passages from the four Gospel accounts, and no other texts within the New Testament, not to mention any texts from the Hebrew Scriptures.

35. All of the following discussion is completely reliant on the article by Chén Yānróng entitled “The *Shengjing zhijie*: A Chinese Text of Commented Gospel Readings in the Encounter between Europe and China in the Seventeenth Century,” *Journal of Early Modern Christianity* 1(1) (2014), 165–93.

36. Dates occur in the text at the writing of the preface (1636) and the ninth volume (1642), and so it is feasible that there may have been later publication work done to produce the last five volumes. See Chen, “The *Shengjing zhijie*,” 173–4.

37. As cited in Chen, “The *Shengjing zhijie*,” 174.

38. Consult Chen, “The *Shengjing zhijie*,” 189–90.

39. At least this was not mentioned in her article, as far as I could see.

40. See Philippi Couplet et al., trans. and comm., *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus* (Paris: Daniele Horthemels, 1687), appearing on the first page of *Scientia Sinicae, Liber Primus*, in a special note printed in italics after the first paragraph. This occurs in the monograph after lengthy prolegomena amounting to 124 pages.

41. Quoting from Mungello, *Curious Land*, 270. On the same page, he admits that there were some “slight differences of interpretation” between the two scholars that should be noted, but the subsequent discussion does not reveal much of importance. In support of his claims, Mungello quotes on the same page from an evaluative statement found in a PhD dissertation produced by Robert Crawford, where he claims that the commentaries one finds in the *Sishū zhijiě* are “for the most part, a stylistically simplified version of [Zhū Xī]’s commentaries.” As will be seen in what follows, this is a simplification of the actual state of Zhāng’s commentaries and their later influences. Even though Mungello later on cites the fact that the authors of *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus* did claim that they “preferred the commentary of [Zhāng Jūzhèng] to that of [Zhū Xī] because of its differences in interpreting the Classics,” he continues to argue that “these differences are far less significant than the *Proëmialis Declaratio* implied.” Cited from Mungello, *Curious Land*, 280.

42. Here I am referring in particular to the footnotes found in the latter portion of Meynard’s *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus (1687)*, 331–422.

43. Here I am employing a 2007 version of Zhāng Jūzhèng’s commentaries, the *Sishū zhijiě*, which are presented under new titles and in a modern edited form. Because there are no numbers to specific passages or paragraphs, I will refer to the texts by the numbering system found regularly in James Legge’s versions of *The Chinese Classics*, as well as the page number(s) where the canonical passages and Zhāng’s commentaries appear in this modern rendering. For further details about the nature of the layout and other features, please see endnote 21 above. All these modern texts are edited by Chén Shéngxī 陳生璽 and others working with that scholar. The first is entitled *Zhāng Jūzhèng jiāng píng Dàxué Zhōngyōng huángjiā dúběn* 張居正講評《大學·中庸》皇家讀本 [*The Imperial House’s Reader of Zhāng Jūzhèng’s Explanations and Critical Comments on The Great Learning and The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*] (Shànghǎi 上海: Shànghǎi cǐshū chūbǎnshè 上海辭書出版社, 2007), and the second like it, *Zhāng Jūzhèng jiāng píng Lúnyǔ huángjiā dúběn*

張居正講評《論語》皇家讀本 [*The Imperial House's Reader of Zhāng Jūzhèng's Explanations and Critical Comments on The Analects*] (Shànghǎi 上海: Shànghǎi císhū chūbǎnshè 上海辭書出版社, 2007). Similarly attractive volumes have been prepared on Zhāng Jūzhèng's commentaries to the *Mèngzǐ* 孟子 (2007, in two volumes), the *Shàngshū* 尚書 (2007, in two volumes), the *Shījīng* 詩經 (2009, in two volumes), and the *Zìzhì tōngjiàn* 資治通鑑 (2010).

44. See Chén, et al., eds., *Zhāng Jūzhèng jiǎng píng Dàxué Zhōngyōng* [*Zhōngyōng* Ch. 16 in three parts], 79–81.

45. Quoting from Chén, et al., eds., *Zhāng Jūzhèng jiǎng píng Dàxué Zhōngyōng* [*Zhōngyōng* Ch. 16], 80. Here I have sought to find relatively neutral ways in English of referring to these sacrificial rites and the spiritual beings addressed by them, avoiding some common terms employed in other English renderings that carry negative denotations or ambivalent connotations. For example, some have referred to *sì* 祀 as “ancestral worship”; also, *qí* 祇 might be seen as “terrestrial daemons,” such as the one engaged by the philosopher Socrates; again, the *rénɡuǐ* 人鬼 could be “human ghosts.” Nevertheless, the terms “daemon” and “ghosts” may carry negative connotations related to evil spirits, involving moral evaluations of them that are not intended by these general terms in ancient Chinese.

46. Here and in what follows these interpretations are also drawing upon Chén, et al., eds., *Zhāng Jūzhèng jiǎng píng Dàxué Zhōngyōng* [*Zhōngyōng* Ch. 16], 80.

47. Quoting from Chén, et al., eds., *Zhāng Jūzhèng jiǎng píng Dàxué Zhōngyōng* [*Zhōngyōng* Ch. 16], 81.

48. Consult *Analects* 3: 12.

49. The following quotation is an English rendering by this author of the passage found in Chén, et al., eds., *Zhāng Jūzhèng jiǎng píng Lúnyǔ* [*Analects* 3: 12], 33.

50. Quoting from Zhū Xī 朱熹 ed. and comm. *Sìshū jízhù* 四書集註 [Collected Notes on the Four Books] (Taipei 台北: Yìwén yìnshūguǎn 藝文印書館, 1980), *Zhōngyōng*, 11.

51. Cited from Chén, et al., eds., *Zhāng Jūzhèng jiǎng píng Dàxué Zhōngyōng* [*Zhōngyōng* Ch. 19], 91.

52. Consult Zhū Xī, *Sìshū jízhù*, *Zhōngyōng*, 14 verso.

53. A poem in the third book of that canonical work, and using Legge's textual references, it is III.iii.vi, stanza 6. Consult James Legge, *The Chinese Classics, Volume 4 She-King* (Hong Kong: Anglo-Chinese Press, 1865), 544.

54. See Chén, et al., eds., *Zhāng Jūzhèng jiǎng píng Dàxué Zhōngyōng* [*Zhōngyōng* Ch. 33], 140–1.

55. Unfortunately, Mungello takes the assertion by the seventeenth-century Jesuits in their translation and comments on the 33rd chapter of the *Zhōngyōng* to be illegitimate, but he does so on the basis of an assumption that they were “reading in their own theology” into the text. He apparently had not read or realized that their claims were based on Zhāng Jūzhèng's own elaborations. Here I will argue that there was in fact a conceptual harmony between them that Mungello missed. Consult Mungello, *Curious Land*, 286. In this context, he refers to James Legge's translation in English, noting that Legge did not “argue for” the existence of God at this point in the text. In fact, what Legge had done in the passage quoted from the *Shījīng* was to refer to

shàngdì as “God,” and *shàngtiān* as “High Heaven,” and so it would seem that by this means Legge was in fact asserting that theistic metaphysics were present in that text (and therefore would support both Zhāng Jūzhèng’s and the seventeenth-century Jesuits’ claims by means of his translations of these terms). See James Legge, trans. and comm., *The Chinese Classics, Volume 4 She-King*, 544.

56. Referring to Analects 3: 13.

57. Quoted from the commentary found in Chén, et al., eds., *Zhāng Jūzhèng jiǎng píng Lúnyǔ* [Analects 3: 13], 34.

58. I am indebted to Zhòng Xīnzi 衷鑫恣 for his use of the term “polypneumatism” as a description of the many kinds of spiritual beings that are not a supreme being in Ruist traditions. See the term in its adjectival form in Zhong Xinzi, “A Reconstruction of Zhū Xī’s Religious Philosophy Inspired by Leibniz: The Natural Theology of Heaven,” PhD dissertation, Hong Kong Baptist University, 2014, 235.

59. As presented in Zhong Xinzi, “A Reconstruction of Zhū Xī’s Religious Philosophy Inspired by Leibniz,” 113–4, 232–8.

60. Consult Hoyt C. Tillman, “Consciousness of T’ien in Chu Hsi’s Thought,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 47(1) (June 1987): 31–50. More recently, I have developed these claims of Zhū Xī in relationship to later Christian explorations of his works by both foreign and Chinese Christian scholars, including their varying accounts of his conception of *tiān*. For those interested, please consult Lauren F. Pfister, “Zhu Xi and Christianity,” in Ng Kai-Chiu and Huang Yong, eds., *The Dao Companion on the Philosophy of Zhu Xi* (Dordrecht: Springer Verlag, 2020), 681–737.

61. From this angle, it is interesting to note that Zhāng Jūzhèng at least once directly cited the Hàn dynasty Ruist systematizer, Dǒng Zhòngshū 董仲舒 (c. 179 BCE–c. 104 BCE), as one of his inspirations for his understanding of governance. It was Dǒng’s theory of a relatively strict moralistic “sense-and-response” pattern of the relationship between *tiān* and human beings, expressed in the phrase *tiān rén gǎnyīng* 天人感應, that bears some important resemblance to Zhāng’s own worldview, although Zhāng’s understanding of that dynamic is less rigid than what Dǒng promoted. Find the citation from Dǒng’s work in the context of a discussion of governance in Chén, et al., eds., *Zhāng Jūzhèng jiǎng píng Lúnyǔ* [Analects 12: 17], 189, and the use of the phrase *gǎnyīng zhī lǐ* (感應之理 “the principle of sense-and-response”) in the same work, [Analects 3: 13], 34.

62. Cited from Deuteronomy 6: 5 (New International Version). It is expressed in the New Testament in two ways (Matthew 22: 37 and Mark 12: 30), reflecting at the very least a difference in the conceptions regarding the “heart” in Hebrew and Greek languages (*leb* in ancient Hebrew, *kardia* in ancient Greek), where the former includes rational as well as emotional activities, while the latter tends to be associated exclusively with the emotional sphere.

63. The Analects 7: 21. The following English renderings come from Edward Slingerland, trans., *Confucius – Analects with Selections from Traditional Commentaries* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company Inc., 2003), 71.

64. Another contemporary English rendering of this term in this particular context renders this word as “deity,” and so one can understand how this would promote

a secularist or anti-theistic attitude among some contemporary Ruist scholars. See Chichung Huang, trans., *The Analects of Confucius (Lun Yu): A Literal Translation with an Introduction and Notes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), [7:20], 91. Notably, D. C. Lau renders the same term as “gods.” Consult D. C. Lau, trans. *Confucius – The Analects (Lun yü)* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1979), [7:21], 88.

65. Consult Chén, et al., eds., *Zhāng Jūzhèng jiǎng píng Lúnyǔ* [*Analects* 7: 21], 102–3.

66. Found in Chén, et al., eds., *Zhāng Jūzhèng jiǎng píng Lúnyǔ* [*Analects* 6: 22], 66.

67. As described in Chén, et al., eds., *Zhāng Jūzhèng jiǎng píng Lúnyǔ* [*Analects* 2: 24], 26.

68. Found in Chén, et al., eds., *Zhāng Jūzhèng jiǎng píng Lúnyǔ* [*Analects* 7: 21], 103.

69. A principle elaborated as in the way which will follow, and found in Chén, et al., eds., *Zhāng Jūzhèng jiǎng píng Lúnyǔ* [*Analects* 11: 12], 165.

70. So Zhāng explains in his commentaries in Chén, et al., eds., *Zhāng Jūzhèng jiǎng píng Lúnyǔ* [*Analects* 3: 12; 6: 22; 7: 35], 33, 86, and 111. The same teaching is also underscored at the end of the *Zhōngyōng* in Chén, et al., eds., *Zhāng Jūzhèng jiǎng píng Dàxué Zhōngyōng* [*Zhōngyōng* Ch. 33], 141.

71. Explained in this manner in Chén, et al., eds., *Zhāng Jūzhèng jiǎng píng Lúnyǔ* [*Analects* 7: 35], 111.

72. As expressed in relationship to how an exemplary person has “awe of the heavenly mandate” (*wèi tiān mìng* 畏天命), as found in Chén, et al., eds., *Zhāng Jūzhèng jiǎng píng Lúnyǔ* [*Analects* 16: 8], 267.

73. In this way, Zhāng explains why Master Kǒng is at peace with the spiritual beings when he is ill during his final period of life, suggesting that praying is only for those who have been morally deficient in their reverence to spiritual beings. Consult Chén, et al., eds., *Zhāng Jūzhèng jiǎng píng Lúnyǔ* [*Analects* 7: 35], 111.

74. As asserted in Chén, et al., eds., *Zhāng Jūzhèng jiǎng píng Lúnyǔ* [*Analects* 2: 24; 6: 22 and 28], 26, 86, and 89.

75. Highlighted in Zhāng’s comments in Chén, et al., eds., *Zhāng Jūzhèng jiǎng píng Lúnyǔ* [*Analects* 6: 22], 86.

76. As underscored in the commentary discussions found in Chén, et al., eds., *Zhāng Jūzhèng jiǎng píng Lúnyǔ* [*Analects* 7: 23 and 12: 5], 104 and 181.

77. As expressed by Master Kǒng in the particular situation when he heard thunder, found in Chén, et al., eds., *Zhāng Jūzhèng jiǎng píng Lúnyǔ* [*Analects* 10: 25], 159.

78. As found in Chén Shéngxǐ, et al., eds., *Zhāng Jūzhèng jiǎng píng Lúnyǔ* [*Analects* 12: 12 and 13: 5], 189 and 198.

79. For an account of the “resistant post-secular secularists,” please consult the Methodological Introduction to this volume.

80. One of the most famous of the early Roman Catholic converts who had attained the rank of a *jìnshì* 進士 (something like a PhD in the twenty-first century) as a Ruist scholar.

81. A second-ranking Ruist scholar who met the much younger James Legge in Hong Kong in the mid-1840s and whose works have been described in my article, “Discovering Monotheistic Metaphysics: The Exegetical Reflections of James Legge (1815–1897) and Lo Chung-fan (d. circa 1850)” in Kai-wing Chow, On-cho Ng, and John B. Henderson, eds., *Imagining Boundaries: Changing Confucian Doctrines, Texts, and Hermeneutics* (Albany, New York: SUNY Press, 1999), 213–49.

82. Kāng was a person of great eminence in the final decades of the Qīng empire, taking a position during the ill-fated Reform Movement of 1898 equivalent to a prime minister in other political contexts. Further details about his life and one of his most unusual works are provided in chapter 6 of this volume.

83. A major example of such an argument that employs the claim of “Christianization” to deny that there is any theistic conceptions within “classical Chinese culture” is addressed in chapter 7 in this volume especially in relationship to a translation and interpretation of the *Zhōngyōng*, a key text for Zhāng Jūzhèng’s justification of his own version of Ruist theism, as has been demonstrated within this chapter.

84. I have tried to introduce some initial description of Couvreur’s work that includes some brief comments about his reliance on Zhū Xī, in an article that is forthcoming in a volume to be produced by Fu Jen University. It is entitled “A Comparative Grammatological Overview and Initial Interpretive Problems Related to Séraphin Couvreur’s 顧賽芬 (1835–1919) *Les Quatres Livres*.”

Chapter 4

Post-Secular Revelations regarding the *Dàxué* and the *Zhōngyōng*

To initiate philosophy students in the understanding of Ruist (“Confucian”) philosophical traditions and their related problems, it is a standard move to initiate the study by reference to the canonical work of *The Four Books* (*Sishū* 《四書》). Normally their philosophy teachers would begin with studies of the *Lúnyǔ* 《論語》 or *The Analects*,¹ and subsequently tackle the much larger but mostly dialogic texts that constitute the *Mèngzǐ* 《孟子》 or *The Mencius*.² If a thorough course of study in this realm is designed by their teacher, they would then be initiated in the study of the *Dàxué* 《大學》 or *The Great Learning*,³ as well as the study of the *Zhōngyōng* 《中庸》.⁴ With the systematic study of this four-in-one *magnum opus* as the basis for their understanding of “classical” Ruist traditions, students are thoroughly prepared to take further steps in their studies of subsequent developments found during the two-and-a-half millennia of Ruist scholarly studies, creative writings, and interpretive diversity.

In fact, however, most philosophy classes dealing with such themes would only focus on studies of *The Analects* and *The Mèngzǐ*, without dealing with the full texts of the latter two texts within *The Four Books*, even though they are the shorter tomes within that four-in-one classic text. If *The Great Learning* and *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*⁵ are taught, they are normally presented in the forms of those texts produced by Zhū Xī in the twelfth-century CE Sòng dynasty context, and little if anything is discussed about their textual complexities and the history of the diverse forms of these two texts. As will be seen below, there are good justifications for taking this route historically, especially if one adopts the imperial Qīng authorization of Zhū Xī’s commentaries as adequate warrant for doing so.⁶ Nevertheless, as I will seek to indicate within the balance of this chapter, the fact of that textual diversity and the debates that surrounded them set the stage for centuries of

philosophical debates within subsequent Ruist sub-traditions, debates that continue to be addressed even in twenty-first century Chinese philosophical circles.

My reference above to a “four-in-one *magnum opus*” is an indirect way of referring to the fact that Zhū Xī sought to unite the four previously independent works into an inter-textual whole by means of his cross-referencing efforts to explain various passages in one text by means of the others, particularly in the cases of his versions of *The Great Learning* and *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*. In other words, what had for nearly 1,500 years within Ruist traditions been left unnoticed and disconnected had been synthesized into a new textual unity on the basis of his intertextual interpretive efforts, particularly in their claims related to whole person cultivation that would lead to becoming a sage (*chéng shèng* 成聖). This was a matter of such importance to ancient Ruist teachings, and was underscored in Zhū Xī’s synthetic reinterpretation of those ancient works, that it became probably the most distinctive feature of orthodox Ruist traditions for the last 700 years of the imperial era, from the twelfth to the twentieth centuries CE. Obviously, then, some of the most important philosophical concerns were rooted in those claims, as well as some of the most notable assertions related to the articulation of some form of Ruist spirituality that have become more prominent once again in the early twenty-first century among certain Chinese philosophers.⁷

In what follows, therefore, I will take steps first of all to identify the basic historical background that can account for the presence of at least two major textual traditions related to *The Great Learning* and *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*. Subsequently, I will explain in more detail the complexities involved in these textual differences and indicate not only why they are controversial in their textual forms, but also why they were so significant philosophically for the reigniting of a new wave of Ruist orthodox scholarship and lifestyle. Having done this important historical, textual, and background work, I will then take a further step to describe and elaborate why Zhū Xī’s particular contributions to the “new wave” were both remarkable in their synthetic insights and controversial in their philosophical claims. On this basis, then, I will be able to address some of the clever ways that three of the most notable nineteenth and twentieth-century Anglo-European translators of Ruist canonical literature handled these complicated problems in their translations and commentaries and how they responded evaluatively to the issues that they felt had to be addressed due to their own worldview commitments. Subsequently, I will give three examples from contemporary twenty-first century Chinese writings of how the philosophical controversy caused by these textual and interpretive traditions continue to provoke philosophical debates among notable Chinese philosophers. As a result of all these efforts, then, I will draw this chapter’s study toward closure, by indicating why I anticipate

that these philosophical problems will and should remain part and parcel of Ruist philosophical concerns for the foreseeable future.

DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN TWO MAJOR RUIST TEXTUAL TRADITIONS

From a broader historical perspective, one could justifiably claim that it was the major dimensions of classical Ruist traditions that set the framework for what we can now refer to as “traditional Chinese culture.” The “five classics” (*wǔjīng* 五經), a set of canonical texts that included a sixth lost scripture dealing with music, set the epistemological and cultural categories for an elitist Ruist expression of a flourishing life. What were referred to mostly by single ideographs as the *Yì* 易 (The Changes), the *Shū* 書 (History), the *Shī* 詩 (Poetry/Odes), the *Lǐ* 禮 (Rites and Customs), the *Yuè* 樂 (Music), and the *Chūnqiū* 春秋 (lit. “Spring(s)-and-Autumn(s)”) portrayed cultural interests invested in (1) the nature of transforming and traumatic changes at all levels of the phenomenal universe (in the *Yì*), (2) the ancient stories of sage kings and their enemies (expressed in the *Shū*), (3) the poetic expressions of a diverse set of poets from ancient states before the imperial era took shape (embodied in the *Shī*), (4) a diverse collection of rituals and customs that mainly, but not exclusively, described the lifestyle of the elite classes (revealed through the *Lǐ*), (5) a lost classic that dealt with the role of music in the different stages of life, and (6) the brief chronicles of the state of Lǔ 魯 that projected brief and discerning assessments regarding the honorable and the blameworthy among its rulers and those of neighboring states.⁸ Put in other words, they portrayed fundamental elements of cosmogeny and cosmology, history, poetry, politics, ritual and ethics, music, and fine arts. From this classical foundation, the imperial establishment of Ruist expressions of cultured life was able to develop, transform, and guide other dimensions of the various cultures that developed across dynastic history from the second century before the Christian era till 1911. Profiles of Ruist expressions of cultured life were captured by some of the best among the Protestant missionary-scholars in the latter part of the nineteenth century, suggesting just how much wider, multidimensional, and traditional this vision of cultured life was, especially when compared with the general orientation of modern philosophical studies in the first decades of the twenty-first century. For example, late in his life, the former Scottish Congregationalist missionary turned Oxford professor, James Legge 理雅各 (1815–1897) wrote in 1880 what Norman Girardot has called “the first university handbook” on Chinese religions,⁹ viewing it from both from the Ruist canonical sources that he knew so well and also from accounts of the current imperial rituals that few foreigners in his own era had

even heard about, much less seen.¹⁰ A year later, a former American missionary who became part of the Qīng imperial administration, William Alexander Parsons Martin 丁韪良 (aka W. A. P. Martin, 1827–1916) wrote a revealing account of specific aspects of that elite expression of traditional Ruist Chinese culture.¹¹ It is distinctive because it is written by an insider who interacted daily with Ruist elite for many years and so was able to portray details about their Ruist institutions, ideals, and cultural expressions that are as insightful as they are rare.¹²

For those philosophers who are not used to thinking of ritual expressions as part of their ethical orientation or philosophy of culture, seeking to comprehend and analyze the claims and justifications for this elitest Ruist expression of cultured life may seem bland or even otiose. Resources offering more sophisticated philosophical accounts of the ethical and metaethical concerns inherent in Ruist rituals are provided by Antonio S. Cua (1932–2007),¹³ and their roles in an informed philosophy of culture can be studied from specific works of Robert Neville (1939–).¹⁴ These orienting steps are helpful for dealing with these two texts that originally served as two among dozens of chapters within collections of ritual tractates included in what was later called the *Liji* 《禮記》 or *The Record of Rites*. Notably, however, *The Great Learning* and *The State of Harmony and Equilibrium* as found in *The Record of Rites* (chapters 42 and 31, respectively) contained many more discussions about moral and ethical principles—and in the latter text, important claims related to achievements of elevated epistemological states and the character of various metaphysical entities and their transformations—than they have descriptions of ritual acts (as appear in many other chapters of those collections). In the textual form that they appear within *The Record of the Rites*, they form the oldest textual versions of both texts, and so in late imperial discussions they were referred to the “old text” versions (*gǔběn* 古本) of each scripture. They reflect cultural realities that were taking shape during the latter part of the third century and the earlier part of the second century before the Christian era, that is, at the end of the Warring States period and near the beginning (and perhaps sometime after) the establishment of the first Hàn dynasty, the Western Hàn (206 BCE).¹⁵

The development of philological, historical, and literary commentaries on these two texts began to take shape substantially during the Táng dynasty (618–907), setting precedents in interpretive developments that ignited a new wave of creativity during the Northern and Southern Sòng dynasties (960–1279).¹⁶ It was Zhū Xī who set a new standard for these interpretations by integrating perspectives from previous Sòng Ruist scholars’ thoughtful interpretations and framing them within a synthetically worked out worldview that informed his own interpretations and provided innovative justifications for a new form of Ruist orthodoxy in

its metaphysical, cultural, moral, epistemological, historical, and political expressions. Nearly 500 years after his death, Zhū's commentaries had received Qīng imperial commendations, so that in Qīng dynasty editions of *The Record of Rites*, when a reader came to chapters 31 and 42 where *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony* and *The Great Learning* were to be found, there were brief notes pointing the reader to see Zhū Xī's versions of those texts in his commentaries to *The Four Books*. In other words, even though the differences between the "old text" versions and the "new text" versions were already heatedly debated by that time, Qīng Ruist authorities wanted to quash any opposition to the imperially authorized commentaries written by Zhū Xī.

Whether or not twenty-first century Chinese philosophers follow this ideological reduction of the diversity of the canonical texts to the Zhū Xī standard is generally no longer a matter of ideological alignment, but may be motivated by the fact that the textual and interpretive complexities are so vast that it is much easier to approach the texts on the basis of the Qīng authorized versions and their commentaries. In doing so, however, they hamper themselves and their students from understanding one of the most important philosophical debates within Ruist traditions, because it deals with how one should approach the process of becoming a sage.

DETAILS OF THE TEXTUAL REORGANIZATION AND EMENDATIONS OF THE DÀXUÉ AND ZHŌNGYŌNG

Inspired by the creative reorganization of these two texts suggested by two of his Ruist predecessors who died many decades before he was born, the two Chéng brothers—Chéng Hào 程顥 (1032–1085) and Chéng Yí 程頤 (1033–1107)—Zhū Xī continued their textual reconstructions based significantly on insights drawn from his beliefs about their basic claims as scriptures and informed at times also by his own *lǐ* 理-and-*qì* 氣 grounded worldview. The resulting textual reorganization made the differences between the "old text" and "new text" versions of *The Great Learning* far more pronounced and significant than those of *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*.¹⁷ So, even though the latter text was longer and thematically more complex than *The Great Learning*, the textual transformation that established the Zhū Xī-inspired "new text" of that Ruist Scripture was monumental.¹⁸

From the angle of comparing the two reorganizations of these seminal Ruist canonical works, Zhū Xī's "new text" versions bore out some important similarities that heightened their philosophical meaning, and simultaneously created textual and interpretive controversies that shaped many of the debates and criticisms of his claims for the subsequent seven centuries. Here I will

summarize three points of structural similarity that these “new text” versions possessed in common.

First of all, Zhū Xī declared that the very first portion of each text was itself a “classic” (*jīng* 經) taught by Master Kǒng (“Confucius”) himself, and that the much larger remainder of each text was designed ultimately to be commentaries (*zhuàn* 傳) to the authoritative claims found in that initial section of each text putatively articulated by the Ruist “teacher of myriads of ages.” The fact that he identified an author of the commentarial traditions for each text that was historically related to the teachings of Master Kǒng was also distinctive, illustrating the sense of authoritative certainly in Zhū Xī’s interpretive glosses that was as bold as it was controversial.¹⁹ Notably, no earlier commentator had ever made such a division of these scriptures into classic/commentary in any age previous to the Sòng dynasty, provoking critics already in the Sòng period and all subsequent dynastic periods to ask what justifications could possibly support such audacious textual distinctions.²⁰

Second, each of the commentarial sections were divided into new chapters, generally not following the sequence or breaks in the “old text” versions, especially in the case of *The Great Learning*. Ten chapters of commentaries were identified by Zhū Xī within *The Great Learning*, and thirty-three chapters in *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*. In modern editions of these “new text” versions, each of the chapters are given an Arabic number following the sequence of their appearance in the canonical text, following precedents set by James Legge in his 1861 English versions of those two scriptures.²¹

Third and finally, the sequence of the commentarial chapters specifically followed Zhū Xī’s philosophical and textual assumptions regarding the meaning of key elements found in the classic portion of each text. This was very directly visible within Zhū Xī’s greatly revised text of *The Great Learning*, but was a more controversial claim within the “new text” version of *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*. In the former case, there were three main principles and subsequently eight steps that framed the connections of the ten commentaries in a relatively understandable sequence of stages and realms of cultivation, making it particularly attractive for its directness and memorability. These chapter sequences also explicitly mirrored the order of stages of whole person cultivation that Zhū Xī intended to promote, and so set the stage for subsequent debates about how any person might become a sage.

What should be stated historically about this major textual precedent and the creation of the four-in-one *magnum opus* of *The Four Books*—a text that is now always connected with the name of Zhū Xī—is that it set into motion a new wave of textual emendations and commentarial accounts that persisted till the end of the imperial period in 1911. Within the extensive scholarly descriptive and evaluative studies of Ruist classical learning (*jīngxué* 經學)

by the notable Chinese academician of the Institute of Chinese Literature and Philosophy at Academia Sinica in Taipei, Lin Ch'ing-chang (Lin Qingzhāng 林慶彰), there are found just over forty different textual reconstructions of the *Dàxué* that appeared from the period of the eleventh century (the Southern Sòng dynasty) to the end of the nineteenth century (the final years of the Qīng dynasty).²² This plethora of textual diversity may be seen as merely a historical curiosity to those outside of Ruist circles, but it was in fact stimulated into being by the Ruist search for attaining sagely consciousness, a matter central to the basic philosophical anthropology of Ruist traditions. It had as much to do with Zhū Xī's commentaries as particular texts as well as the intertextual philosophical insights that Zhū Xī made between passages within the four scriptures to create the four-in-one magnum opus that proved to be so attractive, so insightful, and so controversial for subsequent centuries.

ZHŪ XĪ'S CONTROVERSIAL "NEW TEXT" OF *THE GREAT LEARNING*: EXPLANATIONS AND REVELATIONS

On the basis of what has now been explained and described above, some further points of controversy, especially related to the textual emendations and philosophical interpretations of Zhū Xī's "new text" of *The Great Learning*, can be briefly and poignantly highlighted. Though it is historically true that Zhū Xī's textual reorganizations were inspired in part by his extensive studies of the published and unpublished writings of the two Chéng brothers, he was undoubtedly operating under his own creative insights and so went far beyond them in bringing a synthetic wholeness to his commentarial works for *The Four Books*. Where his innovative work took on unusual proportions came about when, after he discovered that the commentarial comments within *The Great Learning* dealing with "investigating things and extending knowledge" (*gèwù zhìzhī* 格物致知) were woefully inadequate, he created his own "appended chapter" (*bǔzhāng* 補章) inspired by teachings from the two Chéng brothers. What this amounts to is this: a set of ten Chinese characters identified within the "old text" version was subsequently extended into a passage of nearly 180 more words in the "new text" version, all of which had never existed previously in the older version. Though they were framed as "commentary" and were declared to be inspired by the words of "Master Chéng" (Chéngzǐ 程子), the text became a *cause célèbre* for his supporters and a *bête noire* for his distractors, due in part to their perceived Buddhist tendencies.²³ In order to grasp the nature of the argument and some of the philosophical implications, I quote below the main body of that appended chapter in the English rendering produced by Ian Johnston and Wang Ping.

What is meant by “extending knowledge to the limit lies in investigating things” is that, if we wish to extend our knowledge to the limit, this involves approaching things and thoroughly investigating their principle [in each case]. In all probability the intelligence of men’s minds is such that there is none without knowledge and, in the case of the world’s things, there is none without principle. So, to the extent that these principles are not thoroughly investigated, then a man’s knowledge is incomplete. This is why the initial teaching of the greater learning must be to cause the person learning to approach all the things in the world and, on the basis of the principles which he already knows, to increase his thorough investigation of them in order to seek to reach this limit. If he exerts his strength on this over a long time, he will suddenly come to understand how things are and will have a thoroughgoing comprehension of them. Then, for the multitude of things, what is manifest or hidden, what is fine or coarse, will in all cases be reached, and his mind in its whole substance and great workings will be entirely illuminated. This is what is meant by investigating things. This is what is meant by the perfecting of knowledge.²⁴

Four issues and their related concerns should be addressed in seeking to understand Zhū Xī’s claims found in this “appended chapter.”

First of all, from the angle of philosophical anthropology, Zhū’s account of the human “mind” (*xīn* 心)—or what Chung-ying Cheng and others prefer to call the “heart-mind” in the context of Ruist texts because of the prominence of emotive states that are part and parcel of acts of knowing and coming to know in these canonical texts—involves an active effort in coming to know the “principle” (*lǐ* 理) of anything that is within their sphere of attention. By this means, one is able to arrive at a state of omniscience with regard to things in the phenomenal world that one knows, as well as with regard to the nature and function of the heart-mind. Though it is not made explicit in this paragraph above, this depicts the nature and qualities of the consciousness of any Ruist sage (*shèngrén* 聖人). Consequently, it is crucial to understand in epistemological terms what he means by “thoroughly investing their principle” (*qióng qí lǐ* 窮其理) and “seeking to reach this limit” (*qiú zhì hū qí jí* 求至乎其極), requiring one to identify the nature of patterned principle both in particular things as well as within the heart-mind itself.

Metaphysically speaking, then, principle (or “patterned principle”) is not a physical entity, but is something reached by “intelligence” (or the “spirit” of the heart-mind, *líng* 靈), and is itself non-material. It is not only found within things and within the heart-mind but has some interconnectedness with all things, so that a single-patterned principle exists within all things and as a metaphysical lynchpin to Zhū Xī’s understanding of the cosmological universe. This concept he referred to under the rubric of the *tàijí* 太極 or “Supreme Ultimate,” suggesting that this is where the “limit” would be found in any one thing that is “thoroughly investigated.” Put into other terms that

Zhū used elsewhere, this all happens when one reverently, attentively (*jìng* 敬), and thoroughly investigates things. From this perspective, one can see that Zhū Xī is a metaphysical realist interested in understanding the phenomenal universe in all its multiform expressions.

Two Buddhist-like elements appear in several phrases that appear in this paragraph, and so constitute the last two issues I will address here. When a person works hard at reverently, attentively, and thoroughly investigating things, Zhū claims they will “suddenly” come into a “thoroughgoing comprehension” of their principles, and so will have reached that “perfect knowledge” that is the state of sagely consciousness. The phrase used by Zhū links together a Buddhist-style “suddenness” with Master Kǒng’s concern for “thoroughgoing comprehension” of his teachings (and so not just material things)—*yīdàn huòrán guāntōng yǎn* 一旦豁然貫通焉—“in a particular moment will suddenly attain thoroughgoing comprehension of them.” So, at the very end, when the “whole substance” and “great workings” of the heart-mind are revealed, the term describing that comprehensive “illumination” is a term, *míng* 明, that was regularly found in Buddhist sutras to refer to “enlightenment.” In addition, however, that same term is also a major epistemological concept found in *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*, and so here the overlapping terminology or Buddhist and Ruist texts could complicate interpretive matters significantly.

The tone of Zhū Xī’s “appended chapter” is replete with confidence, and so in some quarters could be read as a self-aggrandizing hubris that needed to be stifled before it “corrupted the youth.” It is not without consequence, then, that for the last four years of his life, Zhū Xī was faced with ideological opposition from the highest levels of elite Ruist authority in the Southern Sòng empire, and so was defrocked of all of his scholarly titles.²⁵ During the last four years, he lived as a commoner, but those who knew him and followed him did not allow this political tragedy to tarnish their respect for their master and teacher. It is claimed that 3,000 persons attended his funeral when he died at the age of 70. This existential trauma Zhū experienced is not generally known even by those who study various aspects of Chinese philosophy, though it may be recalled by those specializing in Zhū Xī studies. Particularly in this light, then, it is worth asking: Why would the works of such a controversial and ultimately publicly demoted Ruist scholar end up becoming so significant for the last seven centuries of the imperial era in China (not to mention elsewhere in Korea, Japan, and Vietnam)?

In spite of some more or less subtle problems with his claims, and the obviously egregious assertions that provoked a vicious opposition to his works, Zhū Xī’s accounts within *The Great Learning* and *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony* provided a new and systematically worked out interpretive account of how life could become a flourishing expression of intelligence and insight within the river of the cultured and cosmogenic Dao. Within

The Great Learning are matters promoting virtuous restraint and cultured life within one's family, society, and larger world that highlighted the ways that mundane life could be made marvelous and sagely. Previously no clear pattern of whole person cultivation of this sort had taken the center stage of Ruist cultivation practices, but within decades after Zhū Xī's demise, his systematic and articulate worldview captured the appreciation of numerous Ruist scholars who had never before encountered such a well-integrated account of an orthodox Ruist form of life. Another aspect of its enduring legacy is that by reinterpreting the metaphysical and whole person cultivation claims promoted in *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*, Zhū Xī produced a vital option to the goal of spiritual enlightenment made by Chinese Buddhists and an alternative to searching for immortality by Daoists. Put very succinctly, Zhū's claims reasserted a Ruist cultural hegemony within mundane human contexts. This conscious effort at dislodging the popular claims of contemporary Buddhist and Daoist intellectuals was summarily justified by means of the collection of quotations from earlier Sòng Ruist scholars brought together in the fourteenth chapter of Zhū Xī's and Lǚ Zǔqiān's 呂祖謙 (1137–1181) compendium, *Reflections on Things at Hand* (*Jīnsī lù* 《近思錄》).²⁶ Where Ruist scholarly life had previously sometimes taken on an aura of bookish aloofness and elite snobbishness, Zhū's reinterpretations of whole person cultivation and its attendant form of life constituted a populist rejection of those corrupt forms of Ruist scholasticism that offered sagely attainment to all who reverently, attentively, and thoroughly investigated things.

In subsequent centuries, another Ruist scholar endured a now well-known struggle with Zhū's way toward sageliness. It is now a classic story, telling of an older teenaged Chinese youth, known for being precocious, who sat before a thicket of bamboo plants to "reverently, attentively, and thoroughly investigate" the principle residing in the bamboo. Having chosen to do so with some kindred friends, he was left alone after several days and ended up in a state of psychological despair and physical exhaustion after a full week of quiet-sitting while seeking the patterned-principle within the bamboo. Subsequently, Wáng Shǒurén 王守仁, having taken on a new style name, Wáng Yángmíng 王陽明 (1472–1529), argued that his breakthrough insights came from reading the "old text" version of *The Great Learning* and discovering that Zhū Xī's account of whole person cultivation was "wrongly conceived."²⁷ It is of no little consequence, then, that of the four published documents by Wáng Yángmíng cited in Johnston and Wang's study, three of them explicitly refer to the "old text *Dàxué*" in their titles.²⁸

One of the new highpoints of anti-Zhū Xī critiques came during the transformation from the Chinese Míng to the Manchurian Qīng dynasty in the mid-seventeenth century. The Míng loyalist and Hànlín 翰林 scholar, Máo Qíling 毛奇齡 (1623–1713), failed in seeking to gain imperial support

for his opposition to the emperor's authorization of Zhū Xī's commentaries to *The Four Books*, but in the process, Máo developed a new approach to critical textual analysis that led to the establishment of a new Ruist sub-tradition.²⁹ Developing a style of "critical intra-canonical hermeneutics" to challenge Zhū Xī's philological claims for ancient texts, Máo developed a "hermeneutics of suspicion" that started with the basic claim that the "old texts" of *The Great Learning* and *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony* were not only the older texts, but they should also be considered to be the authentic ones. What Zhū and others had produced were "false classics," unrepresentative and willfully distorted texts that had mislead thousands of Ruist scholars since his death.³⁰ By means of insisting on careful philological analysis of terms that were drawn originally from pre-imperial sources and then applied within Zhū's own commentary with meanings that were shaped by Sòng dynasty Chinese understandings, Máo initiated a form of critique that later was referred to as "Hàn Learning" (*hànxué* 漢學),³¹ that is, insisting on the phonetic and philological differences of Hàn dynasty Chinese terms and phrases that carried different denotations than those same ideographs and multi-character terms during the Sòng period that occurred historically a thousand years later.³² In this sense, Máo created a new textual methodology that was an early Qīng equivalent of analytical philosophical analysis and applied it trenchantly, though unsuccessfully, to oppose Zhū Xī's preeminence in contemporary Ruist traditions. Near the end of his life, Máo worked with a host of younger Ruist followers to produce a monumental study constituted by analytical criticisms of various passages throughout the whole of Zhū Xī's commentaries to *The Four Books*. The work was entitled *Changes and Errors in The Four Books* (*Sishū Gǎi Cuò* 《四書改錯》), amounting in its published form to 22 fascicles (*juàn* 卷) in length, including 32 separate thematic "textual realms" (*ménbù* 門部) within the relevant texts that involved a total of 447 separate case studies or "articles" (*tiáo* 條).³³ Such a formidable and systematic critique could not be simply set aside, even though Máo still agreed with the basic claim (following approaches also taken by Wáng Yángmíng, but without the "Hàn Learning" methodology that Máo developed more than 200 years later) that all persons who pursued sagehood properly according to the authentic Ruist canonical works (including *The Four Books*) could attain their goal.³⁴

HOW MODERN MISSIONARY-SCHOLARS HANDLED THE DIVERSE TEXTUAL TRADITIONS

Here a very practical question arises regarding choices that informed translators needed to make when they became aware of the diversity of textual

traditions related to *The Great Learning* and *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*. What needed to be put into consideration was not only the prevailing attitudes of their age—whether it was the attitudes of Qīng imperial authorities or those of a post-traditional Chinese cultural setting—but also their own informed sense of the controversy. As has been already indicated previously, the Qīng imperial house had effectively placed its imperial seal to the new text versions of the two Ruist scriptures created by Zhū Xī as well as his interpretations of those texts, a cultural factor that simply could not be ignored. Under post-traditional cultural contexts (i.e., after 1911), the problem could be increased exponentially, because besides the necessary confirmation of the existence of the “old text” and “new text” versions, there had been several dozen other versions of *The Great Learning*, in particular, that posed a major problem for settling questions about what should count as the “standard text.”³⁵ Having become informed and committed to doing the translation work, the translators then could determine how and where to address the problems within a proper place in their formatted rendering put into the target language. On the basis of what I have currently come to know through relatively extensive studies of the translations of Ruist canonical texts in European languages by sinologically competent intellectuals, there are a handful of Christian missionary-scholars who rendered versions of *The Great Learning* and *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony* with the critical historical and hermeneutic consciousness that this pair of Ruist canonical texts required.³⁶ Those missionary scholars and their relevant works that I will discuss here will be, first of all, the Russian Orthodox abbot who resided in Běijīng from 1807 to 1821, Iakinǎf 雅金夫 Иакинф (secular name, Nikita Yakovlovich Bichurin 比丘林 Никита Яаковлевич Бичурин (1777–1853); second, the Scottish Congregationalist and London Missionary Society representative residing primarily in Hong Kong from 1843 to 1873, James Legge 理雅各 (1815–1897); third, the French Jesuit living in the Jesuit mission compound in Xiànxian 獻縣, near Héjiānfǔ 河間府 in Héběi 河北 Province, Séraphin Couvreur 顧賽芬 (1835–1919); and finally the Portuguese Jesuit living primarily in Macau but also elsewhere in Guǎngdōng 廣東 province during his career, Joaquim Angelico de Jésus Guerra 戈振東 (1908–1994).³⁷

As far as I am aware at this time, the first self-conscious effort to deal with this complicated textual problem related to the multiple versions of *The Great Learning* and *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony* came from Iakinǎf, a largely unknown figure even in Anglo-Western European intellectual circles, but seen among Russian sinologists as a figure of foundational significance for the development of their modern discipline of sinology.³⁸ Iakinǎf had produced a number of important studies, especially related to the history of ethnic groups living on the border between the Russian and Qīng empires,³⁹ and in addition was a major translator of numerous kinds of Chinese texts,

vocabulary lists, and dictionaries.⁴⁰ His presence is so much felt (though in fact very little is known in detail about his works by many twenty-first century Russian sinologists), that in the offices of the Department of Oriental Manuscripts in St. Petersburg they have an eight foot tall full color portrait of the man (possibly a painted self-portrait), portraying Iakinf dressed in Manchurian clothing, and placed directly in the middle of the wall opposite to the entrance door.⁴¹ Nevertheless, and sadly not without some historical irony, what Iakinf has left as unpublished manuscripts greatly outweighs his published works, as demonstrated by an unusual article written originally in Russian by an academic named Koshin, and then subsequently published in a German rendering in 1938.⁴² What Koshin knew about Iakinf's knowledge of Zhū Xī was very basic: sometime around 1814, after being in Běijīng for seven years as the leader and abbot of the Ninth Russian Ecclesiastical mission, Iakinf had produced a Russian manuscript of Zhū Xī's authoritative texts and commentaries to *The Four Books*. Nevertheless, where that manuscript is currently held remains a mystery.⁴³ Having unusual opportunities to travel to Moscow and Saint Petersburg in 2014 and 2016, I was able with the help of colleagues from the Museum of Oriental Manuscripts in Saint Petersburg and its related academic department to view two versions of Iakinf's Old Russian manuscripts⁴⁴ that were his renderings of *The Four Books* as well as Zhū Xī's annotations to them that were kept in their own collection, as well as another pair of smaller manuscripts of the same sort, but only dealing with *The Great Learning* and *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*, kept in the Russian National Library located in the same city. Neither of those two pairs of manuscripts I reviewed were the ones described by Koshin. When I had the further opportunity to consult the first pair of large manuscripts held in the Museum in great detail, I was able to confirm the immense efforts taken by Iakinf in producing full renderings of both the whole four-in-one canonical texts and their commentaries. In that research process, it was discovered that the manuscripts had been prepared with scribal editorial notes added during the last two years of Iakinf's stay in Běijīng, that is, from 1820 to 1821.⁴⁵ Knowing the Chinese standard text well enough to follow the structure of the Old Russian renderings, I worked through selected portions of these manuscripts carefully for several days, having also the occasional aid of a Russian doctoral student, and subsequently informed and consulted Prof. Tatiana Pang (known in Russian as "Tatiana Pan"), the head of the academic department related to the museum, regarding what had been discovered. Later on, due to the generous support of the director of the Museum, Prof. Irina Popova, I was allowed to also see what was held in the Russian National Library and did so on the basis of what I had learned from the manuscripts held in the Museum. What was discovered there, however, were two much smaller and separate volumes, prepared by a scribe with elegant calligraphy,

as if for future publication. They were, in fact, scribal copies of Old Russian versions of *The Great Learning* and *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony* dated as having been prepared in 1835. What I focused on in both settings was Iakinf's account of the "appended chapter," the fifth chapter in Zhū Xī's "new text" version of that work, and found that in both the 1820–1821 version and in the 1835 version of that section, Iakinf had self-consciously chosen not to translate Zhū Xī's creative addition to *The Great Learning*. Instead, he wrote a brief note that explained that what had been written there was "problematic" and unworthy of translation. This was extremely amazing to me, and was at first considered to be something Prof. Pan refused to believe was generated by Iakinf's own self-consciousness and independent scholarly judgment, suggesting that there must have been a Manchurian precedent that he had consulted (since most members of those Ecclesiastical Mission learned Manchurian first, and only later may have learned Chinese). Nevertheless, when we consulted three triglot versions of Zhū Xī's commentaries to *The Four Books* also held in the museum's extensive collections and produced in the eighteenth-century Qīng context in Manchurian, Mongolian, and Chinese, we found that in all cases they had published also Manchurian and Mongolian renderings of that "appended chapter," accompanying the standard Chinese version that Zhū Xī had originally written and published. From this special and important confirmation, underscored also by the critical editorial notes that were added to the 1820 manuscript (and assumed to be written by Iakinf himself), these two Old Russian versions of Zhū Xī's commentaries to *The Great Learning* provided evidence that Iakinf was more than a "mere translator." His was the first rendering of those texts by a European missionary-scholar that possessed a critical awareness of that one major controversial section of *The Great Learning*. From this perspective, then, I can confirm that Iakinf was a critical textual scholar who stood with those who criticized Zhū Xī's efforts regarding his highly controversial "new text" version of that small canonical work. Unfortunately, a more thorough study of the whole of these manuscripts has not yet been produced in any language, so that a more precise understanding of the level and extent of his critical awareness is yet to be fully documented.

A more sophisticated way to handle the translation problem involved recognizing the presence of both versions and setting up a format by which both versions of both canonical works—that is, both the "old text" and the "new text" versions of both *The Great Learning* and *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*—could be offered in their different forms. This would in fact be possible textually if any translator could translate both *The Four Books* and *The Record of Rites*, the latter being among the longest of all the Ruist scriptures. Those among Anglo-European sinologists and missionary-scholars are only a select few: James Legge, Séraphin Couvreur, and Joaquim Guerra.⁴⁶

James Legge set the precedent by publishing the “new text” versions of both Ruist scriptures in his English renderings of *The Four Books*—starting with the first edition in 1861, and then offering two other “modern” editions, until he finished his published renderings of both of those English translations in 1893, in a slightly revised (and fourth) version.⁴⁷ In the midst of those renderings and re-renderings of the “new text” versions found in the various editions of the first volume of *The Chinese Classics*, Legge also provided an alternative rendering of the “old text” versions of both works as the 31st and 42nd chapters of his English version of *The Record of Rites*.⁴⁸ In the context of *The Sacred Books of the East*, where they appeared as the 27th and 28th volumes among the fifty tomes in the series, Legge faithfully rendered the texts according to their arrangements in the “old text” versions, but did not have the additional advantages of the standard Chinese text at the top of the page or the freedom to add the extensive footnotes at the bottom of the page, beneath his English translation, as occurred in *The Chinese Classics*. Nevertheless, he also did manifest his awareness of the textual differences between the “new text” and the “old text” differences in interesting ways, something that Johnston and Wang in their studies apparently did not realize.⁴⁹ Perhaps this is why his renderings do not always change with the changed context, because he did not have the opportunity to ply alternative renderings within the commentarial notes, as he had done sometimes in *The Chinese Classics*. Nevertheless, what Legge did reveal in those less voluminous commentary footnotes is more than adequate in underscoring his self-consciousness as a critical translator. As with Iakinf, he had made some self-conscious and critical judgments about what Zhū Xī had done, but he added a new level of engagement, not only in recognizing the formal textual differences, but also engaging the diversity of textual standards and interpretive alternatives in a deft manner.

A careful comparative analysis underscores the fact that the two different “old text” and “new text” versions were being clearly studied by Legge and that the *Lǐjì* version was definitely following the former, and not the latter. In the versions of both *The Great Learning* and *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony* in *The Chinese Classics* and Legge’s *Lǐ Kí*, the former includes Zhū Xī’s introductory explanation of both texts, statements that do not appear in the 1885 *Lǐjì* version.⁵⁰ The latter only start with the canonical text, and nothing more. This was a clear sign from the very beginning that the textual basis of the two renderings was not the same; careful comparative reading bears this out. With regard to the two different versions of *The Great Learning* (the “old text” being referred to wisely by Johnston and Wang as the *Tàixué* 太學, that is referring to the learning of the “utmost” one, or the “emperor”), the accompanying format indicators make it clear from the beginning that there is no “classic” at the beginning followed by ten commentarial chapters, but only

a sequence of thirty-nine numbered paragraphs. Following the flow of each text, the first major break that indicates where the “new text” diverges from the “old text” is when Zhū Xī ends his “classic” section and starts with the first commentarial chapter. At that location, the end of the fourth paragraph of Legge’s *Lí Kí*, the Scottish translator adds a discerning footnote.

Here ends the first chapter of the Book according to the arrangement of Kū Hsī [Zhū Xī]. He says that it is “the words of Confucius,” . . . The sentiments in this chapter are not unworthy of Confucius; but there is no evidence that they really proceeded from him, nor of the other assertions of Kū.⁵¹

This is certainly a clear indication that Legge found a number of Zhū Xī’s claims untenable, including this extremely influential assertion that Master Kǒng was the author of that first section of the work. Essentially speaking, then, Legge had rejected the Sòng Ruist scholar’s claim that the first section of that work was of greater authority than all the rest of the text, and so this inherently challenged the interpretive emphasis and further justifications Zhū Xī made for reorganizing the canonical “old text” in such unprecedented ways. Subsequently in the text, Legge once again assessed Zhū Xī’s justifications for changing the first character in the phrase *qīnmín*, 親民 “caring for the common people” from *qīn* to *xīn* 新, and so meaning “renewing the common people,” and found contextual reasons in the immediate context for rejecting those justifications.⁵² This is a style of analytical textual and interpretive criticism not unlike Máo Qíling’s work, a person whom Legge explicitly appreciated.⁵³ Notably, following this trend of critiquing Zhū Xī’s claims, in the introduction to the whole of his *Lí Kí*, Legge highlights the additional fact that he disagreed with Zhū’s account of the authorship of the piece, preferring a position argued by a Hàn dynasty scholar that it was the production of Master Kǒng’s grandson named “Kǒng Jí 孔伋,” also known as Zǐsī 子思.⁵⁴

Similarly, we find Legge’s self-conscious engagement with the differences between the “old text” and the “new text” versions of *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony* easily documentable from the relatively few footnotes found in his *Lí Kí* version of that scripture. So, for example, after completing the rendering for the twenty-second paragraph of the first of the two parts of *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony* in his *Lí Kí* version, Legge notes that “this ends the second chapter of the Treatise” by which he made indirect reference to Zhū Xī’s “new text” version.⁵⁵ Emphasizing indirectly his dissent with the Sòng Ruist scholar’s interpretive judgments, Legge renders a phrase found in his 1861 version of the “new text” as “to live in obscurity” is changed in 1885 to “to search for what is mysterious,” justifying the interpretation of the phrase from “a reading of the text, as old as the second Han dynasty.”⁵⁶ Once more this suggests that Legge was following Máo Qíling’s style of criticism,

justifying his claims by means of Hàn Learning in contrast to the Sòng Ruist scholar's arrangement of the text and his interpretive claims.

Though a good number of other details could be documented to underscore the point being made here, I sincerely hope that the previous evidence has confirmed in the minds of readers that Legge was indeed a self-conscious and critical scholar, fully aware of the textual differentiation between the “old” and “new” texts, and following interpretive precedents in the Qīng period that challenged Zhū Xī's interpretive dominance.⁵⁷

While Iakin and Legge were undoubtedly aware of the textual problems and their significance, we find another way of handling this problem in Séraphin Couvreur's Latin and French renderings of *The Great Learning* and *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony* as found in *The Four Books*, and also his French renderings of the two chapters in *The Record of Rites*. Couvreur was an interpretive minimalist, manifested in the fact that he did not provide any extensive commentarial notes to his canon-in-translation produced in church Latin and modern French.⁵⁸ One substantial reason he did so in his version of *The Four Books* is that, while Couvreur provided the standard Chinese texts at the top of each page (there were more than one Chinese text here, as will be seen) and his French and Latin translations at the bottom portion of each page, in between those two distinct textual entities he presented a third textual entity—his transcriptions of the Chinese readings of the upper textual entity in his own French transcription system, based on a classic French and Chinese dictionary that he had published earlier.⁵⁹ This took up so much space that he could not provide Leggian-like elaborations or any footnotes. Instead, Couvreur integrated into the canonical Chinese text at the top of the page certain glosses taken from Zhū Xī's imperially authorized commentaries, and then translated those into both French and Latin in parenthetical statements within his renderings. Notably, these additions to the Chinese standard text were added in half-sized Chinese ideographs, so that they would not be confused with canonical passages in the ancient Ruist scriptures. More of these were present in the first portions of both *The Great Learning* (*Ta Hio: La grande étude*) and *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony* (*Tchoung Ioung: L'invariable milieu*), a good amount in the Analects (*Liun Iu: Entretiens de Confucius et de ses disciples*), and quite a bit fewer in his versions of the *Mèngzǐ* (*Œuvres de Meng Tzeu*).⁶⁰ What is not even mentioned by Johnston and Wang, however, is that Couvreur provided the “old text” versions of both of these Ruist scriptures in his French and Latin translation of the *Lǐjì*, and in a format that came closer to approximating other features of Legge's sinological precedents.⁶¹ Nevertheless, it still remained limited in its interpretive scope, though it also like Legge manifested Couvreur's self-consciousness of the diversity of those textual traditions. As will be seen in what follows, Couvreur provided enough hints for an informed reader to come

to understand that there was an alternative text being employed “beneath” the translation’s rendering. That is to say, if readers were not aware of the diversity of texts, not to mention their philosophical significance, they might overlook the fact that Couvreur had provided versions of both the “old” and “new” textual traditions in church Latin and modern French.

As in the case with James Legge’s English renderings of the “old text” versions of *The Great Learning* and *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony* in his 1885 *Lî Kî*, Couvreur did not include any of the initial explanatory statements that Zhū Xī had prepared for those two scriptures in the context of *The Four Books* in his French and Latin versions of those two chapters in the *Liji*.⁶² From the very outset, then, it was manifest that the texts were being handled in a different manner. Again, similar to Legge’s “old text” renderings, Couvreur did not follow Zhū Xī’s “new text” tradition for *The Great Learning* with the division of an initial classic section followed by ten commentaries but divided the full text as it had been originally presented in *The Record of the Rites* in forty-one paragraphs;⁶³ *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony* was presented in two “articles,” the first consisting of sixty paragraphs, and the second with only nineteen paragraphs.⁶⁴ Again, in exactly the same places where the divergencies in the canonical Chinese texts of the old and new versions are seen in Legge’s versions from *The Record of the Rites*, those same distinctions are found also in Couvreur’s versions of these two Ruist scriptures in his *Li Ki ou Mémoires sur les Bienséances et les Cérémonies*. Confirming his own self-consciousness of the textual differences, Couvreur refers twice in footnotes to the “modern school” and “the moderns” in *La grande étude* to indicate textual differences between Zhū Xī’s “new text” and the “old text” that was presented in his *Li Ki*.⁶⁵

Another sign of Couvreur’s awareness of the varying attitudes toward *La grande étude* and *L’invariable milieu* in these “old text” versions, when they are studied more carefully,⁶⁶ is that in 1913, two years after the 1911 revolution had occurred, he could be more free to explore other interpretive options than the former Zhū Xī standard interpretation promoted by the Qīng imperial authorities. This he realized by changing the format of his text in some significant ways. Where in *Les quatre livres* Couvreur had essentially three sections for each page (top, middle, bottom) and four texts (Chinese at top, transcription in the middle, French and Latin translations in the bottom), in his *Li Ki* there were four sections and five texts. What followed the Chinese standard text and transcription sections in the top half of the page was a French translation that was printed across the whole page and not just in one of two columns (as had been done in *Les quatre livres*). Below that was a fourth section, put into two columns, and including not only the French translation but also various kinds of footnotes that added a significant amount of value to his production of these renderings. Nevertheless, these

footnotes were from several other sources that included Zhū Xī's notes but did not emphasize Zhū's comments exclusively, as had been done previously in *Les quatre livres*. Also, these notes are not found in a Chinese version at the top of the page, as had occurred in *Les quatre livres*' "new text" version, but were independent mini-texts integrated into the Latin translation, and normally written in French. So, what appeared at the bottom section of each page was sometimes very complex. What I can document here, then, is a transformation of the consciousness of this modern Jesuit translation scholar that I take to be part and parcel of both the post-traditional Chinese setting that he had entered into after 1911 as well as the self-consciousness that the Zhū Xī's "new text" tradition of those two Ruist scriptures were no longer the only philosophical and canonical standard that should be addressed. Consequently, Zhū's interpretations, though still important, were not the only ones that should be consulted.

So, while there were relatively few Chinese and foreign language notes found in the texts of *La grande étude* and *L'invariable milieu* in the renderings based upon the Sòng Ruist "new text" textual and interpretive traditions found in *Les quatre livres*,⁶⁷ most pages in Couvreur's *Li Ki* renderings contained footnotes of one sort or another, and sometimes of mixed sorts.⁶⁸ Very few pages within the "old text" versions of those two Ruist scriptures did not have any footnotes.⁶⁹ Where Couvreur had clearly stated that "the majority [of the notes] are from Tchou Hi" in his preface to *Les quatre livres*,⁷⁰ quite a different interpretive situation was found in both of the "old text" versions of those two Ruist scriptures. While Couvreur had added some important intra-textual notes to refer readers to the original texts from other ancient Ruist texts found within these two scriptures,⁷¹ in order to help provide clarity with regard to the sources for those quotations, there was a larger pool of interpretive options drawing on two main sources as well as other unnamed commentaries within Couvreur's texts in his *Li Ki*. Besides citing Zhū Xī a significant number of times in *La grande étude*, and relatively less times in *L'invariable milieu*, he also cited comments from the Hàn Ruist commentator, Zhèng Xuǎn 鄭玄 (127–200, referred to in the French footnotes as Zhèng Kāngchéng 鄭康成) and the Táng Ruist commentator, Kǒng Yǐngdá 孔穎達 (574–648),⁷² among others. Notably, in Couvreur's *La grande étude* within his *Li Ki* the number of times alternative interpretive notes were cited was ten times, while Zhū Xī's opinions or textual emendations were cited nine times. This rather balanced number of citations in the smaller Ruist scripture, however, was not maintained in the larger text of the *Li Ki* version of *L'invariable milieu*. There references to Zhū Xī occurred only seven times, while Zhèng was mentioned six times, Kǒng Yǐngdá eleven times, and another six notes without any names were also included. In this case, then, references to the Sòng Ruist constituted only about a quarter of all the footnoted references

(not including the intra-textual notes) found in this version of the text in the *Li Ki*. Couvreur like Legge had served his readership well by offering a rich set of interpretations that revealed much about the importance of the textual diversities between the “old text” and the “new text” traditions, even though he did not highlight them in quite the same way as the former Scottish missionary scholar and later Oxonian professor had done.⁷³

The final figure among these most notable of Anglo-European missionary-scholar translators is the Portuguese Jesuit and bellicose sinologist, Joaquim Guerra.⁷⁴ Having lived very much of his adult life in the post-traditional Portuguese and Chinese setting of Macau, Guerra taught also in Portuguese sinology during the 1960s before returning to Macau in order to complete the Portuguese renderings of the full ancient Ruist canonical literature, a task he began to work on in the 1970s, with all the works published between the years from 1979 to 1988.⁷⁵ Having an immense respect for and competitive attitude toward James Legge, and a somewhat less respectful attitude toward Couvreur,⁷⁶ Guerra worked out his own way within the post-traditional cultural setting that was also influenced by post-Vatican II attitudes toward other religious and cultural traditions to address the problems created by Zhū Xī’s “new text” textual tradition and its historico-philosophical significance. His self-consciousness of the post-traditional setting that he worked in energized a relatively unusual set of steps he made to challenge the Sòng Ruist’s previous hegemony of interpretations related to the two Ruist scriptures being addressed here, including their textual diversity.

Guerra minced no words in describing the value and status of Zhū Xī’s (in his unusual Portuguese transcription, “Tjur-Xe”) life and works, especially with regard to the creation of *The Four Books*. Noting how “this master of the twelfth century” had “taken the liberty to alter the sequence of the text [of *The Great Learning*],” Guerra asserts that Zhū ended up causing “confusion” because of the “fanatical” manner in which it was transmogrified.⁷⁷ Naming him the “Pharoah” of Ruist traditions, Guerra gives a somewhat detailed account of the emergence of “the Neo-Confucian heresy in China,” and then describes Zhū not only as “the uncontested Corypheus of Neo-Confucianism,” but goes on to charge him with creating “a heretical Reformation of Confucianism, what was in fact an Anti-Confucianism masquerading as Neo-Confucianism.”⁷⁸ Guerra was not alone among Jesuits who criticized Zhū Xī, but he was clearly the most dismissive and harsh critic of the Sòng Ruist among those modern Jesuits who published their criticisms.⁷⁹

Intriguingly, then, within Guerra’s “Four Volumes” he did produce a Portuguese version of “The Great School” (*O Grande Escola*) but only on the basis of the “old text” tradition drawn from *The Record of the Rites*. His own “Four Volumes of Confucius” did not include the *Mèngzǐ*, but instead replaced it with *The Classic of Filial Piety* (*Xiàojīng* 《孝經》), and so it was

his own creation of a post-traditional Ruist canonical tradition expressed in Portuguese, simultaneously refusing by this act to accept Zhū Xī's precedent in creating *The Four Books*.⁸⁰ He simply refused to present in that translation context anything of the “heretical Reformation” that Zhū Xī sought to create and made it clear that he himself did so on the basis of the critical writings and justifications made by the later Míng Ruist, Wáng Yángmíng, who explicitly used the “old text” version to criticize Zhū Xī's “new text” version of *The Great Learning*.⁸¹

Intriguingly, Guerra had much more problem with the textual “distortions” of the “new text” version of his Portuguese versions of *The Great Learning* than with those of *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*. In the latter case, he continued to use the thirty-three chapter version (!) of Zhū Xī's “new text,” giving the text almost the same name in both the context of his *Quadrivolume* and *O Ceremonial*: that is, in the former, he used the title, “Toward Perfect Harmony” (*A Harmonia Perfeita*),⁸² and in the latter, “The Perfect Harmony” (*O Harmonia Perfeita*).⁸³ In the case of the version of *The Great Learning* produced in the *Quadrivolume* context, it is prepared in twelve numbered sections and follows the “old text” tradition, using the name “The Grand School” (*O Grande Escola*).⁸⁴ For the version of that same text found in *O Ceremonial*, Guerra renamed the work following the commentaries of Hàn and Táng Ruist scholarship as “School of Rulers” (*Escola de Governo*), producing it in thirteen numbered sections.⁸⁵ By this means, Guerra presented to his Portuguese readers a very different set of texts, but all grounded on his principled opposition to what he considered to be a distortion of Ruist traditions.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS: CONTEMPORARY CHINESE PHILOSOPHERS CHALLENGING ZHŪ XĪ'S ACCOUNTS

In what follows, I do not want to present a thorough set of arguments, but I intend to indicate in a rather simple manner how the problem of the textual diversity of these two Ruist scriptures continues to be noted and discussed in Chinese by some very significant scholarly figures.

One of the figures sometimes associated with the first or second wave of Modern Ruist intellectuals, Liáng Shúmíng's 梁漱溟 (1893–1988), was a teacher in the Philosophy Department at Běijīng University, initially teaching in Buddhist philosophy, and then in the early 1920s switching to focus on Ruist philosophical traditions. Several decades later, when he served as a soldier during unstable times, he met two slightly older men who spent their extra time outside of assigned duties giving lectures on Ruist philosophical themes. They were students and followers of an elderly Ruist scholar and

former ambassadorial figure during the late Qīng period, a noted cultural figure from Hángzhōu 杭州 named Mǎ Yīfú 馬一浮 (1883–1967). Liáng was deeply impressed with their intellectual character and their intensive studies of *The Great Learning* as preserved in *The Record of Rites* (i.e., the “old text” version), and so kept copies of two of these lectures for his own use. Throughout all the twists and turns of mid-twentieth-century Chinese political situations, Liáng preserved those notes, and then entrusted them to relatives before he died, adding an introduction that he had written for the two essays. Only in 2017 did a granddaughter of Liáng arrange to have the two lectures by men with the family names of Wǔ 伍 and Yán 嚴 published along with that introductory essay, nearly thirty years after her grandfather had passed away.

Why did she wait so long? There is no clear statement made about the reasons for the delay, but in reading Liáng’s introduction, he states very explicitly that he found the positions on whole person cultivation of these two men convincing, overcoming Zhū Xī’s position, and having more insight than Wáng Yángmíng’s account.⁸⁶ Clearly, that kind of interpretation of classical Ruist philosophical texts would not have been considered as a “standard” account, but it was creative and convincing enough that Liáng asked that it be published along with his own introduction to their two essays after his death. Believing that their accounts could advance a new way of attaining sageliness that was not following the traditions of either Zhū Xī or Wáng Yángmíng, Liáng presented it to the public (and here we could assume that he had philosophically informed readers primarily in mind) for their own assessment.

Intriguingly, Liáng Shúmíng is not the only person in contemporary Chinese philosophical circles to present their case against the standard accounts of whole person cultivation based upon their reading of the “old texts” of *The Great Learning* and *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*. Another prolific Chinese philosopher from the “other shore” of the Taiwan straits, Fu Pei-jung 傅佩榮 (Fù Pèiróng 1948–), has produced volumes containing his own notes to Zhū Xī’s commentaries to *The Four Books*. Originally published in Taiwan in 2012, two of the volumes dealing with his accounts of *The Confucian Analects* and *The Mèngzǐ* have also been published in Mainland China in 2018.⁸⁷ In presenting this kind of systematic interpretive work, Fu Pei-jung is one among a number of Chinese scholars who have published their scholarly notes to major Ruist ancient scriptures, but the outcome of his own study was quite different from many other of his philosophical and other Chinese colleagues. Here, however, more about his background should be given, in order to understand how the publications he has produced possess a level of authority that would be attractive to informed Chinese readers.

Having completed his doctorate at Yale University in philosophy, dealing with religious themes within Ruist philosophical traditions, Prof. Fu

continued to teach and write about Ruist philosophical and religious themes throughout his whole career, taking up the position of the Head of the Philosophy Department at National Taiwan University. Considered to be something like the Harvard of Taiwanese universities, Prof. Fu's status at Taiwan National University and within philosophical circles in Greater China and internationally has remained well-known. His published writings often have a practical concern for younger persons, and so he has taken on a role that has been much appreciated by many.

Notably in this case, however, he has taken up what some might consider an unusual interpretive stance. After working through all of *The Four Books* and giving his interpretive assessments based on his studies of the canonical texts and their interpretive history, Fu Pei-jung went on to write a small but trenchant volume published the following year in 2013, entitled *Zhū Xī was Wrong*.⁸⁸ Rather than give a thorough exposition of its claims,⁸⁹ what can be seen in this work is something like a twenty-first century critique in the manner of the work of Máo Qíling, but one obviously modern, post-traditional, and addressing contemporary Ruist philosophical values and worldviews.

What exactly was the role of Mǎ Yīfú in relationship to these matters concerning the interpretation of *The Great Learning* and *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*? There would seem to be a strong possibility that he offered something quite creative, since the two men who claimed to be his followers and who influenced Liáng Shúmíng were operating with a new set of interpretations of the “old text” of *The Great Learning*. Nevertheless, up to this point in time, I have not been able to find a satisfactory answer to this question, because the most notable secondary literature I have seen focuses on his account of the “Six Arts” (*liùyì* 六藝), often used to describe the ancient Ruist scriptures of the Five Classics with the addition of one also claimed to be about music.⁹⁰ This would mean that he was presenting a form of sagely culture that was apparently an integrated and synthetic whole based upon a vision of transformative and other changes (from the *Yìjīng*, 《易經》 or simply 《易》), an understanding of how to interpret sagely histories (from the *Shūjīng*, 《書經》 abbreviated as simply 《書》), ancient odes and songs (from the *Shījīng*, 《詩經》 or 《詩》), proper ritual and governance (generated from studies of *The Record or Rites* or the *Lǐjì*, 《禮記》 abbreviated as simply 《禮》), and the lost *Classic of Music*, *Yuèjīng*, 《樂經》 or simply 《樂》), and finally a form of governance that was benevolent, beneficent, and wise (as described in part by the *Chūnqiū* 《春秋》, that is, *The Spring and Autumn Annals* and its associated commentaries). This would be a distinctly Ruist conception of elite culture that would also include the teachings of *The Great Learning* and *The State of Harmony and Equilibrium* within its proper ritual and governance, but they would then not be as prominent or significant in their portrayal of sagely culture in the philosophical or independent way that Zhū Xī had made them.

My suspicion is that Mǎ's elitist account of classical-Ruist-inspired culture and his previous political role within the Manchurian-led Qīng Empire was more than enough to have him branded by Red Guard radicals as a rightist and anti-revolutionary, unlike Féng Yǒulán who was seen as "educatable," that is, less traditional and less intransigent.⁹¹ Added to this were his manifest interests in Chinese Buddhist teachings, so that he may have been seen also among certain intellectuals of Ruist orientation and by Chinese Marxist intellectuals as a syncretistic thinker who was not really part of the New Modern Ruist lineage. It would also put him in contrast to those theistic Ruists or *shàngdì*-ist Ruists like the sixteenth-century Zhāng Júzhèng⁹² and the nineteenth-century Luó Zhòngfán,⁹³ both of whom could more easily link their worldview and its interpretive justifications to canonical passages within Ruist scriptures. Whatever the case had been, his name was generally not heard of in the 1980s, and only in the 1990s were some works published about him. Now in the city of Hángzhōu, one of the famous six capitals of traditional Chinese imperial cultural histories, his name has been resuscitated, and his thoughtful cultural claims are being reconsidered. A memorial hall to his memory has been established on the famous site of West Lake in metropolitan Hángzhōu, where he previously taught students, and a research center in his name related to studies in the humanities now exists at Zhéjiāng University, also located in Hángzhōu. Nevertheless, it would seem that his cultural vision was so broad that it must be seen as inherently interdisciplinary rather than strictly philosophical (in the modern senses of that academic discipline as found in many universities and other educational institutions in our current age). As a consequence, it would be good to have an informed account of how he dealt with some of the philosophical problems discussed in this chapter by someone who has studied his published teachings in depth.⁹⁴

Most significantly, it is undeniable that all of these works are intent on offering an alternative account of how one could reach a Ruist-inspired sageliness. This is a major issue that often is simply not addressed by many scholars of Ruist traditions but cannot be addressed here in this chapter. I will reserve the last chapter of this volume for my own reflections on this matter in the light of these and other claims made by various contemporary Chinese philosophers.

NOTES

1. Coined by James Legge as the antiquated latinized name for the ancient Ruist Scripture first in 1861, *The Analects* as a title has remained the preferred favorite for English translations not only in Anglophone contexts (such as D. C. Lau), but also among Chinese scholars offering their own English rendering of this canonical work.

Sometimes also referred to as *The Analects of Confucius* (Arthur Waley, Burton Watson, and Chichung Huang) or modernized as *The Sayings of Confucius* (James R. Ware). Richard Wilhelm's German rendering of the texts as *Gespräche* follows this more modern terminology, being equivalent to "sayings." An even more expansive title was created by Ku Hung-ming 辜鴻銘 (1868–1937) when he published his English rendering of that classic as *The Discourses and Sayings of Confucius* (Shànghǎi: Kelly and Walsh, 1898).

One could argue on the basis of the actual content of the classical work that the title could be more fruitfully referred to as "the Confucian Analects," as was done by Henry Rosemont (1934–2017). Another even more explicitly descriptive title, when rendered from the French title employed by the French Jesuit translator, Séraphin Couvreur, is "The Discussions of Confucius and those of his Disciples" (1895). Now the term "analects" is also used in standard English for any set of ancient or notable sayings related to a particular topic. In this chapter, I will occasionally refer to this work in the way that Rosemont suggested, calling it "the Confucian Analects."

2. The latter is the latinized form of the former, but has become a standard way of referring to the text since as early as the eighteenth century Latin translation of the text by the Flemish Jesuit, François Noël (1651–1729).

3. This again was the title coined by James Legge in a modern English rendering that has tended to become a standard translation of the title for this text. Generally speaking, there has been little debate over the use of the term "Great" for the first Chinese ideograph in the title, but the second has prompted some alternative renderings. Some earlier Latin and German renderings prefer the equivalent for "science" rather than "learning," while Ezra Pound suggested the term "digest" to describe its content. One of the more unusual and insightful renderings of the title has been given by Andrew Plaks in his version produced for the Penguin series: "The Highest Order of Cultivation." See Andrew Plaks, trans. and comm., *Ta Hsüeh; and, Chung Yung; or The Highest Order of Cultivation and The Practice of the Mean* (London: Penguin, 2003).

4. Here we face a great diversity of titles in English, including two from James Legge himself. Having coined *The Doctrine of the Mean* as the title in 1861, he sought to change it in 1885 and 1893 to *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*, but was prevented from doing so directly, and so made note of it within an appropriate footnote. Among alternative renderings of this classic's title have been the following: *The Code of Life or the Universal Order of Confucius* (Ku Hung-ming, trans. (London: John Murray, 1906); *The Unwobbling Pivot* (Ezra Pound, trans. (New York: New Directions Pub. Corp., 1951); "The Invariable Medium" (*l'invariable milieu*) of Séraphin Couvreur (Ho Kien Fu: Mission Press, 1895); *Centrality and Commonality* as coined in Tu Wei-ming's volume using that title, with a subtitle "an essay of Confucian religiousness" (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1989); *Focusing the Familiar* (Roger T. Ames and David L. Hall; Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001); and *On the Practice of the Mean* (Andrew Plaks; London: Penguin, 2003). The diversity of titles and their meanings here suggest some reasons for the actual interpretive complexities that have occurred within Ruist traditions, especially during the period from 1200 to the present.

Ian Johnston and Wang Ping find four classes of interpretations of this title, based on four grammatical assumptions about the relationship of the two Chinese ideographs that constitute the title of this Ruist scripture. See Ian Johnston and Wang Ping, trans. and annot., *Daxue and Zhongyong: Bilingual Edition* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2012), 182–3. For a list of all the translations of the titles of both of these Ruist scriptures, see *ibid.*, 514, which documents titles from 17 distinct English renderings, as well as six French translations, two German renderings, and one Latin translation.

5. These will be my preferred English renderings for the titles of these two Ruist classics in this chapter.

6. It is notable that this interpretive problem was significant enough that Féng Yǒulán chose to provide two different chapters devoted to each of *The Great Learning* and *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony* respectively in the period before the imperial Ruist traditions began to take shape. Over the years he changed his commitments with regard to which age those two texts represented, but he continued to address them as independent texts with their own meanings nearly 1,500 years before they were brought into the four-in-one classic that Zhū Xī created and promoted. See these chapters in the relevant portions of Fung Yu-lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, trans. Derk Bodde. Two vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952–1953), and *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*, ed. Derk Bodde (New York: The Free Press, 1948) or in any one of their many English editions published later, as well as in the Chinese versions (the original of the former text published in 1931–1934; and two Chinese versions of the latter published in numerous editions starting in the late 1980s).

7. By the phrase “Chinese philosophers” here I mean to refer to not only those who are ethnically Chinese persons and are identified as philosophers, but also those who are working in what is identified as the discipline of Chinese philosophy, even though they may not be ethnically Chinese. These include many persons from a number of cultures that have been deeply influenced by Ruist traditions, such as those in Japan, Korea, and Vietnam, but also those from other cultural and national settings who taken up these traditions as a scholarly expertise and, at least in some cases, also as a form of lifestyle and cultural orientation that influences their way of expressing other non-Chinese aspects of their lives. Those whom I have become aware of in this latter category, due to my own cultural orientations and limitations, have been primarily from Anglo-European cultural settings.

8. For alternative accounts of this Ruist elite cultural orientation and its extensive history, consult Michael Nylon, *The Five “Confucian” Classics* (New York: Yale University Press, 2001) and relevant articles in the two-volume work edited by Xinzhong Yao, *RoutledgeCurzon Encyclopedia of Confucianism* (New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003).

9. A characterization of this volume by Legge found in Norman J. Girardot, *The Victorian Translation of China: James Legge’s Oriental Pilgrimage* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 2002).

10. Consult James Legge, *The Religions of China: Confucianism and Taoism Described and Compared with Christianity* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1880).

11. See W. A. P. Martin, *The Chinese: Their Education, Philosophy and Letters* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1881).

12. Other works worthy of review because of their unusual insight into the transformations from traditional to post-traditional forms of life in mainland China are W. A. P. Martin, *Essays on the History, Philosophy, and Religion of the Chinese* (Shànghǎi: Kelly and Walsh, 1894), and his volume republished many times in Anglophone contexts, *The Lore of Cathay; or, The Intellect of China* (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson and Ferrier; New York and Chicago: Fleming H. Revell, 1901).

13. Three volumes of his work provide access to these issues from progressively larger thematic perspectives. First of all, consult Antonio S. Cua, *Ethical Argumentation: A Study in Hsün Tzu's Moral Epistemology* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1985). Subsequently he produced *Moral Vision and Tradition: Essays in Chinese Ethics* (Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1998), and near the end of his life he published his mature reflections on various themes, found in *Human Nature, Ritual and History: Studies in Xunzi and Chinese Philosophy* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of American Press, 2005).

14. Here I am thinking particularly of Robert C. Neville, *Normative Cultures* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995) and more recently, *The Good is One, Its Manifestations Many: Confucian Essays on Metaphysics, Morals, Rituals, Institutions and Genders* (Albany: State University of New York, 2016).

15. Find similar accounts of the historical claims worked out in greater detail in Johnston and Wang, *Daxue and Zhongyong: Bilingual Edition*, 21–2 and 185–9.

16. Though the work of Johnston and Wang employs only three major commentaries to illustrate these interpretive developments—those of the Hàn Ruist scholar, Zhèng Xuǎn, the Táng scholar, Kǒng Yǐngdá, and Zhū Xī's own commentaries—they cite and describe within their second appendix twenty-four separate names of Chinese commentators to one or both of these Ruist scriptures, including seven commentators from before the Sòng dynasty, ten from the Sòng period, and twelve others representing the last three dynasties (Yuán, Míng, and Qīng). Consult Johnston and Wang, *Daxue and Zhongyong: Bilingual Edition*, 499–509.

17. Johnston and Wang often describe the Dàxué as being the “simpler” of the two texts, they admit succinctly that “the differences between the *Li ji* [sic] text [of the Zhōngyōng] and that of Zhū Xī's SSZJ [his commentaries to The Four Books] version are less marked in the case of the Zhongyong than in the case of the Daxue” (Johnston and Wang, *Daxue and Zhongyong: Bilingual Version*, 192). Once these differences are described in more detail, it may be felt that this is somewhat of an understatement, because the textual differences are numerous, major as well as minor, and interpretively overdetermining the meaning of that smaller canonical work. Elsewhere they admit that Zhū Xī “made substantial rearrangements of the text of the Daxue and relatively minor rearrangements of the text of the Zhongyong” (Ibid., 4), so that his textual changes of the Dàxué “effect a significant change” in how it was “viewed” and “interpreted” (Ibid., 28).

18. Comparative charts of the “old text” and “new text” textual details found in Johnston and Wang's study of both versions of these two Ruist scriptures manifestly bear out these claims. They are a great help for those new to these textual

complexities, and are presented in English for those unable to read the Chinese standard texts. Consult them in Johnston and Wang, *Daxue and Zhongyong: Bilingual Version*, 25 and 193.

19. For example, regarding Zhū's claim that Zīsī 子思 was the author of the extensive commentarial sections of *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*, Johnston and Wang state succinctly that "solid evidence to support Zisi is the author is hard to find" (Johnston and Wang, *Daxue and Zhongyong: Bilingual Version*, 208).

20. Among the most prominent of those critical of Zhū Xī's claims are also mentioned by name, and sometimes with some elaboration, in Johnston and Wang's study. They included Wáng Yángmíng 王陽明 (1472–1529), Wáng Fūzhī 王夫之 (1619–1692), Chén Què 陳確 (1604–1677), Máo Qíling 毛奇齡 (1623–1716), and Luó Zhòngfān 羅仲藩 (active c. 1850–1860). Lists of these and other critics are found in Johnston and Wang, *Daxue and Zhongyong: Bilingual Version*, 39–40 and 184–9, with specific accounts of each of these commentators' critical points and other details are found in *Ibid.*, 505–9.

21. See these and other details elaborated in the Chinese introduction to the republication of the five tomes of Legge's *Chinese Classics* published by East China Normal University Press in Shànghǎi in 2010, this one appearing as the introduction to the first volume. That essay has also been republished in a slightly revised version in Fèi Lèrén [Lauren F. Pfister], *Fānyì dé Kuāxuékē Yánjiù Fāngfǎlùn – Fèi Lèrén Hànxuéjiā Yánjiù Xuānlùn* 《翻譯的跨學科研究方法論——費樂仁漢學家研究選論》 [Methodology in Interdisciplinary Studies of Translation—Selected Essays from Lauren F. Pfister's Sinological Studies]. Trans. and eds. by Yuē Fēng 岳峰 et al. (Xiàmén 廈門: Xiàmén University Press, 2016), 263–78.

22. See relevant chapters in the following monographs written and edited by Lin Ch'ing-chang 林慶彰: 《清初的群經辨偽學》 (Taipei: Wénjin 文津 Pub. Co., 1990); 《中日韓經學國際學術研討會論文集》 (Taipei: Wànjuànlóu Túshū 萬卷樓圖書Ltd., 2015); 《明代經學研究論集》 (Shànghǎi: East China Normal University 華東師範大學 Press, 2015).

23. For those interested in some detailed studies related to the more general theme of Buddhist philosophical influences in Zhū Xī's philosophical system, consult John Makeham, ed., *The Buddhist Roots of Zhu Xi's Philosophical Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

24. As found in Johnston and Wang, *Daxue and Zhongyong: Bilingual Version*, 151, with the standard Chinese text found on the previous page.

25. These and the following details can be found documented and elaborated in relevant sections of Wing-tsit Chan's works, *Chu Hsi and Neo-Confucianism* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1986) and *Chu Hsi: New Studies* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1989). It is not often the case that translators or philosophers would highlight this critical point in Zhū Xī's life and career, but it was underscored in the introductory essay to the Portuguese translation of *The Great Learning* by Joaquim Guerra. Consult Joaquim Guerra, trans. and comm., *Na Escola de Confúcio: Quadrivolume de Confúcio 論語, 大學, 中庸, 孝經 – Texto Original, Leitura Alfabética, Tradução e Notas Críticas* [The School of Confucius: The Four Books of Confucius—Original Text, Transcription (in Portuguese), Translation (in Portuguese) and Critical Notes] (Macau: Jesuítas Portugeses, 1984), 674.

26. See a translation of this major work (including its fourteenth chapter) produced by Wing-tsit Chan, *Reflections on Things at Hand: A Neo-Confucian Anthology* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967).

27. See this story and other details about Wáng Yángmíng's life and works in Julia Ching, *To Acquire Wisdom: The Way of Wang Yangming* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976).

28. Consult Johnston and Wang, *Daxue and Zhongyong: Bilingual Version*, 505.

29. This interpretation of his work is argued in Lauren F. Pfister, "Mao Qiling's Critical Reflections on *The Four Books*," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 40(2) (June 2013): 323–39.

30. These two expressions of hermeneutics are elaborated at some length in Pfister, "Mao Qiling's Critical Reflections," 326–7 and 331.

31. This term is also used in twenty-first century Chinese as a reference term for "sinology," the modern discipline of "studying China" primarily in European university contexts, but that was a meaning for the term developed only in the twentieth century. Here again we can see how Chinese language has shifted meanings over time, being a principle insight that Máo employed with devastating impact and malicious intent, believing that he had discovered extraordinarily well-justified reasons to falsify numerous claims made by Zhū Xī.

32. Described and elaborated in Pfister, "Mao Qiling's Critical Reflections," 337.

33. See these details also in Pfister, "Mao Qiling's Critical Reflections," 331.

34. As argued in Pfister, "Mao Qiling's Critical Reflections," 332–3.

35. Very early in my career at Hong Kong Baptist University I had the privilege of meeting the well-known Hong Kong translator who has taught at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, the retired D. C. Lau 劉殿爵 (1921–2010). That brief meeting occurred in 1988 at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and so I was eager to ask him questions about his methods of translation and his attitudes toward James Legge, whose work I was addressing in the international conference that we were both attending at that time. During our conversation Prof. Lau clarified that he did not intend to produce any English version of either *The Great Learning* or *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*, because the textual problems were too complicated. Only fifteen years later did Andrew Plaks prepare for the Penguin series (where Prof. Lau had produced renderings of the Analects and the "Mencius") his own English translations of the new text versions of those two works. Notably, Plaks fills the latter half of his book with extensive notes, including accounts of the complicated textual history. Ten years later the extensive study by Johnston and Wang was produced, providing a major step forward in the English translation and interpretation of these texts and their interpretations. What I will indicate in the balance of this section of the chapter is that this process of finding ways to address the textual and interpretive complexities of these two texts had already begun in the nineteenth century, with precedents that anticipate Johnston and Wang's own work (most of which they were aware).

36. A good number of other missionary-scholars and sinologists either have not manifested their self-conscious awareness of the textual problem, or have simply avoided addressing the problem by translating only the "new text" versions created by Zhū Xī as the "standard texts."

37. An article dealing with three of those persons on the basis of earlier research, translated into Chinese by others, and published in 2016 is “Hàn xué Xīmǎlāyǎ Shānmài dé Sānzuo Xīnfēng—Yājīnfū, Gù Sàifēn, Gè Zhèndōng dé Shēngpíng jí Zuǒpǐn” (〈汉学喜马拉雅山脉的三座新峰——雅金甫, 顾赛芬, 戈振东的生平及作品〉) [Three New Peaks in the Sinological Himalayas—The Lives and Works of Iakinf, Séraphin Couvreur, and Joaquim Guerra] . *Shìjiè Hànxué* 《世界汉学》 [World Sinology] 16 (2016): 113–45.

38. Consult historical accounts of his life in two works produced by Lǐ Wēilǐ 李伟丽, *Ní Yǎ Bìqiūlín jǐ qí Hànxué Yánjiù* 《尼·雅·比丘林及其汉学研究》 [N. Y. Bichurin and his Sinological Studies], (Běijīng: Xuéyuán 学苑 Pub. House, 2007) and “Éluósī Hànxué dé Diǎnjī: Bìqiūlín” (〈俄罗斯汉学的奠基——比丘林〉) [The Foundation of Russian Sinology: Bichurin], in Liǔ Ruòměi 柳若梅 and others, *Gōutōng Zhōng É Wénhuà de Qiáoliáng: Éluósī Hànxuéshǐ shàng dé Yuànshì Hànxuéjiā* 《沟通中俄文化的桥梁: 俄罗斯汉学史上的院士汉学家》 [Communicating across the Bridge between Chinese and Russian Cultures] (Běijīng: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Pub. 外语教学与研究出版社, 2010).

39. See a representative bibliography of his published works in Harmut Walravens, ed. *Iakinf Bičurin: Russischer Mönch und Sinologe—Eine Biobibliographie* [Iakinf Bichurin: Russian Monk and Sinologue—A Bio-Bibliography] (Berlin: C. Bell Verlag, 1988), 34–54.

40. As described in Boris Pankratov, “N. Y. Bichurin as a Translator,” *Far Eastern Affairs* (2002): 113–27.

41. A much smaller copy of that image, done only in black and white (where the original is in color, with Iakinf wearing a long and dark blue robe), is found reproduced in an article in Russian that was written by a scholar whose family name was Maskinov, in an article dealing with Bichurin and sinology, appearing in the *Journal of The Russian Academy of Science* 72(12) (2002): 1011. The whole article appears on 1099–106.

42. See S. A. Koshin, “Über die unveröffentlichten Arbeiten des Hyazinth Bitschurin (Nach Archivmaterialien des Asiatischen Museums) [About the Unpublished Works by Iakinf Bichurin (Based upon Archival Materials found in Asian Museums)],” trans. Wolfgang Seuberlich. *Monumenta Serica* 3 (1938): 628–44. The original was produced in Russian while the author was in Leningrad in November 1928.

43. It was suggested to me by Russian colleagues that it might be held in the archives of Kasan University, but I have not had any opportunity to verify that claim.

44. The phrase “Old Russian” referred to the Russian language used before the 1917 revolution, both in its written form as well as in its vocabulary and grammar. That form of Russian was complicated also by the traditional expressions used in Russian Orthodox worship, forms of Russian that I found were not readable or understandable to untrained twenty-first century Russian persons, and was difficult even for the PhD students who had adequate training to deal with some aspects of those manuscripts.

45. The details are as follows: Nikita Y. Bichurin, (Iakinf), trans. *The Four Books with Zhū Xī’s commentaries in Old Russian. 1820–1821*. Those two massive volumes are now located in the Archives of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts, Russian

Academy of Sciences, Saint Petersburg. Call Numbers: Fond 7, Bichurin, Nos. 17 and 18. Manuscript in two volumes, written on Chinese paper. The first volume involves the *Dàxué*, *Zhōngyōng*, and part of the *Lúnyǔ*, while the second volume contains the remainder of the *Lúnyǔ* and the whole of the *Mèngzǐ* (canonical texts and commentaries). They are 617 folia and 562 folia pages in length respectively.

46. Whether or not the Latin renderings of Ruist canonical texts prepared by the Italian Jesuit who spent his adult years in the Xújiāhuì 徐家匯 mission compound, Angelo Zottoli 晁德蒞 (1826–1902), included renderings of both versions of these works I have not yet been able to confirm.

47. As found in the 1893 edition, Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, Vol. 1, *The Great Learning*, 355–81, and *The Doctrine of the Mean* [The State of Equilibrium and Harmony], 382–434.

48. They appear, however, as chapters 28 and 39, respectively, in the second volume of James Legge, trans. and comm., *The Sacred Books of China: The Texts of Confucianism, Part IV: The Lǐ Kǐ, XI -XLVI* (*The Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. 28, “Book XXVIII. Kung Yung [*sic*], or The State of Equilibrium and Harmony,” 300–29, and “Book XXXIX. Tâ Hio, or The Great Learning,” 411–27).

49. In their notes on Legge’s translations of the two versions of both canonical works, Johnston and Wang refer to Legge’s renderings as “the high point of the missionary endeavours in English translation,” yet on the following page they offer the following summary of what they found in the translations of Legge’s *Lǐjì* versions of these two scriptures. “The translations are very similar, although by no means identical, but there is no Chinese text and the notes are much reduced” (Johnston and Wang, trans. and comm., *Daxue and Zhongyong: Bilingual Edition*, 516–7, the former quote on the former page, and the latter on the latter). They refer to these as the “second version” of both texts, which in fact would not be correct, since Legge has produced a “modern” version of these texts in 1867, and so technically this was the third version, to be followed by a fourth version (that is essentially the modern version of 1867) republished in the 1893 partially revised edition of *The Chinese Classics*, Vol. 1, published in Oxford by Clarendon Press. More significantly, there is no clear statement in their summary that Legge produced English renderings of the “old text” version in the order of its presentations, and not the revised “new text” versions created and published by Zhū Xī. When they state that they were “by no means identical,” it seems odd that they would not add that these versions were English renderings of the “old text” versions, since their own study is based on that difference. What may be a concern of theirs is that Legge’s rendering of certain passages that Johnston and Wang take to require a new interpretive rendering were not handled with such a sensitivity to the changed context within the canonical work. Even if that is so, it will be seen in what follows that Legge was very self-conscious about what he was doing as a translator of important canon-in-translation.

50. Compare Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, Vol. 1, 355–6 and 382–3 with his *Lǐ Kǐ*, Vol. 2 (*The Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. 28), 300 and 411.

51. Found in Legge, *Lǐ Kǐ*, Vol. 2 (*The Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. 28), 412–3, with the footnote starting on the first page and continuing at the top of the marginal section on the second page.

52. Citing from Legge, *Lǐ Kǐ*, Vol. 2 (*The Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. 28), 415.
53. Written out in a full paragraph at the end of section III of Legge's prolegomena to *The Chinese Classics*, Vol. 1, 20. Also cited by Johnston and Wang in *Daxue and Zhongyong: Bilingual Edition*, 507.
54. Consult Legge, *Lǐ Kǐ*, Vol. 1 (*The Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. 27), 53–4.
55. Seen in Legge, *Lǐ Kǐ*, Vol. 2 (*The Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. 28), 304, endnote 2.
56. Compare Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, Vol. 1, Ch. XI, para.1, 391 and Legge, *Lǐ Kǐ*, Vol. 2 (*The Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. 28), 303–4, also endnote 1 on 304.
57. Not only is the influence of Máo Qǐlíng's methods manifest in his footnotes, but also references to the *shàngdì*-ist Ruist scholar Legge had met, Luó Zhòngfān, are found explicitly mentioned. See Legge, *Lǐ Kǐ*, Vol. 2 (*The Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. 28), 413 endnote 1 and 416 endnote 1.
58. This is a fact that Johnston and Wang apparently do not realize, describing each opening of Couvreur's rendering of the "new text" version as "somewhat similar to Legge in his Chinese Classics, each page containing the Chinese text, French and Latin translations, notes and commentary" (Johnston and Wang, *Daxue and Zhongyong: Bilingual Edition*, 517).
59. These are found immediately underneath the Chinese texts at the top of the page, and as far I as I seen and have recorded, do in fact occur on every page of *Les quatre livres* that includes the Chinese canonical and commentarial texts. The dictionary earned Couvreur his first of three Julien Prizes in 1885. It was published and republished a number of times, with one of them being this Taiwanese edition: *Dictionnaire Classique de la Langue Chinoise* (Taipei: Kwangchi Press, 1906).
60. Find examples of these commentarial notes in Couvreur's *La grand étude* in Séraphin Couvreur, trans. and comm., *Les Quatres Livres avec un Commentaire abrégé en Chinois et une double traduction en Français et en Latin et un Vocabulaire des Lettres et des Noms Propres* (Taipei: Kwangchi Press, 1972), original version 1895, 12 (ch. 6 in the commentaries), in *L'invariable milieu* on *Ibid.*, 39 at the end of ch. 15, in the *Liun Iu* at *Ibid.*, 100 (4:25), and in his *Meng Tzeu* at *Ibid.*, 404 (2B: 13).
61. It was published over a period of years from 1899 to 1916 in three volumes, but the version I have used is a post WWII republication: Séraphin Couvreur, trans. and comm., 禮記 *Li Ki ou Mémoires sur les Bienséances et les Cérémonies. Texte Chinois et une double traduction en Français et en Latin* (Paris: Cathasia, and Leiden: Brill, 1950), 2nd ed.
62. Compare the initial pages of those two texts in Couvreur, *Les quatre livres*, 1 and 27–8, with Couvreur, *Li Ki ou Mémoires sur les Bienséances et les Cérémonies*, Vol. 2 (1913), 427 and 614.
63. See the full text in Couvreur, *Li Ki ou Mémoires sur les Bienséances et les Cérémonies*, Vol. 2, 614–35. Notably, Legge's had only 38 paragraphs, indicating how both men chose to follow various other standards in distinguishing paragraphs.
64. Consult that whole text in Couvreur, *Li Ki ou Mémoires sur les Bienséances et les Cérémonies*, Vol. 2, 427–58. Once again, Legge's division into two "sections" was similar, but his division of the paragraphs was radically different, having 59 in the first section, and 68 in the second.

65. Find these textual notes published in French at the bottom of two pages in Couvreur, *Li Ki ou Mémoires sur les Bienséances et les Cérémonies*, Vol. 2, 615 and 626.

66. Here I will not comment at any length on the style of his renderings in both modern French or church Latin, except to say that Couvreur was in a number of places within these Ruist scriptures far less rigorous and precise than Legge in his renderings.

67. Only 11 of 25 pages in the “new text” version of *La grande étude*, and only nine of 40 pages in the “new text” version of *L’invariable milieu*.

68. There were eighteen of twenty-one pages in the “old text” version of *La grande étude* with one or more footnotes, and twenty-five out of thirty-one pages with footnotes in the “old text” version of *L’invariable milieu* in Couvreur’s *Li Ki*.

69. In the case of the “old text” of *L’invariable milieu*, no footnotes were found within the Latin rendering on 429, 437, 445, 449, 453 and 455; in the “old text” of *La grande étude*, only three pages did not have notes (625, 633–4).

70. Quoting from the French found in Couvreur, *Les quatre livres*, vi.

71. Offered 21 times in *La grande étude*, and nine times in *L’invariable milieu* of these “old text” traditions.

72. It is significant that Johnston and Wang also took these two commentators as the most significant interpreters of the pre-Sòng period, and so translated their commentaries as part of their work in interpreting the “old text” versions of these two Ruist scriptures, which they referred to respectively as “Taixue” and “Using the Centre.”

73. Two other missionary-scholars who also were aware of the controversies caused by Zhū Xī’s creation of *The Four Books* and his understanding of how one becomes a sage were Ernst Faber 花之安 (1839–1899) and Richard Wilhelm 衛[尉]禮賢 (1873–1930). In what Faber called his “systematic[al] digests” of the teachings of “Confucius” and “Mencius,” he noted the important influence of “Choo-fu-tsze” (Zhūfūzǐ 朱夫子) in interpreting *The Four Books*, but also noted the controversies surrounding his positions. Also, after Wilhelm had left his Qīngdǎo 青島 mission field and took up a professorial position in Frankfurt, he wrote a characterization of Zhū Xī in a relatively short book on the history of Chinese philosophy, describing “Dschu Hi” as being “a systematic spirit of the first order,” but also one who created controversies that were challenged vigorously by other Ruists in the Sòng and Míng dynasties. For those interested in these claims, see Ernst Faber, trans. and comm., *A Systematical Digest of the Doctrines of Confucius according to the Analects, Great Learning, and Doctrine of the Mean, with an Introduction on the Authorities upon Confucius and Confucianism* (Hong Kong [sic]: China Mail Office, 1875), 32–4 and his *The Mind of Mencius or Political Economy founded upon Moral Philosophy. A Systematic Digest of the Doctrines of the Chinese Philosopher Mencius*, B. C. 325. Trans. Arthur B. Hutchinson (London: Trübner and Company, 1882), x. For Wilhelm’s comments, consult Richard Wilhelm, *Chinesische Philosophie* [Chinese Philosophy] (Breslau: Ferdinand Hirt, 1929), 104–11.

74. An attempt to give a broader account of Guerra’s life and his contributions in creating a modern Portuguese canon-in-translation of all the Ruist scriptures has been

presented in Lauren F. Pfister, “Joaquim Angélico de Jesus Guerra (1906–1993): A Brief Biography and Overview of His Portuguese Chinese Classics,” in Mechthild Leutner and Hauke Neddermann, eds., *Challenging Narratives: Blind Spots of Sinology*, as an issue in *Berliner China Heft / Chinese History and Society* 46 (2015), 25–41.

75. Summarized with appropriate details in Pfister, “Joaquim Angélico de Jesus Guerra,” 26–7.

76. Guerra’s attitudes related to Legge are displayed both in his giving the Scottish sinologist the titles of “Master” and “Pastor” in numerous places within his Portuguese corpus, and referring to him, even when he is very critical of some of his English renderings, as “the most important sinologist of our era.” Couvreur was not given such accolades, though he is occasionally referred to as “Father,” for Guerra found his renderings to be less precise and helpful than those of the Latin translations produced earlier by Angelo Zottoli in the early 1880s. Consult Guerra, *Quadrivolume de Confúcius*, 643, 707, 747, for examples for how Guerra refers to Legge, and also Joaquim A. de Jesus Guerra, S. J., trans. and comm., *O Ceremonial (Lei-Ky)—Original Chinês em Caracteres e Alfabeto, Versão Portuguesa e Notas Críticas* [The Ceremonial [Compendium] (Liji) – Original Chinese with Characters and Transcription, Portuguese Translation and Critical Notes] (Macau: Jesuítas Portugueses, 1988), 3 vols., here see Vol. 3, 478–9, for Guerra’s qualification of Legge as “o maior sinólogo até hoje” (“the most important sinologist [even] until today”).

77. Quoting from Guerra, *Quadrivolume de Confúcio*, 656–7. This author’s rendering from the Portuguese text.

78. Quoting from passages found in Guerra, *Quadrivolume de Confúcio*, 658, 664–5. This author’s rendering from the Portuguese texts.

79. Another notable modern Jesuit critic of Zhū Xī was the relatively younger French Jesuit living in the same mission compound in Héběi as Séraphin Couvreur, Léon Wieger 戴遂良 (1856–1933). In a short but incisive critique of Zhū Xī’s political and cultural influences that had “poisoned China until 1905,” Wieger criticized Zhū’s political conservatism and metaphysical worldview, characterizing the latter as “a dynamic materialism,” and his personal character as “arrogant,” making enemies of some of the key persons with whom he worked. For these negative judgments of Zhū Xī’s influences, see Léon Wieger, *A History of the Religious Beliefs and Philosophical Opinions in China from the Beginning to the Present Time*. Trans. from French by Edward Chalmers Werner (New York: Paragon Book Reprint Corporation, 1969), 667–71. The original French edition was published in 1917, and the first edition of the English version was produced in 1927.

80. Also, in another twist of rejection, Guerra presented those four tomes in an order that did not have follow Zhū Xī, but instead followed Legge’s precedent, starting with his Portuguese version of the Confucian Analects, followed by *The Great Learning* and *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*, and ending with *The Classic of Filial Piety*.

81. See Guerra’s references to Wáng Yángmíng (in his Portuguese transcription “Wão Yãomeq”) in Guerra, *Quadrivolume de Confúcio*, 658, and Guerra, *O Ceremonial*, Vol. 3, 477.

82. Consult the Chinese text with Guerra's idiosyncratic transcriptions on the left side of the opening, and his Portuguese rendering on the right side, in Guerra, *Quadrivolume de Confúcio*, 776–827. This is followed by his “Critical Notes” (Ibid., 827–913).

83. Here the text is formatted in a different manner. First comes the Chinese standard text followed after each paragraph by the idiosyncratic transcription of the passage (Guerra, *O Ceremonial*, Vol. 3, 141–68), all of this followed by the Portuguese rendering (Ibid., 169–93), and then finally the “Critical Notes” (Ibid., 193–228).

84. See again the Chinese text with Guerra's idiosyncratic transcriptions on the left side of the opening, and his Portuguese rendering on the right side, in Guerra, *Quadrivolume de Confúcio*, 682–705. This is followed by his “Critical Notes” (Ibid., 705–39).

85. As in the previous case within this particular context, the text is formatted in a different manner. First comes the Chinese standard text followed after each paragraph by the idiosyncratic transcription of the passage (Guerra, *O Ceremonial*, Vol. 3, 453–65), subsequently followed by the Portuguese rendering (Ibid., 466–77) and then ultimately ending with a section simply entitled “Notes” (Ibid., 477–92).

86. For those interested in this text, see Liáng Shúmíng 梁漱溟, *Rújiā Xiūshēn zhī Nèijīng: Lǐjì Dàxué piān Wǔ Yán Liǎngjiā Jiěshuō* 《儒家修身之內經：《禮記•大學篇》伍嚴兩家解說》 [The Inner Path of Ruist Whole Person Cultivation: Two Ruist Scholars named Wǔ and Yán and their Interpretations of *The Great Learning* as found in *The Record of Rites*] (Běijīng: Commercial Press, 2017).

87. Of these republished mainland editions I have so far found only two volumes, dealing with the Confucian Analects and *The Mèngzǐ*, but not of the other two shorter texts in *The Four Books*. See Fu Pei-jung 傅佩榮 (Fù Pèiróng), *Rén Néng Hóng Dào: Fù Pèiróng Tán Lúnyǔ* 《人能弘道：傅佩榮談論語》 [Humans are Able to Enlarge the Way: Fù Pèiróng Talks about The Analects] and *Rén Xìng Xiàng Shàn: Fù Pèiróng Tán Mèngzǐ* 《人性向善：傅佩榮談孟子》 [Human Nature Has a Tendency Toward Goodness: Fù Pèiróng Talks about *The Mèngzǐ*], both volumes being published in Běijīng by the Eastern Press (Dōngfāng Chūbānshè) in 2018. The title of the second volume indicates that Prof. Fù opposes the position of Zhū Xī, and so is already a sign that there is something significantly different about his approach to the Sòng Ruist's interpretations.

88. Consult Fu Pei-jung 傅佩榮 (Fù Pèiróng), *Zhū Xī Cuòle* 《朱熹错了》 [Zhū Xī was Wrong] (Běijīng: Dōngfāng 東方 Pub. House, 2013).

89. Such a detailed account of this volume would certainly be worth doing, but due to the limits of space granted for this volume, I do not provide that account here. I would be glad if other scholars who know of the work would offer their own evaluation of its arguments.

90. My initial introduction to Mǎ Yīfú's teaching came from reviewing parts of a volume produced by Liú Lèhēng 劉樂恆 entitled *Mǎ Yīfú Liùyìlùn Xīnquán* 《馬一浮六藝新詮》 [A New Interpretation of Mǎ Yīfú's Account of the Six Arts], published in 2016 in Shànghǎi by the Shànghǎi Ancient Books Press (Shànghǎi Gǔjí Chūbānshè 上海古籍出版社). This was based on his PhD dissertation completed in 2010 at

the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology entitled *Mǎ Yīfú Liùyìlùn Xīlun* 《馬一浮六藝論析論》 [An Analytical Discussion of Mǎ Yīfú's Account of the Six Arts].

91. As characterized in chapter 1 of this volume.

92. As elaborated at length in chapter 3 of this volume.

93. For details about this relatively little-known Ruist scholar, see Pfister, “Discovering Monotheistic Metaphysics: The Exegetical Reflections of James Legge (1815–1897) and Lo Chung-fan (d. circa 1850).”

94. The copy of Mǎ Yīfú's complete works published in the twenty-first century includes ten volumes of writings, a collection that I have not had the opportunity to read through at the time of writing this chapter.

Chapter 5

On the Demystification of the Mysteries in Classical Ruism

Post-Secular Musings on the Zhōngyōng

FRAMING A HERMENEUTIC PROBLEM RELATED TO *THE ZHŌNGYŌNG*

In their volume seeking to present a “translation and philosophical interpretation” of *The Zhōngyōng* 《中庸》, the most metaphysical text within *The Four Books*, Roger T. Ames and David L. Hall translate the text on the basis of a phenomenological assertion relating any particular “focus” of activity to a larger “field” of dynamic interactions.¹ Though their methodological inspiration is drawn from selected concepts found in Alfred North Whitehead’s (1861–1947) Process Philosophy system,² they unabashedly oppose Whitehead’s own theism without ever mentioning this major aspect of Whitehead’s metaphysics.³ They pursue this approach in order to oppose what they claim is a “‘Christianization’ of Chinese texts,”⁴ an orientation informed by “our Judeo-Christian tradition,”⁵ replacing the “distortion” with their own preferred American-inspired secularized worldview and its attendant vocabulary within those same Chinese texts. This principled secularism is read back into their particular account of “classical Chinese” settings (as seen for example in their glossary account of the concept of *tiān* 天),⁶ claiming that they are reviving a particular approach to translation of key terms by respecting and responding to “the Chinese sensibility.”⁷

What intrigues a reader of this text is that all this is done by Ames and Hall while claiming, at the same time, that the propriety involved with ritual actions, specifically associated with the term *lǐ* 禮, is “at once cognitive and aesthetic, moral and religious, physical and spiritual.”⁸ How can such a secularist approach handle the “moral,” “religious,” and even “spiritual” dimensions of ritual propriety and its “process of personalization” in these realms that are not necessarily as secular as their preferred “field and focus”

approach trenchantly asserts? Here I am asking a hermeneutic question regarding the development of an intellectual numbness or willful pursuit of an outright intellectual rejection accompanying the American secularist prejudice (*Vorurteil*) that they link to their presupposed “Chinese sensibility.” These kind of questions are all the more suitable in the post-secular context of contemporary Chinese philosophical circles in Mainland China, where a principled Marxist rejection of religious claims is no longer systematically and unquestionably applied, and a new search for cultural understandings that include religious claims and experiences is being pursued by some Chinese philosophers and other Chinese intellectuals.⁹

One of the ways Ames and Hall do this is by adopting a hermeneutics of suspicion opposing “the substantive language represented by the dominant Western philosophical resources.”¹⁰ Another way, and one more radical than the “classical Chinese sensibilities” they putatively promote, is that they also adopt a critical form of modern textual selectivity reminiscent of *Formgeschichte* skepticism, applying it to *The Zhōngyōng* in ways that do not appear at all to be rooted in “classical Chinese” textual hermeneutics and the many kinds of “sensitivities” that appear within pre-Qin texts. This significant point will be explored near the end of this article, only after I have carefully examined and critically assessed their particular rendering of specific passages within *The Zhōngyōng* that directly appeal to “spiritual beings,” ritual propriety, and “religious activities.” Though the understanding of these terms will be based on sources in Chinese, Anglophone, and other European languages, the most significant assertion about the metaphysical, religious, and ethical nature of these terms found in the latter portion of this article will rely on commentaries to *The Four Books* prepared by the tutor of the Wǎnlì 萬曆 emperor in the Míng dynasty, Zhāng Jūzhèng 張居正, a sixteenth-century figure who wrote about these matters without ever having come into contact with Christian missionaries or other foreign expressions of a theistic worldview.¹¹

FOCUSING ON CLASSICAL CHINESE TEXTUAL HERMENEUTICS: *THE ZHŌNGYŌNG* CHAPTERS 16 AND 19 AND CONUNDRUMS IN *FOCUSING THE FAMILIAR*

Having unreservedly expressed their concern about ritual propriety and its “process of personalization,” the way Ames and Hall appear to apply a principled avoidance in identifying any philosophical significance to religious, moral, and spiritual dimensions of metaphysical realities referred to in *The Zhōngyōng* is philosophically disconcerting. Having thoroughly rejected any transcendent reference for terms, such as *tiān* or *shàngdì* 上帝,¹² and

avoiding any clarification or explicit reference to rituals that may involve those two and other spiritual realities (as seen below in chapter 19 of *The Zhōngyōng*), Ames and Hall even appear to avoid obvious references to the importance of “ghosts and spirits” (*guǐshén* 鬼神) in the sixteenth chapter of *The Zhōngyōng*. As one works through their translation and interpretations with the Chinese standard version of Zhū Xī’s “new text” version of *The Zhōngyōng* in these passages,¹³ a growing concern about a hermeneutic prejudice that refracts their claims about possessing philosophical insights into these portions of the classical Ruist scriptures continues to be strengthened.

Here allow me to start reconsidering these matters by analyzing and reflecting on their rendering of one section of this Ruist scripture found in chapter 19 of the new text version of *The Zhōngyōng*

Taking up the places of their forebearers, carrying out their ritual observances (*li*), playing their music (*yue* 樂), showing respect to those whom they esteemed, extending their affections to those of whom they were fond, serving their dead as though they were still living, and serving those who are long departed as though they were still here—this then is filial piety at its utmost.

The sacrificial observances to *tian* 天 at the winter solstice in the southern suburbs of the capital and to the earth (*di* 地) at the summer solstice in the northern suburbs are ways of serving the high ancestors. Ritual observances performed in the ancestral temple are ways of making sacrifices to one’s forebearers. For one who has a clear understanding of the sacrificial observances to *tian* and the earth, and the various ceremonies such as the Grand *di* sacrifice and the autumnal *chang* sacrifice performed in the ancestral temple, the governing of the empire is as easy as placing something in the palm of one’s hand.¹⁴

Certainly, the phrases that deal with “serving the dead as if they are living” above suggest a form of “familiar life” with one’s departed ancestors that has ritual, ethical, and metaphysical implications. Ames and Hall want to make the whole of this passage be involved with “high ancestors” (their unexplained rendering for *shàngdì* 上帝) and “forebearers,” but there is a conundrum that they create in the second paragraph that makes one wonder about their principles of translation (especially since they boldly provide the standard Chinese text before their English rendering, making questions about their rendering of terms and phrases all the more significant for those who can read in both linguistic media). On what I take to be a normal reading of their claim in the first sentence of that passage, sacrifices to *tiān* and earth are ways of “serving the high ancestors.”¹⁵ Are both *tiān* and earth related to anyone’s (or everyone’s) high ancestors? How is that the case? If that is so, should there not be a philosophical elaboration of these important ritual expressions, adding insight

to how one “serves the dead as if they are living”? Ironically, the passage is left unaddressed in any philosophical way within Ames’ and Hall’s volume; one also finds no gloss for either the term *shàngdì* or the two untranslated names of ritual sacrifices (“the Grand *dì* sacrifice and autumnal *chang* sacrifice”) that are “performed in the ancestral temple.” If these latter sacrifices are performed for the sake of ancestors in addition to those sacrifices to *tian* and earth mentioned earlier, they must be important ritual ways of expressing filial piety. Why, then, are they not given any “philosophical interpretation”?

What is being asked here is not extraordinary for a book whose subtitle is “A Translation and Philosophical Interpretation of the *Zhongyong*.” Notably, a year before Ames and Hall published their volume, *Focusing the Familiar*, the well-known Canadian scholar of Chinese philosophical and religious traditions, Julia Ching 秦家懿 (1934–2001), published a substantial volume on *The Religious Thought of Chu Hsi*,¹⁶ that is, Zhū Xī 朱熹 (1130–1200), the Sòng Ruist scholar whose reordered and revised version of the *Zhōngyōng* is the one that Ames and Hall employed as their standard text.¹⁷ Notably, Ching offers in her third chapter within that book an exegesis of “Spiritual Beings (Kuei-shen),”¹⁸ including sections on “Ghosts and Spirits”¹⁹ and “A Philosophical Rationalization”²⁰ that she associates with Zhū Xī’s account of these phenomena. Immediately following that discussion within the same chapter, she provides sections “On Communing with the Spirits,” citing both chapters 16 and 19 of *The Zhōngyōng* that I am discussing here in this chapter, and then adds a section “On Ancestral Spirits.”²¹ This appears to be a very thorough and serious philosophical interpretation of the very same passages that are left untreated philosophically by Ames and Hall. As will be seen here in what follows, these two passages in *Focusing the Familiar* are handled unevenly. Chapter 16 of *The Zhōngyōng* is ultimately rejected by Ames and Hall from this canonical Ruist scripture by means of a modern textual critical move, because they consider the passage to be “unsuitable” and “unjustified” as being part of the original text—something never considered by any traditional Ruist commentator—they assert that their avoidance of offering any “philosophical interpretation” of chapter 16 and its major concepts is warranted. Chapter 19 of *The Zhōngyōng* is left in the form of its problematic rendering as seen above, but is offered as a text without any accompanying philosophical interpretation. In this light, then, it is worth noting that Ching’s account is assuredly not a “Christianization” of those two texts within the *Zhōngyōng*, but is a philosophically responsible and interpretively helpful interpretation of most of their claims. This assertion can be made by comparing her approach to these various metaphysical and religious concepts with a passage from John Major (1943–) about “Confucian religion” that is quoted affirmatively by Ames in another volume published in 2011, *Confucian Role Ethics: A Vocabulary*. There Major is cited as writing

I translate *di* [帝] as “thearch”—a felicitous word first used, I believe, by Edward Schafer—when it refers to a specific personage such as the Supreme Thearch (*shangdi* [上帝]) or the Yellow Thearch (*Huangdi* [黄帝]), or to idealized rulers (“emperors”). Thearch captures well the character of ancient Chinese thought wherein divinities might be (simultaneously and without internal contradiction) high gods, mythical/divine rulers, or deified royal ancestors: beings of enormous import, straddling the numinous and the mundane.²²

This passage from Major’s book on “early Han thought” is interesting for several reasons. First, it offers an alternative rendering for the term *dì*, and then elaborates it to include a wide range of metaphysical, mythical, and ancestral denotations. Among those possible meanings—denotations that can be held “simultaneously and without internal contradiction”—Major cites “high gods,” something that Ames and Hall had denied could be applied to *tiān*, and did not allow it to be seen in their renderings of the “Supreme Thearch” where it appears in *The Zhōngyōng*. As in the case of Julia Ching, Major is offering an alternative metaphysical account of “ancient Chinese thought” that includes these beings as part of the whole worldview of ancient Chinese writers. This appears to be a helpful philosophical interpretation that parallels those offered by Ching and was published eight years before *Focusing the Familiar* itself was given to the reading public.²³

Another way to explore possible meanings of single Chinese ideographs or characters is to consult a relevant dictionary, and fortunately for those who are used to employing resources in Anglophone settings, Paul W. Kroll (1948-) has produced in recent years a dictionary of “classical and medieval Chinese,” by which he and those who worked with him meant to provide meanings that stem from texts related to the period from the Warring States 481–221 BCE through the end of the Hàn dynasty (220 CE) in the “classical period” and then extending on till the end of the Táng dynasty for the “medieval period,” or until 907 CE.²⁴ Though prepared for the sake of university students, it includes more than 8,200 graphs that are presented with meanings ranked according to their primary and secondary denotations, suggestive also at times of some historical development of terms. As a consequence, if the articles for *tiān* and *dì* indicate something of the range of meanings we have already seen above as addressed by Ames and Hall in the first case and Major in the second case, it would provide a further basis by which a justification for an unusual “philosophical” translation could be underscored.²⁵

Notably, in relationship to the term 帝 *dì*, the article included in Kroll’s dictionary presents only two meanings along with their elaborations: “highest god” and “highest of earthly rulers.”²⁶ Though the first meaning includes the use of the term as a general term of reference for “gods” and “divinities” in Daoist traditions, the latter meaning also includes the possible meaning

of “thearch (i.e., god-king).” In both senses, then, a metaphysical reference for a deity is justified, and the particular suggestion for rendering the term in English made by Major is confirmed.

The term 天 *tiān* includes six meanings, the final one being only found in medieval Chinese as a binome employed to refer to the people of the Indus River region, and so irrelevant for the purposes being explored here.²⁷ The other five meanings given in the order of their presentation are as follows: “the sky, the heavens,” “heaven,” “heaven-endowed,” “natural,” and the Buddhist term translating the Sanskrit word, *deva*, for “god, divinity, celestial being.” The fourth denotation may be suggestive of something more comprehensive, as suggested by Ames and Hall, but the way it is described by Kroll is that the “natural” is “not initiated by or deriving from humans,” and so would seem to oppose the “philosophical” interpretation they seek to assert that includes all humans, among other sentient and non-sentient beings. Notably, the second denotation is described as “an overarching power beyond human comprehension but often responsive to human entreaty and to ritual sacrifice from the ruler.” That account sounds very much like the theistic *tiān* that Ames and Hall want to deny is involved in the “classical Chinese” context they are describing, a point that will be taken up later.²⁸

Once again, it is worth noting that in the most recent English rendering of the passage referring to *shàngdì*, Johnston and Wang use the term “the Supreme Lord,” understanding it from commentaries written in the Hàn, Táng, and Sòng to refer to some kind of deity.²⁹

Major’s and Kroll’s corrective to Ames’ and Hall’s “A-theistic” Ruism, Ching’s philosophical claims related to Zhū Xī’s religious thought, as well as Johnston and Wang’s interpretively informed perspectives, all provide suitable justifications for proffering philosophical elaborations of the nature of these concepts as they appear in *The Zhōngyōng*. To be fair, however, only Major’s and Ching’s works would have been available for Ames and Hall to consider when they provided their alternative renderings. To see, in addition, that such terms (according to Major) refer to “beings of enormous import, straddling the numinous and the mundane” suggests that they must be important enough to require a “philosophical interpretation” from the two translators and commentators who wrote *Focusing the Familiar*. Why, then, do they not offer readers at least a short paragraph about these beings—such as found in Plaks’ notes to his own English translation of *The Zhōngyōng*, or in Major’s tome, or provide a thorough account such as Ching’s in her major study?

To explain these obvious lacunae within their work, it is necessary to elaborate more about the hermeneutic gymnastics Ames and Hall employ in relationship to chapter 16 of *The Zhōngyōng*, a hermeneutic set of interpretive decisions manifest in their translation, explanation, and ultimate rejection of

the whole chapter. The passage in their rendering, initiated by the Chinese text and then followed by their English translation, goes as follows:

The Master said, “The efficacy (*de* 德) of the gods and spirits is profound. Looking, we do not see them; listening, we do not hear them. And yet they inform events (*wu* 物) to the extent that nothing can be what it is without them. Because of them, the people of the world fast, purify themselves, and put on their finest clothes in carrying out the sacrifices to them. It is as though the air above our heads is suffused with them, and as though they are all around. The *Book of Songs* says:

The descent of the gods
Cannot be fathomed –
How much less can it be ignored.

Such is the way that the inchoate becomes manifest and creativity (*cheng* 誠) is irrepressible.”³⁰

Basically, the two renderings of Johnston and Wang of this same passage involve differences in interpretation that need not cause much conflict with this translation by Ames and Hall,³¹ and so we can allow this text found above to speak for itself.

What makes this passage so noticeable is that it presents a vision of the communion of the spirits and humans that addresses the “social” (*shèhuì* 社會) activity of participating in sacrifices to the spirits as a process where the spiritual and human realms are intimately related, to the point that “nothing can be what it is without” the spirits “inform[ing]” them. This mirrors what John Major has stated previously that these “gods and spirits” (to use the rendering found above in Ames’ and Hall’s text) are “simultaneously . . . straddling the numinous and the mundane.” Thinking back on what was found in chapter 19 of *The Zhōngyōng*, these appear to be linked substantially with “serving the dead as if they are living.” Especially in this light, then, this statement would seem to require a philosophical interpretation, one consistent with other passages in *The Zhōngyōng* that refer to such beings as well (such as chapter 19). Nevertheless, it will be shown in what follows that this desirable outcome is not offered by Ames and Hall.

At this point, it is not inappropriate to make two additional comments about the nature of “society”—using a form of “popular etymology” that can be found also in Ames’ elaboration of the meaning of particular Chinese ideographs—since the nature of society is a major element for Ames and Hall in their interpretation of *tiān*.³² First of all, it is important to indicate that the first character in the current Chinese word for “society,” as already above, was originally also a term for a special sacrifice to the spirits of the land, a

word found in the classical Ruist scriptures of the *Mèngzǐ* (7B: 14) and *The Zhōngyōng* (Ch. 19), among other major Ruist canonical texts. Second, that Chinese term *shè* 社 consists of the “spirit” radical on the left hand side, combined with the radical for the “land” on the right hand side. One need not go too far to discover that the concept of society in the pre-Qín context in general regularly included one’s proper ritual responsiveness to one’s ancestral spirits, and to do so in order to realize personalization through appropriate ritual actions in becoming a cultivated person (*jūnzǐ* 君子). Indeed, this was so important morally for Master Kǒng (“Confucius”) that he required sacrifices to the spirits of one’s deceased parents, and castigated those who sacrificed to spirits that were not within their appropriate ritual ambit.³³

From the textual comments presented by Ames and Hall to this sixteenth chapter of *The Zhōngyōng* we find some initial contrasts that deserve further reflection. Commenting on the canonical passage that claims that “gods and spirits” make things “what they are,” the endnote simply cites the Hàn dynasty Ruist scholar, Zhèng Xuǎn 鄭玄 (127–200) and his explanation of the meaning of two key terms that lead to this English rendering.³⁴ Obviously, then, this Hàn dynasty scholar treated this passage (and its text) with intellectual respect and sought to make it understandable within his own explanatory notes. One might even think that this portrayal of the meaning of the sentence was also confirmed by Ames and Hall, but in the third endnote found in this chapter that appears at the very end of the whole section, that assumption is thoroughly rejected. Because of the radical interpretive turn made by Ames and Hall at this point in the text, this endnote is worth repeating in its entirety:

Takeuchi Yoshio (1979): 37 relocates this passage, arguing that [chapters] 15 and 17 are continuous, and the overt reference to gods and spirits is not consistent with the Confucius of the *Analects*. In relocating it, he is able to attribute it to Zisi who, unlike Confucius, makes frequent use of *cheng* 誠. There is an allusion in this passage to a similar notion of “the inchoate being manifest” in *Zhongyong* [Ch.] I.³⁵

What I have already revealed from the *Analects*³⁶ is that Master Kǒng did in fact make overt reference to “ghosts” (*guǐ* 鬼) and was concerned about how properly cultivated persons dealt with them. This being the case, I believe that we all should want to ask more about who this Japanese scholar, Takeuchi Yoshio 武内義雄 (1886–1966) is.³⁷ From a more recent Chinese source, we learn that he was a radical post-traditional Japanese scholar of classical Chinese texts, not well-known outside of Japan, but promoting critical reconstructions of various ancient texts³⁸ as also done by his Chinese contemporaries in post-traditional China, Hú Shì 胡適 (1891–1962)³⁹ and Gù

Jiéngāng 顧頌剛 (1893–1980).⁴⁰ How is such a radical hermeneutic approach promoted by Takeuchi able to be employed by Ames and Hall to support their own post-traditional secularist reading of *The Zhōngyōng*, and still justify it as a “classical Chinese” philosophical interpretation of this Ruist canonical work? It would seem that anyone would have good reasons to be philosophically suspicious of such claims on the basis of what has been revealed about the post-traditional textual critical methods adopted by Takeuchi.

A NON-DEMYTHIFIED RUIST ACCOUNT OF THE MYSTICAL IN *THE ZHONGYONG*: ZHĀNG JŪZHÈNG'S ALTERNATIVE RUIST THEISM AND POLYPNEUMATISM

Ames and Hall employ a post-traditional strategy of promoting the “composite nature” of the text of *The Zhōngyōng* to justify their philosophical avoidance of Ruist theism, but it is made questionable by their reliance on the radical textual claims of Takeuchi.⁴¹ This is so because, first of all, those claims fly in the face of a number of other mystical (or “numinous”) elements that appear elsewhere in this same Ruist canonical work (such as found in chapters 19 and 33) that they unusually hide by offering alternative translations without any commentarial explanation.⁴² In addition, by “blaming” Zīsī for this pro-spiritual Ruist interpretation, they must admit that Zīsī (according to Takeuchi himself, as seen above) is offering another understanding of a Ruist worldview that does include “gods and spirits” within the classical Chinese period. Very significantly, this suggests—and notably in stark contrast to Ames’ and Hall’s fundamental assertion—there is no singular “classical Chinese sensibility” that is strictly nontheistic or even nonreligious, because there are classical Ruists who also support some form of theism or a dynamic polytheism (including at least Master Kǒng, Zīsī, and Master Mèng).

At another point in their text, Ames and Hall admit that Duke Zhōu and Master Kǒng have been “‘theomorphized’ to become *tian*” in “Confucian tradition,”⁴³ but this leads to another set of interpretive quandaries emphasized by the internal quotation marks in this statement. How can a single person be made into *tiān* if the latter is “what our world is and how it is”? Even though they admit the historical fact of an anthropomorphized *tiān*, one that can involve “a distinctly Chinese version of euhemerization that grounds ancestor reverence,”⁴⁴ all of these claims appear to point to a personified *tiān* that is strangely familiar to theistic worldviews, in spite of their adamant denial to the contrary.

Intriguingly, there are theistic Ruists who made their way into the interpretive history of *The Zhōngyōng*, vying with this early twenty-first century

non-theistic American secularist reading of the text produced by Ames and Hall. A notable case is that of Zhāng Jūzhèng 張居正 (1525–1582), a Chinese scholar who became the imperial tutor to the Wǎnli emperor of the Míng dynasty, preparing his theistic commentary to *The Four Books* without ever encountering any Christian form of theism. Zhāng published his commentaries to *The Four Books* in the early 1570s, a full decade before the first major Jesuit missionaries who came to live and die in China began to make their presence known in the southeastern part of the empire.⁴⁵ Notably for Zhāng, *tiān* and *shàngdì* are both terms for the “highest spiritual being,” ruling over a hierarchy of beings noted also in his commentary to the sixteenth chapter of the *Zhōngyōng*. There he describes three levels of spiritual beings: heavenly spirits (*tiānshén* 天神), terrestrial deities (*dìqí* 地祇), and spirits of departed humans (*rénguǐ* 人鬼).⁴⁶ The fact that all these spiritual beings, unlike everything else in reality, have no physical form that is visible and make no noise that is audible—as is stated clearly in the canonical text and elaborated by Zhāng⁴⁷—puts them in a category of metaphysics that is difficult for humans to comprehend. Nevertheless, they are able to move humans to perform acts of reverence as they participate in appropriate sacrificial rituals.

[They] cause [all] people under the heavens to experience sober respect and reverent awe (*sùgōng jìngwèi* 肅恭敬畏), solemnly performing [the rites] as if they are visibly present among them (*yánrán rúzài rúcǐ* 儼然如在如此).⁴⁸

The last phrase written by Zhāng in this quotation is a gloss of a famous phrase found in *The Analects*, where Master Kǒng encourages his disciples to participate in sacrifices to the spirits “as if the spirits are [visibly] present” (*jìshén rú shén zài* 祭神如神在).⁴⁹ In the context of that passage within his commentaries to the *Lúnyǔ*, Zhāng Jūzhèng elaborates this phrase by reference to the passage quoted above in the *Zhōngyōng*, chapter 16.

Spiritual beings (*guǐshén* 鬼神) have no physical form or audible expression, so how could one truly see them?! Still, because the heart-mind [of the sage] expresses its virtuous commitments to the uttermost (*xīn jí qí chéng* 心極其誠), then it is as if [the spirits] are seen (*gù rú yǒu suǒ jiàn ěr* 故如有所見耳).⁵⁰

All this is to say, then, that Zhāng Jūzhèng takes these metaphysical encounters as actual events that are part and parcel of the vision of reality any informed scholar should consider. The phrase “as if they are [visibly] present” is not the expression of a skeptical doubt but reflects the state of mind of a sagely person who acts reverently while participating in sacrificial rites before imperceptible spiritual powers. So, what is the status of *tiān*? Zhāng

offers his clarification in a passage in the *Lúnyǔ*, where Master Kǒng explains that when one “sins against *tiān*,” there is no use in seeking to pray (Analects 3: 13), because (it is intimated) there will be no means to rectify the situation.⁵¹ Zhāng Júzhèng’s commentary confirms this intimation by means of a definition of *tiān* in this immediate context

that which has no partner and is most esteemed under all the heavens is only *tiān*” (*tiānxià zhī zhìzūn ér wúduì zhě, wéi tiān ěr yī* 天下之至尊而無對者，惟天而已).⁵²

While this definition offers a particularly surprising statement in claiming that *tiān* has no equal or “partner”—it is “matchless” precisely in the sense of being a supreme deity. Though more could be explained, I confirm on this basis that we have here a form of Ruist theism that “places” its supreme deity within the scope of the phenomenal world, rather than a spiritual being that is both within and above, or beyond, or perhaps even interactively engaged with some larger conception of the universe. It is not a “Judeo-Christian” theism, or European deism, and definitely not a Christian Trinitarianism. It is a Ruist expression of hierarchically discernible and dynamically engaged “polypneumatism” with a supreme being at its apex.⁵³

This was Zhāng Júzhèng’s metaphysical vision integrated into his interpretation of the classical Ruist texts within all *The Four Books*, and he also believed that Master Kǒng in his own way also supported that worldview. Notably, it was Zhāng’s commentaries to *The Four Books* that influenced the first Latin translations and interpretations produced in the late seventeenth century by Jesuit scholars,⁵⁴ so that one might argue that their “Heaven” / “Coelum” was inspired by a Ruist precedent, one that was theistic but did not apparently support the process ontology or “field and focus” methodology that Ames and Hall support.

CONCLUDING ASSESSMENTS OF THE SECULARISM PROMOTED IN *FOCUSING THE FAMILIAR*

My argument, therefore, offers the following counter claims to certain aspects within the translations and interpretations found in *Focusing the Familiar*.

First, there is no one “classical Chinese” worldview and ontology that prevailed among Ruist scholars in the pre-Qín period (before the second century CE), and so to make any claim about “the” position that was held among those various scholars is historically questionable and interpretively unjustifiable.

Second, Master Kǒng is neither an anti-theist nor a non-theist, but was responsive ritually to various deities and spirits, and particularly emphasized the ritual obligations any cultivated person had to her or his departed parents. He himself spoke of *tiān* as a “high God,” as did Master Mèng, though Master Xún denied that such a supreme deity existed. What Masters Kǒng and Mèng offer as a form of Ruist theism is not as developed or articulate as that of the Míng dynasty Ruist scholar, Zhāng Jūzhèng, but the worldviews the three of them promote are generally still classifiable as “Ruist theisms.” These Ruist theisms are distinct from any Christian understanding of deity as a Trinity and do not include any theology of incarnation, that is distinctive of Christian theism. Therefore, referring to the Ruist deity, *tiān*, as “Heaven” need not be a form of Christianization, but it is certainly an expression of a theistic worldview.

Third, if Ames and Hall were to offer a thoroughly consistent secularist interpretation of the mystical elements within *The Zhōngyōng*, they should first demythologize both *tiān* and *shàngdì*, and also the ghosts and spirits. There would then be good reasons, as already mentioned above and illustrated in Zhāng Jūzhèng’s own Ruist theism, or perhaps on the basis of the interpretations supported by Johnston and Wang’s textual and hermeneutic research, to offer some philosophically insightful account of all of these terms, since they are intimately linked up to the ritual propriety that sagely persons adopt to embody their worldview. On this basis, they could explain the specific nature of the religious sacrifices mentioned in chapter 19 of *The Zhōngyōng*, and so, rather than avoiding them by leaving them only in transliterated forms and therefore essentially untranslated, they could reveal the philosophical significance of those rituals that prepare a ruler to rule well.

In additions, and following the same interpretive concerns, it is incumbent upon Ames and Hall to explain why the interpretations made by the Hàn dynasty Ruist scholar, Zhèng Xuǎn, of the key passage in chapter 16 were apparently incorrect from their philosophical point of view. That would be philosophically appreciated and would be more justified than arguments that treat the canonical text in such radical and non-traditional ways on the basis of a controversial rejection of this key passage on the grounds of a post-traditional skeptical textual reading.

From a very different angle, it would seem contrary to their purposes to talk about the “theomorphizing” of ancient Ruist figures, if in fact there is no theism or polypneumatism involved. One would expect that the same sort of demythologization should be applied to the “theomorphizing” of Duke Zhōu and Master Kǒng, especially if this is not supposed to be part of “the ancient Chinese sensibility.” Still, if there was a “theomorphizing” process within Ruist traditions, one would expect that they should be explained philosophically and the other metaphysical concepts found within *The Zhōngyōng*. Yet

precisely because Ames and Hall do not do so, but instead associate this “distinct form of Chinese euhemerization” with a *tiān* that is “anthropomorphized” and still part of “the Confucian tradition,” one finds it very hard to distinguish that kind of Ruist theism from any other number of theisms (whether of the Greek sort mentioned by Euhemerus, or of other theistic traditions, such as Jewish, Islamic, Christian, Bahai, Jehovah’s Witnesses’, or Christian Scientists’ accounts).

From a post-secular perspective that has revealed some of the rhetorical strategies of Ames’ and Hall’s American secularist discourse as applied within their translation and interpretations of *The Zhōngyōng*, there can now be further clarifications about the nature of their hermeneutic prejudgments and its philosophical and cultural significance. Ames and Hall’s anti-theistic bias in interpreting this “classical Chinese” canonical text is ultimately not essentially anti-Christian or even anti-Judaeo-Christian, in spite of their rhetorical claims about opposing the “Christianization” of classical Chinese texts. Their American secularist philosophy and discourse is simply against any form of “high God” in whatever traditional perspective, even if it is Ruist historically and culturally. It is notable that the Christian source they cite directly when opposing such a “Christianization,” as already noted above, is from the translations and interpretations of the Scottish missionary-scholar, James Legge (1815–1897). Yet if these claims were extended to include all those who interpreted Chinese classical texts as involving a form of Ruist theism in certain passages, contemporary philosophers could also include references to the renderings of *The Zhōngyōng* by Séraphin Couvreur (1835–1919, in French and Latin), Richard Wilhelm (1873–1930, in German), Joaquin Guerra (1908–1994, in Portuguese), and Iakinf (secular name, Nikita Y. Bichurin, 1777–1853, in Russian), since they all agreed with Legge’s rendering. The fact that all these renderings in European languages are consonant with the general metaphysical understandings of key terms found in the commentaries to *The Four Books* written by the Míng Ruist scholar, Zhāng Jūzhèng, writing ten years before any lasting Christian presence was known in the Chinese mainland, suggests that those Christian translators are not “merely Christianizing” their texts but may have much more hermeneutic justification for offering those renderings than Ames and Hall want to admit. In fact, two more recent English renderings by Andrew Plaks, a Jewish sinologist who published the Penguin version of the *Dàxué* and *Zhōngyōng* in English in 2003, and the thorough textual and interpretive study by Ian Johnston and Wang Ping based on English translations of those two Ruist scriptures in two different versions (the “old text” and “new text” versions), and without any mention of a religious affiliation espoused within their work that was published in 2012, provide further affirmations that the adoption of a Ruist theism in translating and interpreting *The Zhōngyōng* is

hermeneutically defensible. Both of these works presented Ruist theism as manifestly feasible and philosophically justifiable from within the traditions of early Ruist teachings and commentaries and provide further evidence that their conceptions in Ruist texts have nothing to do with an either “conscious” or “unconscious” form of “Christianization.” Instead, they are based on reflections developing indigenous symbols, texts, and concepts that support their own distinctive account of Ruist theism and its attendant metaphysics.

These suggest that in our post-secular age a secularist reading of this seminal Ruist canonical scripture should be very carefully reconsidered, especially when its textual hermeneutics takes such a radical step as rejecting a whole chapter within the canonical work as “anomalous.”⁵⁵ Sometimes the medicine prescribed proves to be more harmful than the “poison” it seeks to neutralize.

NOTES

1. See Roger T. Ames and David L. Hall, *Focusing the Familiar: A Translation and Philosophical Interpretation of the Zhongyong* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001), 5–8.

2. Elaborated in Ames and Hall, *Focusing the Familiar*, 14–16.

3. The theistic dimensions of Alfred North Whitehead's metaphysics linked Process Philosophy to Process Theology in numerous ways, and yet it was not in any way related to a “Christianization” of his own metaphysics, an ideological and hermeneutic concern that dominates part of Ames' and Hall's discourse. Nevertheless, it is the case that some of the more liberal forms of American Christian theology were developed on the basis of Process Theology, such as found in the works of the philosopher, Charles Hartshorne (1897–2000), especially in his work, *A Natural Theology for our Time* (1967). As I will argue below, there are many kinds of theisms, including those found in Ruist (“Confucian”) traditions. (See chapter 3 in this volume for an account of Zhāng Jūzhèng's Ruist theism.) Consequently, I will assert in this chapter many times that we all should beware of simplistically assuming that “theistic” language is only “Christian” in content and inspiration. Informed works on process theology and the theistic dimensions of Whitehead's philosophical system include Sandra B. Lubansky, “Process Theology” in Wade Clark Root, ed., *Contemporary American Religion* (New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 1999), Vol. 2, 556–7; Dennis Hurtubise, “God and Time in Whitehead's Metaphysics: Revisiting the Question,” *American Journal of Theology and Philosophy* 24(2) (May): 109–28; Daniel Dobrowski, “The Process Concept of God and Pacifism,” *Sophia* 52(3) (2013): 483–501; and Lewis S. Ford, *Transforming Process Theism* (New York: SUNY Press, 2000).

4. Quoting from Ames and Hall, *Focusing the Familiar*, 5. The complaint is laid against missionary-scholars in general, and also James Legge (1815–1897)

specifically, without any differentiation between a “theistic” worldview and an explicitly “Christian” worldview. This difference becomes critical in the realization that there are Ruist forms of theism that are not Christian in their character, something that James Legge did understand, finding them expressed in the works of Luó Zhòngfān (d. c. 1850), among others. Therefore, these various kind of theistic worldviews are best understood as being distinct, and not simply linked up ideologically as the result of “Christianization.” More about this problem will be addressed in the conclusion of this article. For those interested in the nineteenth-century Ruist theist mentioned above, consult my article, “Discovering Monotheistic Metaphysics: The Exegetical Reflections of James Legge (1815–1897) and Lo Chung-fan (d. circa 1850)” in Ng On-cho, et al., eds., *Imagining Boundaries: Changing Confucian Doctrines, Texts and Hermeneutics* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1999), 213–54.

5. Cited from Ames and Hall, *Focusing the Familiar*, 79. Who the “our” refers to is worthy of further elaboration, since it is manifest that it is not shared by Ames and Hall themselves. I take it to be part and parcel of their rhetorical strategies linked to their explicit American secularist discourse.

6. See Ames and Hall, *Focusing the Familiar*, 80. The simplification of the diversity of Chinese philosophical traditions to a singular “Chinese sensibility” is another manifestation of the rhetorical strategy bound up with their American secularist discourse.

7. Citing Ames and Hall, *Focusing the Familiar*, 7.

8. Quoting from Ames and Hall, *Focusing the Familiar*, 41.

9. This concept of post-secularity is the methodological core of this volume, and so has been discussed in depth within the “Methodological Introduction.” The concept has been elaborated by me at length and with examples from twenty-first century Chinese philosophical works. Consult “Post-Secularity within Contemporary Chinese Philosophical Contexts,” *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 39(1) (March 2012): 121–38.

10. Citing Ames and Hall, *Focusing the Familiar*, 7.

11. For those interested, an extensive study of Zhāng Jūzhèng’s metaphysical claims is presented in chapter 3 of this volume.

12. In the latter case this rejection occurs by simply not even including it as a glossary item in the interpretive portion of their text. In contrast, Andrew Plaks includes an informed account of the term “shang-ti: The Supreme Lord of Heaven” in *Ta Hsiieh and Chung Yung (The Highest Order of Cultivation and On the Practice of the Mean)*, trans. and comm. by Andrew Plaks (London: Penguin Books, 2003), 111–12.

13. For more about Zhū Xī’s (1130–1200) “new text” version of *The Zhōngyōng*, see the relevant discussion in chapter 4 of this volume. Notably, Ames and Hall do not discuss the philosophical significance of their choosing to use the “new text” version of *The Zhōngyōng* rather than the “old text” version found in the *Liji (The Record of Rites)*.

14. Cited from Ames and Hall, *Focusing the Familiar*, 99. The standard Chinese text for this canonical passage appears on the page before.

15. Notably, whether this is a proper portrayal of the objects of those sacrifices is controversial, and is not elaborated at all in this manner in the Chinese standard text.

16. See Julia China, *The Religious Thought of Chu Hsi* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

17. This is the “new text” version of *The Zhōngyōng* discussed in some detail in chapter 4 within this volume.

18. Ching, *The Religious Thought of Chu Hsi*, 54–71, relevant endnotes found on 273–7.

19. Consult Ching, *The Religious Thought of Chu Hsi*, 60–3.

20. Found in Ching, *The Religious Thought of Chu Hsi*, 64–6.

21. See Ching, *The Religious Thought of Chu Hsi*, 66–7.

22. Cited in Roger T. Ames, *Confucian Role Ethics: A Vocabulary* (Hong Kong and Honolulu: The Chinese University Press and The University of Hawai‘i Press, 2011), the quotation appearing on 223, and the citation (endnote 31) on 304.

23. Consult John Major, *Heaven and Earth in Early Han Thought: Chapters Three, Four and Five of the Huainanzi* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), found in the bibliography of Ames, *Confucian Role Ethics*, 317.

24. As described in the “Introduction” to Paul W. Kroll, with the assistance of William G. Boltz, David R. Knechtges, Y. Edjung Lien, Antje Richter, Matthias L. Richter, and Ding Xiang Warner, *A Student’s Dictionary of Classical and Medieval Chinese* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2015), x.

25. Notably, Kroll indicated that the dictionary was made for the sake of “practical use in reading and translating,” making it all the more significant and relevant for the purpose it is being used for in this chapter. See Kroll et al., *The Student’s Dictionary of Classical and Medieval Chinese*, x.

26. As found in Kroll et al., *The Student’s Dictionary of Classical and Medieval Chinese*, 84, lower left column.

27. Consult Kroll et al., *The Student’s Dictionary of Classical and Medieval Chinese*, 450, both columns.

28. Similarly, the articles related to “鬼*guī*” and “神*shén*” include a number of meanings related to metaphysical concepts and mystical phenomena, suggesting a more dynamic and vital metaphysics than Ames and Hall have been allowing. See Kroll et al., *The Student’s Dictionary of Classical and Medieval Chinese*, 147–8 and 407 left column respectively.

29. See Ian Johnston and Ping Wang, trans. and comms., *Daxue and Zhongyong: Bilingual Edition* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2012), 434. These claims, along with their rendering *shàngdì* as “the Supreme Lord,” confirm the theistic imagery that Major also maintains.

30. Quoting from Ames and Hall, *Focusing the Familiar*, 96. There are three endnotes cited in this text, two of them being significant for our analysis, and so they will be referred to below.

31. As found in Johnston and Wang, *Daxue and Zhongyong: Bilingual Edition*, translation texts of the “old text” (to which they give the title, *Using the Centre*) is on 265, and of the “new text” (to which they give the title, *Central and Constant*) is on 437. They are different in three places, but the differences need not detain us because they are not essentially different in denotative content than what Ames and Hall provide as a translation. It is of some interest that they produce these translations on the basis of the interpretations of the Hân Ruist, Zhèng Xuǎn (127–200) and the

Táng Ruist, Kǒng Yǐngdá (574–648) in the “old text” version, and on the basis of the Sòng Ruist, Zhū Xī (1130–1200) in the “new text” version, so that a strong sense of support for these three other sources for Ruist expressions of spirituality appear to be well justified.

32. Ames and Hall claim that *tiān* is “the environing social, cultural, and natural context that is brought into focus and articulated by sagacious human beings” (*Focusing the Familiar*, 27), and in their philosophical glossary of terms they define *tiān* as “both *what* the world is and *how* it is” (emphasis in original, *Focusing the Familiar*, 80). Does this “environing social, cultural, and natural context” include the “gods and spirits”? Though *The Zhōngyōng* text apparently confirms this, Ames’ and Hall’s conception of *tiān* appears to reject any understanding of society that includes “gods and spirits” (not to mention sagely humans) that “straddle the numinous and the mundane.” This radical reduction of the nature of *tian* is highly controversial, especially among those who do not adopt a Marxist or secularist vision of Ruism. Yet our point here is based upon their reductionistic understanding of the term, because it includes the “social” and “society.” If, spirits are rightly considered to be part of “society” in “classical China,” then they should be addressed in a very positive way and offered a philosophical interpretation. This is precisely what Zhū Xī (1130–1200) does in his commentary to this passage of *The Zhōngyōng* as well as in the recorded statements constituting the third chapter of *Zhūzi Yǔlèi* (*Classified Sayings of Master Zhu*), and so one would expect this also of Ames and Hall.

33. Consult Analects 2: 5 and 2: 24.

34. This is endnote 38, found in Ames and Hall, *Focusing the Familiar*, 124.

35. Endnote 40, found also in Ames and Hall, *Focusing the Familiar*, 124. Emphasis in original.

36. Once again, see Analects 2: 5 and 2: 24, as found also in endnote 33 above.

37. A citation of his Japanese article on *The Yǐjǐng* and *The Zhōngyōng*, found within the third volume of his collected works, appears in Ames and Hall, *Focusing the Familiar*, 159. No other information about this scholar is offered in *Focusing the Familiar*.

38. Consult Wu Peng 吳鵬, “Wūnèi Yìxióng dé xuéwén fāngfǎlùn” 武內義雄的學問方法論 [The Erudite Methodology of Takeichi Yoshio] in *Dàonán lùnhéng: 2009 nián quánguó yánjiùshēng yìxué xuéshù yántǎo xùnwènjí* 《道南論衡：2009 年全國研究生議學學術研討問集》 [Collected Essays from the 2009 National Research Students Academic Symposium] (Taipei: [n.p.] 2010), 173–88.

39. A recent study on this critical modernist dimension of Hú Shì’s intellectual impact is presented in Lei Yi, “Hu Shi and the Movement to ‘Reexamine the National Heritage’,” *Chinese Studies in History* 42(2) (Winter 2008–2009): 22–35.

40. A parallel approach to Takeuchi Yoshio’s methodology is illustrated in the early article by Lawrence A. Schneider, “From Textual Criticism to Social Criticism: The Historiography of Ku Chieh-kang,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 28(4) (August 1969): 771–88.

41. See claims made in Ames and Hall, *Focusing the Familiar*, 143–5.

42. Ames and Hall should offer philosophically justified interpretations of several other passages that link the “gods and spirits” with descriptions of the Ruist sage in *The Zhōngyōng*. For example, the classical text refers to the sage as “like a

spirit” (rú shén 如神), but they camouflage this passage by referring to this quality as “numinous” (chapter 24) without any explanation. As has been already seen, they also render *shàngdì* in chapter 19 as “high ancestors” without any further comment for their readers. In addition, they would need to explain the linkage of whole person cultivation concerns of this and other Ruist canonical texts that require sacrificial rituals to be offered to several other deities and spirits also mentioned in chapter 19. None of these matters are addressed in their philosophical interpretation, suggesting a willful eisegetical reading of this classical Ruist scripture based on their secularist assumptions.

43. Found in Ames and Hall, *Focusing the Familiar*, 27.

44. Quoted from Ames and Hall, *Focusing the Familiar*, 80.

45. Details of his life and works are offered in chapter 3 of this volume.

46. Quoting from Chén Shéngxǐ, et al., eds., *Zhāng Jūzhèng jiǎng píng Dàxué Zhōngyōng huángjiā dúběn* 《張居正講評《大學·中庸》皇家讀本》 [The Imperial House’s Reader of Zhāng Jūzhèng’s Explanations and Critical Comments on *The Great Learning* and *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*] (*Zhongyong* Ch. 16), 80. English renderings from this text are by this author, here and in what follows. Here I have sought to find relatively neutral ways of referring to these sacrificial rites and the spiritual beings addressed by them, avoiding some common terms employed in other English renderings that carry negative denotations or ambivalent connotations. Further explanations of this passage are provided in chapter 3 in this volume.

47. Here and in what follows also from Chén, et al., eds., *Zhāng Jūzhèng jiǎng píng Dàxué Zhōngyōng* [*Zhongyong* chapter 16], 80.

48. Quoting from Chén, et al., eds., *Zhāng Jūzhèng jiǎng píng Dàxué Zhōngyōng* [*Zhōngyōng* chapter 16], 81. The English renderings of passages from this text are provided by this author.

49. Consult *Analects* 3: 12.

50. The following quotation is an English rendering of the passage found in Chén, et al., eds., *Zhāng Jūzhèng jiǎng píng Lúnyǔ huángjiā dúběn* 《張居正講評《論語》皇家讀本》 [The Imperial House’s Reader of Zhāng Jūzhèng’s Explanations and Critical Comments on *The Analects*] (Shànghǎi 上海: Shànghǎi cǐshū chūbǎnshè 上海辭書出版社, 2007), (*Analects* 3: 12), 33.

51. Referring to *Analects* 3: 13.

52. Quoted from the commentary found in Chén, et al., eds., *Zhāng Jūzhèng jiǎng píng Lúnyǔ* [*Analects* 3: 13], 34.

53. I am indebted to Zhōng Xīnzi 衷鑫恣 for his use of the term “polypneumatism” as a description of the many kinds of spiritual beings that are not a supreme being in Ruist traditions. See the term in its adjectival form in Zhong Xinzi, “A Reconstruction of Zhū Xī’s Religious Philosophy Inspired by Leibniz: The Natural Theology of Heaven,” PhD dissertation, Hong Kong Baptist University, 2014, 235.

54. A matter developed in chapter 3 in this volume and illustrated at great lengths by Thierry Meynard, Consult his recently published volume, *The Jesuit Reading of Confucius: The First Translation of the Lunyu (1687) Published in the West* (Leiden: Brill, 2015).

55. Quoting from Ames and Hall, *Focusing the Familiar*, 144.

Part III

**ASPECTS OF POST-TRADITIONAL
CHINESE SOCIETY AND
THEIR PHILOSOPHICAL
RECONSIDERATION**

Prefatory Note

Of the three sections of this volume, this is one that is most personal to me, because it was pressed out of my life experiences in living in Hong Kong and teaching Chinese students (who have been the vast majority of my students at all levels) for the past three decades. They all involve what might be considered to be “utopian” projects within Chinese post-traditional contexts but have very different thematic concerns, radically different research materials, and have become vital options for me in research, because I had to face people who lived through those experiences or experienced them myself.

Part of my responsibilities as a full-time faculty member in the Religion and Philosophy Department of Hong Kong Baptist University (1987–2017) have been to help teach courses offered to students throughout the whole university, something that many professional philosophers who earn their living by teaching do on a regular basis in many universities in many countries within our age. One of the courses I created and then taught in that context was entitled “Virtuous Living in a Virtual World.” Having my own philosophical points to underscore as an older member of the faculty in that series of lectures, I discovered that my much younger students (the vast majority being ethnically Chinese, either from Hong Kong or elsewhere in the PRC) knew much more about internet activity in their various Chinese contexts than I did, and were stimulated to apply the lessons I had taught them to their own experiences. As a consequence, among many other discoveries, I was introduced to the phenomenon of the “Human Flesh Search [Engine]” and began to study it in depth. Without the stimulation of my students in this realm, I would have been completely unaware of this phenomenon, and so I want to offer my thanks to them once again for all the lessons they taught me throughout the years that I had the privilege to teach that course.

The second chapter in this section deals with that particular online phenomenon, how it is described, and why it deserves to be put under scrutiny by critical philosophical perspectives that consider the ethical quandaries it actually leads to. Having presented my continual findings related to this matter in several conferences both in the United States and in contemporary China, I found interest in this theme within a Brazilian online journal (and some will add, “of course!”), so that the article was published in the first issue of the first volume of the new online journal, *Modernos & Contemporâneos* (Jan/June 2017). It is reprinted here in a slightly revised version with their kind permission.

What is unusual about the argument in this chapter is that I link the social *Angst* created by the online vigilanti-ism that represents one of the “bad sides” of the Human Flesh Search Engine or *rénròu sōusuǒ* (人肉搜索 and so abbreviated as “RRSS”) with a similar social trauma experienced by Søren Kierkegaard, when he was “attacked” anonymously and mercilessly by newly created popular journals in his Danish context. That comparative angle on the negative impact of new social media is a matter worth considering seriously, particularly because of what it reveals about the “media-ated” forms of information in our own twenty-first century modern contexts that can sometimes prove themselves to be sources of dis-information and less-than-transparent means of communication.

The first chapter in this section was initially stimulated by a theme of the 2011 East–West Philosophers Conference held in Honolulu, dealing with the relativities found in the concept of justice. This prompted me to reconsider a series of three major utopian conceptions promoted by notable Chinese figures in differing twentieth contexts in mainland China and to ask ethical and techno-scientific questions about their concerns for justice, their ethical problems, their feasibility, and the seemingly unanticipated social troubles that they could, and in two cases actually did, produce. Discussions of those three conceptions start with Kāng Yǒuwéi’s 康有為 (1858–1927) “Great Unity” (*dàtóng* 大同), described fully in a posthumously published volume (1935) that I had studied as part of my dissertation and in a later work on that notable Ruist scholar-politician.¹ Subsequently, I move forward to the problems associated with the “First Great Leap Forward” (1959–1962) under the authoritarian rule of Máo Zédōng 毛澤東 (1893–1976, and in simplified characters 毛泽东), and then end that chapter’s discussion with descriptions and evaluations of the impact of the one-child policy that had been implemented for much of the first fifty years of the existence of the PRC.

Within all three of these major utopian projects was a form of “scientific imperialism” in which it was assumed that discoveries in the natural sciences were inherently good, and so should be applied to post-traditional forms of modern Chinese societies with a will to see them transformed

into revolutionized and avant-garde forms of human communities. What is revealed by the critical interpretive studies of these three major twentieth-century techno-scientific projects, however, is that these utopian expressions camouflaged a huge number of monstrously destructive methods for realizing their “vision.” It is precisely for these reasons, then, that a post-secular concern for the value of human lives requires a thorough-going critical reconsideration of the non-neutrality of techno-scientific systems as well as their actual negative impacts of myriads of Chinese citizens. Much of my own reflections on these matters have been anticipated by important and courageous studies pursued by others, whose works have stimulated my concern to address these matters as an engaged post-secular intellectual and philosopher.

The final chapter in this section deals with a major concept with classical and imperial era Ruist traditions, the nature of the sage or sagehood. As is noted within this exploration, there is a major tension between the claims of the earliest Ruist texts that “all persons can become sages” and the heightening of the imagery and descriptions of sagehood in the Hàn 漢 and Sòng 宋 Ruist sub-traditions that creates a major hiatus between the ideal sage and the actualization of sagehood among Ruist followers. In this chapter, I adopt the perspective of an engaged post-secular religious philosopher, and so offer an alternative approach to confirming the realization of sageliness that criticizes what may be referred to as a “divinization” of sages, but also subsequently explores the differences and possible syntheses that occur when one compares sages with saints, noting that these two concepts in past and contemporary Chinese language are referred to by the same term of reference, *shèngrén* 聖人.

Within this section of this tome, therefore, I am adopting some new approaches for Chinese philosophical discussions that extend the nature of the texts and the philosophical principles that can be applied also to a new historical account of the twentieth and twenty-first century Chinese political and cultural phenomena. Rarely has there been, as seen in the first two chapters of this section, a critically justified philosophical analysis of techno-scientific knowledge and practice applied to specific post-traditional political and cultural projects explored and pursued in the Chinese mainland. In all those cases, a post-secular concern for the value of human life and the negative impacts of various forms of techno-scientific projects—whether expressed in explicitly utopian forms or revealed through particular ways political and cultural projects have been put into practice—are being addressed and explored in some depth. Here the “texts” become the larger cultural contexts that not only involve published philosophical works but also political practices and techno-scientific systems that provoke a new set of critical philosophical reflections. In the final chapter, I am taking a bold step in seeking to address a question that many contemporary Chinese

philosophers and those involved in studying Chinese philosophical traditions seldom discuss. The nature of the “sage” is taken as a major assumption in all major Chinese philosophical traditions, but is explicitly integrated into a traditional Ruist worldview. Nevertheless, the questions of how one becomes a sage, whether it is actually possible to become a sage and whether there are notable sages in our contemporary world, reveal a set of philosophical concerns that are critical to the nature of contemporary Ruist traditions, and yet are seldom addressed in any Chinese or other published philosophical works. What I seek to explore in this final chapter is a new approach to the nature of sageliness as it intersects with and is differentiated from the conception of “sainthood” as understood in Chinese Protestant traditions. These are matters that have never before been addressed in such a philosophical manner, as far as I know, but they reveal a new set of philosophical issues that are relevant to certain sectors of contemporary Chinese philosophical circles. They also suggest how comparative philosophical analysis between sub-traditions in both Ruist and Chinese Protestant traditions can increase the scope of historical accounts of Chinese philosophical traditions.

NOTE

1. My earliest publication in this realm appeared in the *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* in 1989 and was drawn from a chapter in my dissertation, where I compared Kāng’s and Plato’s visions of justice as articulated particularly in the former’s work, *Dàtóng shū* 大同書, and in the latter’s Republic. In 2003, I have written a more general article for Antonio S. Cua’s *Encyclopedia of Chinese Philosophy* dealing with Kāng, but did not do much more with Kāng’s life and works until a decade afterward. For that article, see “Kāng Youwei (K’ang Yu-wei)” in Antonio Cua, ed., *Encyclopedia of Chinese Philosophy* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 337–41. Subsequently, I have revealed how Kāng’s work was received by one early twentieth-century German sinologist, Richard Wilhelm (1873–1830) in an article published on “global issues” related to Chinese religious traditions. For those interested in the two larger works, please see “A Study in Comparative Utopias—K’ang Yu-wei and Plato,” *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 16(1) (March): 59–117 and “A Modern Ruist Religious Vision of a Global Unity: Kang Youwei’s Utopian Vision and its Humane Religious Refraction in European Sinology,” in Thomas Janson, Thoralf Klein and Christian Meyer, eds., *Globalization and the Making of Religious Modernity in China”: Transnational Religions, Local Agents, and the Study of Religion, 1800-Present* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2014), 235–71.

Chapter 6

Post-Secular Critiques of Twentieth-Century Utopian Projects in China

UTOPIAN VISIONS AND QUESTIONS ABOUT MODERNITY IN CHINA

Modern Chinese philosophers and intellectuals who have desired to “become modern” across the span of the twentieth century sometimes extended their imaginations by envisioning and writing about their preferred ideal forms of post-traditional society. Many times these utopian visions were justified because they were seen as experimental options which could influence the world at large. That is to say, their justifications appeared to be all the more influential because they willed to think about Chinese society in ways that also invoked values for humanity at large. To think in such visionary manners was revolutionary in its scope and method; most often it required that these Chinese philosophers, intellectuals, and political figures would consider approaches to human problems that appeared strictly scientific or technological in character, and so justified their projects simultaneously as “modern” and “rationally systematic.” What has been tragic is that these secularized forms of rationalization ultimately camouflaged, even in the name of a “higher” form of justice and equality, numerous inhumane procedures, and devastating cruelties. Put in other words, in the name of “creating a higher form of humanity” by various “new techno-scientifically justified methods,” an ironic disjunction emerged between rationality and ethics, between putative “economic benefits” and actual humane forms of justice.

In this sense, as the Polish sociologist, Zygmunt Bauman (1925–) has argued, the mindset of modernity could produce and justify a form of “cold rationality” that was both calm and cruel;¹ while this form of modern rationalism was not at all limited to Chinese intellectuals during the twentieth century, it took on particular poignancy in China because of it being adopted

as one standard for justifying “modernization” within the political ideologies of post-traditional (i.e., post-1911) Chinese regimes. The rationalistic bent of this form of modern utopian thought has a strong strain of *hubris*, *superbia* or overweening pride,² and so it highlights the irony of a form of self-assuredness that is ultimately unwilling and unable to anticipate its own downfall in time to recover from the losses caused by the willfulness of its calm cruelty.

This existential irony appears also as part of the critique of the values undergirding modern post-World War II technological systems which Jacques Ellul (1912–1994) highlighted in three volumes exploring the inherent distortedness of technical rationality. Ellul’s account will loom larger and require explanations in greater detail within our broader discussion of the dystopian outcomes of putatively “good plans” made by the key Chinese figures we will address in this chapter. Admittedly, techno-science has been seen as a secular salvific force among many modernists internationally, and so was applied in economic formulae in order to “enhance human life” and overcome previous limitations in daily human experiences. Nevertheless, as Ellul has documented in thorough ways, techno-scientific expressions of rationality assume a set of practical values to be the fundamental values for “progress,” but end up being essentially insensitive to human beings, even to those who create those technical systems. So, ultimately techno-scientific informed rationality can become an element in justifying inhumanity within economic and political systems in order that certain utopian values and plans might achieve their “modern technical goals.” In this sense, utopian thinking that relies on imagined futuristic or putatively “scientifically confirmed” technical systems belongs to a form of “subject-centered reason” typical of a transcendent subjectivism which loses sight of its situatedness in a specific historically limited and particular culturally informed lifeworld.³ The disruptive character of this particular form of modern rationalism I will explore along lines set up by Jürgen Habermas (1929-), but will do so in greater detail only after we have considered three utopian moments in the twentieth-century Chinese history. So, even while this modern form of “scientific” rationality in China would rigorously critique traditional forms of thought and life, it simultaneously trapped itself within a willful assertion of its own preeminence, and so ended up justifying to itself numerous inhumane means employed in reaching its idealized economic goals, all done in the name of supporting “the common good.”

The examples of these proud visionary scenes I will address here were all produced within twentieth-century mainland Chinese contexts. They employed various kinds of rational argumentation and techno-scientific approaches to reconceive the nature of human beings and restructure their familial settings. In the process of these reconceptions, as will be seen, their utopian forms of secularized rationalism have promoted inhumane practices

and immense social injustices in order to justify and achieve their idealized visions of “economic justice” for the sake of “the common good.” Those to be discussed below will include the following: first, Kāng Yǒuwéi’s utopian account of a modern “Great Unity” (*dàtóng* 大同); second, the economic reconfiguration of humans and their familial settings within the establishment of communal living units under Máo Zédōng leadership, including the excesses expressed during the “Great Leap Forward” and the “Great” Cultural Revolution (*wénhuà dà gémìng* 文化大革命); and finally, the efforts and distortive social influences of the post-Máo Chinese government to enforce its ideals associated with the so-called one-child policy.

UTOPIAN VISIONS AND PHILOSOPHICAL TRADITIONS IN THE TWENTIETH-CENTURY CHINA

A significant problem for many overseas philosophers is that they would not necessarily categorize the leaders and policies I will discuss as matters associated with the contemporary discipline of philosophy. For example, Kāng Yǒuwéi 康有為 (1858–1927) was a non-orthodox Ruist intellectual who promoted a reformist vision of Master Kǒng’s (“Confucius,” Kǒngfūzǐ 孔夫子) teachings read through Ruist scriptures not normally associated with mainline Ruist philosophical scriptures in our own age.⁴ As a consequence, his writings rarely are found in any readings for classes dealing with Chinese philosophy outside of China and East Asia, and if they do appear, it would only be in the context of the sub-disciplines of the history of Chinese philosophy. In addition, one rarely hears of any philosophy department outside of China reading the writings of Máo Zédōng 毛澤東 (1893–1976) as parts of the philosophical curriculum, and yet this is in fact done in China, especially under the category of political philosophy. For those who have engaged mainland Chinese philosophers on a regular basis, this cross-cultural disjuncture within international philosophical circles before the beginning of the twenty-first century was often a source of immense misunderstandings, because for nearly forty years, the basic categories of philosophical thought in mainland China were shaped by Máo’s major writings. Now that we live in a post-Máo era, and even during the Xí Jìnpíng 習近平 (1953–) regime, more critical assessment of his works are being produced, and even in non-Chinese settings his works are sometimes being considered seriously as part of Chinese philosophical traditions.⁵ Finally, the development of a “one-child policy” is certainly a matter for political science, but it is rarely addressed as a matter of philosophical importance within contemporary discussions of Chinese ethics. Nevertheless, each of these figures and movements were promoting a particular vision of justice which had specific economic implications and

justifications, and so from these interpretive angles, it is both suitable and important to weigh their arguments and vision in the light of these basic philosophical standards.

THREE UTOPIAN VISIONS IN POST-TRADITIONAL CHINESE SOCIETY

Here I will introduce briefly the persons and texts I will appeal to in the subsequent discussion, so that their linkages with certain ethical and economic standards and conceptions can be clearly understood.

Kāng Yǒuwéi's *Book of the Great Unity* (*Dàtóng shū* 《大同書》) envisioned a human world freed from pain and devoid of diversity, based on its requirements that all humans take on one particular gendered physical human form that would be otherwise essentially the same. That is to say, using eugenic methods for controlling human existence, Kāng's ideal world would be populated only by complete human look-alikes. Believing this biotechnological feat would eliminate unhealthy comparisons or many forms of personalized selfishness, Kāng sought to re-conceive human possibilities under these "unified" conditions for achieving an ideally happy and hedonistic world.

Though questions regarding the dates when portions of the book were written is a matter of contention among some Chinese scholars,⁶ no one questions the fact that the volume was ultimately published only seven years after Kāng passed away in 1935. Previously published materials from *The Book of the Great Unity* involved only the first two chapters of the ten-chapter tome. Nevertheless, it is what we have in the full volume that is most significant, and also reveals most completely how much Kāng Yǒuwéi intended to transform the nature of human persons and family units. Here below I present the original Chinese headings for the ten chapters of this relatively large volume⁷ along with English renderings, so that the most relevant materials can be immediately recognized.

From this outline of it is manifest that the fourth through seventh chapters deal with reconceptualizing personal existence and humans' relational contexts in sexual, familial, and vocational realms. The key term which portrays Kāng's radical biotechnological assumptions appears in the fourth chapter, where "making humankind the same (tóng 同)" is meant literally. Implications for economic forms of "public" livelihood in the seventh chapter are also based on this biotechnological set of assumptions.

Studies about Máo Zédōng's philosophical career abound in Chinese, but I will focus attention on some of the relevant judgments pronounced about him by Féng Yǒulán 馮友蘭 (1895–1990) in a posthumous work published

Table 6.1 Chapter headings for *The Book of the Great Unity* (*Dàtóng Shū* 大同書)

<i>Chapter</i>	<i>Chinese Original</i>	<i>English Rendering</i> ¹¹⁰
甲 / I	人世界觀眾苦	In the Human World We see that All Suffer
乙 / II	去國界合大地	Abolish National Boundaries and Unite the Great Earth
丙 / III	去級界平民族	Abolish Class Boundaries and Equalize all Peoples and Clans
丁 / IV	去種界同人類	Abolish Racial Boundaries and Make Humankind the Same
戊 / V	去形界保獨立	Abolish Sexual Boundaries and Preserve Independence
己 / VI	去家界為天民	Abolish Familial Boundaries and Become Heavenly People
庚 / VII	去產界公生業	Abolish Livelihood Boundaries and Make Life Vocations Public
辛 / VIII	去亂界治太平	Abolish Disorderliness and Govern by means of the Supreme Peace
壬 / IX	去類界愛眾生	Abolish Categorical Boundaries and Love All Living Beings
癸 / X	去苦界至極樂	Abolish Suffering and Attain Utmost Happiness

Author created.

in 1992.⁸ The overview of Máo’s philosophical development produced by Stuart R. Schram (1924–2012) will also be relied upon.⁹ In addition to these basic interpretive works, there have been some unusually important studies in the past two decades which reveal new dimensions of Máo’s life, thought, and character in relationship to different events during the period of his dictatorship. These include a controversial volume by his personal physician, Lǐ Zhisuī 李志綏 (1919–1995), entitled *The Private Life of Chairman Mao*,¹⁰ a very recent study completed by Frank Dikötter (1961–) on the “Great Leap Forward,”¹¹ and a much earlier study by Jacques Ellul of the use of propaganda during the Cultural Revolution.¹² On the basis of these and other secondary materials, the development and justifications offered by Máo Zédōng and the vast numbers of Chinese Communist cadre who supported his utopian visions for the establishment of people’s communes (*rénmín gōngshè* 人民公社) during the Great Leap Forward will be weighed. As will be seen, they reveal how various policies and the techno-scientific claims supporting them, strengthened by a hope that a quick road to true communism had been discovered, had an immense impact on the lives of untold multitudes of Chinese people in the PRC. It threatened their sense of identity and economic independence, and also sought to recreate the basic social structures in which they lived for more than twenty years after the initial establishment of the communes.

The final section of this chapter will be devoted to ethical questions related to the promotion and enforcement of the “one-child policy” initiated in 1979. Helpful studies related to this national political effort at eugenics, especially as the policy has reached its thirtieth year (in 2009), have been published. In fact, this policy has proven to be one of the most long-standing utopian reconstructionist practices within the PRC. I will rely on studies produced relatively early in 2004 by Vanessa L. Fong¹³ and then later in 2010 by Wú Hóngdá 吳弘達 and Shěn Kuò 沈括.¹⁴ Critical analyses of the implications of this policy in contemporary China have been provided by a historical study of eugenics in China and elsewhere by Frank Dikötter,¹⁵ a contemporary account of some of the practical policy and legal matters associated with the one-child policy described by Philip P. Pan,¹⁶ as well as ethical and economic assessments of the impact of this policy on personal development and public health problems by Ruipíng Fàn 范瑞平.¹⁷ Once again, the utopian character of the plan along with its rationalistic justifications will be weighed in the light of the impact it has had in the well-being of particular persons and their extended families within the last forty years.

The approach to these matters I will take will be dialogic: each of the three utopian visions will be characterized and then evaluated on the basis of its impact on the nature and character of human persons and their familial well-being, using critical standards of judgment drawn from the critique of modern rationalism, the critique of technological values and their inhumaneness and injustices (especially in relationship to its utopian trends), and the assessment of the tension between their ethical justifications based on specific “global concerns,” the economic implications of these claims, and the actual injustices engendered by those visions which actually became practical plans of action. What will become evident is that these three basic utopian visions are linked to each other in various ways, sometimes because the means of attaining their goals are the same, other times because their justifications echo each other (even though they may not have been aware of various precedents). In the concluding reflections, I will consequently seek to understand how the secularized form of rationalism which they rely on prompted these utopian excesses and to point out some questions for critical reflection which should be considered in the light of these studies.

DREAMING OF HEDONISTIC UNIFORMITY: ASSESSING KĀNG YŌUWÉI’S RADICAL VISION

As has already been indicated above, the fundamental basis for Kāng Yōuwéi’s utopian vision was the creation of a total uniformity of human “forms and colors” (*xíngsè tǐgè* 形色), meaning the complete uniformity

of human physical characteristics and skin color; whether male or female, all persons of the same gender should become essentially the same.¹⁸ Conceived long before there was the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, Kāng's dreams rode roughshod over any particular dignity or rights of persons until they had reached the stage of complete uniformity. Notably, while this fifth chapter is the shortest among the central chapters in his work,¹⁹ it is also the most revealing in terms of the faith in biotechnological values, the use of political force, and the elimination of what some would consider to be "inalienable rights" of persons. Already in the late 1950s Ellul had noted how Nobel laureates in the natural sciences could project visions of futuristic worlds, which were utopian in character, but often completely insensitive to the actual human harm their projected dreams about human society would involve in order to achieve their goals.²⁰ This same disjunction between vision and reality, especially within the context of the ethical questions related to justice and the common good, are manifest also in Kāng's utopian dreams.

The physical uniformity to be engineered so that the "Great Unity" might be made possible would be enforced, according to Kāng Yǒuwéi, by the "public government" within the Great Unity (*dàtóng gōng zhèngfǔ* 大同政府),²¹ and several times he admits that it would take more than a thousand years (*qiān shù bǎi nián* 千數百年) to accomplish.²² Furthermore, it is clear that Kāng's standard for a "beautiful race" (*měizhǒng* 美種) was based upon a racist prejudice: it is based on what he refers to as a mixture of "yellow-white" racial stock (*huángbái rén zhī zhǒng* 黃白人之種) and is particularly seeking to overcome the "negative" influences of those from groups of "brown-black" (*zōnghèi* 棕黑) humans.²³ Four methods are determined to engineer this fundamental change in all human beings. First, there is the "method of changing locations" (*qiāndì zhī fǎ* 遷地之法), which essentially means forced migration to climates which Kāng believed would greatly help to change skin colors.²⁴ The massive movements of people which he suggests here are so enormous that it boggles the imagination, but then he attempts to soften the cruelty of this kind of policy by suggesting that it would take more than a thousand years to fulfill. Second, there would be the encouragement of mixed marriages (*záhūn zhī fǎ* 雜婚之法), which would help to change all races toward the standard light-skinned racial tone.²⁵ Third, there would be a governmentally enforced method of changing diet (*gǎishì zhī fǎ* 改食之法), the preferred standard food being (once more) that found prevailing among the "yellow-white" peoples.²⁶ Finally, and most devastatingly, Kāng allows for the implementation of a method of sterilization (*shàtàì zhī fǎ* 沙汰之法) through the consumption of appropriate medicines, in order to "stop the regeneration" (*duàn sì zhī yào* 斷嗣之藥) of those who carry undesirable racial traits (meaning "brown-black" peoples).²⁷

Though presented in brief statements without much fanfare, Kāng Yǒuwéi's instrumental and racial values backed by explicit forms of biotechnological engineering which he could imagine at the time give many reasons at the beginning of the twenty-first century to make us pause. Manifestly, Kāng lived in an era before genetics had been discovered, and so his attitudes about the inherent transformability of human beings was uninformed in this realm, and more influenced by a simplistic form of evolutionary theory. Believing that changing the environment could change any sentient being invokes a deterministic materialism which stands in contrast to the values which give privileges and democratic powers to the people of the Great Unity, but we must recall that he granted these powers only to those who had already been "standardized" on the basis of the principle of "making humanity the same." Certainly, his racist orientation was based upon his own personal assumptions about beauty and the "natural inclinations" of human development, including certain social evolutionary theories which placed "white" and "yellow" races on the top of a hierarchy of human races. Here the putative scientific orientation of his approach and the proclaimed ethical desire to "eliminate suffering" stand in direct opposition to his manipulative forms of population control and the powers of eugenic selectivity granted only to the public government of the Great Unity.

Undoubtedly, the immense cruelty of driving people groups to live for generations in other climates and under other cultural conditions in order to change their physical characteristics is only determined on a prior assumption that "real justice" will be made possible by eliminating all personal distinctions in physical appearance. One wonders if Kāng would have changed this element of his utopian vision if he had lived through World War II and the creation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which disallowed discrimination against people because of their race. But this is certainly a major reason why he would not have the text published during his lifetime; it was a radical departure from a more humane form of government. One shudders at the thought that this form of racist doctrine would mostly like have been welcomed by the Nazi regime, had it been known by Hitler and others during the first years after it was promulgated.

Still, this one small chapter within the *Book of the Great Unity* also provokes a very basic question regarding the nature and timing of the public government of the Great Unity. When exactly would the period of the government of the Great Unity be initiated? If the internationalized democratic government which would rule around the globe was intended for the distant future, and based upon the already homogenized global humanity which Kāng envisioned, the utopian character of the plan would be more consistent. But from these statements in the fourth chapter of his work, Kāng appears to have the government operating much earlier, during the time that the politically engineered efforts at racial homogeneity are enforced; it is no longer

something projected into the distant future, but would be implementing before the Great Unity actually had been realized. If this is the case, there are not only serious questions about the nature of the implementation of these policies but also how the representatives of the public government of the Great Unity would be determined. To give such powers to any human persons, and apparently on principles that are previous to those employed during the era of the Great Unity, appears to give political license to those in power that could become dictatorial, arbitrary, and destructive. Is it truly worth all the human suffering caused by these policies to reach this human homogeneity? Would Kāng's goals of eliminating competition and personal competition due to these eugenic policies and the "sameness" of all human beings actually achieve these other goals?

With regard to the four methods he asserts are necessary to achieve this radical transformation of all individuals within the world, it is apparent that Kāng Yōuwéi was privileging the first method above the other three. He apparently believed that the second and third may be effective for the majority of persons after the initial method was implemented, so that the fourth would only be employed to "eliminate" undesirable elements. The fact that he was so unconcerned about this elimination process was once more based upon his "globalized justifications": to have a world in which all persons were uniformly of the same racial stock was, according to Kāng, the best way to overcome selfish attitudes and bitter rivalries. Though it may involve many generations to achieve this goal, he believed that it could be overcome. This form of a secularized rationalism, putatively grounded on scientific methods and their values, while being justified by hopes for a globally extended transformation of all human beings, cloaks the devastating consequences that would necessarily be involved for all people who suffered under such a forceful set of political policies. Ironically, though Kāng claims that the era of the Great Unity would be one with a minimum of pain and suffering, his route toward achieving the basic conditions of that era is replete with numerous trials denying people's free will, rejecting their personal choices for marriage and places of residence, stifling their freedom to travel and their choices for preferred cultural forms of life, as well as their decision to have children in cases where those persons who did not fit the "racial standard" are politically denied this option.

What must be stated once more is that from the internal structure of Kāng Yōuwéi's arguments related to the development and maintenance of the Great Unity, this fundamental change to the human race is ultimately the basic transformative step which makes possible most, if not all, other dimensions of his utopian vision. In this light, then, we should summarize and weigh the other dimensions related to his account of a reconstructed form of personal existence, the roles of heterosexual relationships and family organizations, and the subsequent developments of economic principles within the era of the Great Unity.

What has been interpreted as the “abandonment of sexual boundaries” in the fifth chapter of his work is literally the boundary of “physical form” or *xíng* 形, but the content of this chapter is clearly oriented toward overcoming imbalances in gender roles and what may be seen as normal heterosexual institutions. Though hedonistic in character, Kāng’s *Book of the Great Unity* assumes that interpersonal sexual relationships are meant to be heterosexual and to produce human offspring. He obviously could not and did not anticipate human embryonic technologies which could conceive children in test tubes or relieve women from bearing children, nor did he imagine the possibility of alternative sexual orientations within the Great Unity. Nevertheless, much of this chapter is focused on showing the great injustices faced by women in many societies, including their lack of access to education, economically productive roles, and political enfranchisement.²⁸ In numerous ways, he supports the liberation of women from cultural patterns which have made these difficult or impossible for them to experience, and especially focuses on the dilemmas of marriage situations which disadvantage women.²⁹ As a consequence, he ends this chapter by arguing that all life-long marriage arrangements should be abolished, and only temporary alliances between willing heterosexual couples should be permitted,³⁰ so that future children could be conceived and given birth, but only under conditions that would not bind the woman to a life as a mother of particular children. How this would be arranged becomes the focus of his lengthy discussion in the following chapter, which deals with the abolishing of familial structures.³¹

What Kāng envisions both in this context and in later economic restructuring is that there should be “public” facilities to cover the whole of life, so that no one would grow up expecting to have “private” or “nuclear families” and their attendant relational limitations. Following patterns that parallel many of the institutional arrangements suggested by Plato for his guardians in the utopian vision of the Greek *polis* he describes in *The Republic*,³² Kāng conceived of a communal form of life that would be organized under the direct powers of public medical doctors and nurses, teachers, and financiers, rather than by long-term political figures, and would cover the whole of any person’s life from birth till death.³³ Nine public institutions are conceived, starting with two to deal with human births and the nurture of infants, three with educational development, and four with later social needs. As in Plato’s *Republic*, Kāng envisions birth as a public service provided by women, but this does not necessarily tie them down to care for the infants they give birth to; mothers are seen as economically independent citizens within the Great Unity, and so once they give birth and have recuperated, they return to their public posts. Those who care for the newborns and infants are primarily women, but in the era of the Great Unity all older women are referred to as “mothers,” all older men, “fathers,” and all younger children as “sons” and “daughters.”³⁴ Starting

from the age of about six, all children will attend schools and will continue in education until their abilities and various interests are fully engaged, passing beyond the university level into specialized studies if they prove to have such excellences. Teachers have particularly significant roles at this point in their lives along with medical doctors, for both will be involved in decisions for any persons at the time of formal independence (nominally about the age of 20) which would allow for heterosexual relationships to begin even as public service is also initiated.³⁵ The goal of these educational institutions is not to narrow the focus of personal interests but to allow for the widest form of diversification of interests, so that well-established and creatively innovative institutions of the Great Unity can be maintained and developed.³⁶ At the other side of human experiences, Kāng envisions special public institutions for the poor, the sick, the elderly, and the dying.³⁷ By this means, Kāng Yǒuwéi intends to overcome all vestiges of familial life and values—outside of the generalization of reference terms already mentioned above—which include all humans at any age anywhere on earth, and so to realize a “public” realm that is explicitly “global” in extent.

Economically speaking, then, the main form of social life is in something that would anticipate the creation of public communes. No private property is permitted, because Kāng sees this as a threat to “public virtue”;³⁸ instead, the breakdown of local, national, and international borders would allow agricultural, industrial, and commercial interests to be developed without a need for competition.³⁹ People in the Great Unity would live communally under leaders related to their specific areas of specialization—whether agricultural, industrial, or commercial—and leaders would assumably only have this role for a year at a time. The general pattern of life would be one of working to fulfill what is necessary, and so allowing a maximum of time for more leisurely activities which would increase the happiness of each and every person.

Summarily speaking, Kāng Yǒuwéi’s utopian vision of the era of the Great Unity promotes a liberalized set of cultural structures which seeks to maximize personal development and relational freedom under conditions of a communal or globally extended set of “public” institutions. Its feasibility is completely dependent, according to Kāng’s explicit justifications, on the basic tenet that an immense international eugenics project will be pursued in order to eliminate all personal distinctions in human physical appearance. In this regard, his project remains dreamlike in its character, and would sanction political powers to have such authority over people groups and individual persons that would easily create a huge amount of personal and social conflict and suffering. This remains a major irony in the face of Kāng Yǒuwéi’s explicit concern to create a world that is free of suffering during the age of the Great Unity, but as Jacques Ellul has demonstrated in great

detail, this disjunction between secularized rationalism and moral duties to human beings often occurs under the guise of “techno-scientific” standards of excellence.

In fact, it should also be pointed out that already in the 1920s and 1930s, there were international contexts outside of China where eugenics projects, including public sterilization of certain people groups, was considered and put into practice. Dikötter identifies how this was done in a number of European countries, starting at the time Kāng’s book was published.⁴⁰ Certainly these also became matters of practical concern under the post-Máo era, as will be seen. But as we have seen above already, there is a great irony in the employment of severely authoritarian methods of control and human engineering by the government of the Great Unity and the promotion of “democratic processes” which Kāng advocates. It seems clear that Kāng Yǒuwéi was unaware of this programmatic contradiction, but it must be repeated that these were made feasible in his mind because the universal uniformity of the physical nature of all human beings was already assumed. Beyond this utopian gap between the ideal and the real in political terms, we should also note that Kāng envisioned the establishment of public communes which paralleled developments in the communistic utopian vision in Máo’s era, but his were developed on the basis of the “sameness” of humanity and not on revolutionary war and the rule of the Proletariat.

PEOPLE’S COMMUNES AND THE COMMUNIST DREAM: RECONSIDERING MÁO ZÉDŌNG’S UTOPIAN PHASE DURING THE GREAT LEAP FORWARD

According to Féng Yǒulán, the vision of the Great Unity which Kāng Yǒuwéi had written down and published was known to Máo Zédōng, being criticized by him as a utopian project impossible to realize.⁴¹ Having had military success with the Red Army in 1949 (while Kāng had failed in military efforts several decades earlier to dislodge the new Nationalist government and reinstate the Qīng emperor), Máo had sufficient reasons to believe that Kāng Yǒuwéi was essentially an anachronous figure, while he himself was traveling on a significantly different road headed toward realizing the communist form of society. Asserting his power to realign property rights in the early 1950s by having plots of land previously owned by relatively wealthy landlords divided and redistributed for ownership by common farmers, Máo had helped to initiate a socialist stage in modern Chinese life which he hoped in the distant future would ultimately come to realize a fully communist-oriented social reality. On the basis of Stuart Schram’s analysis, Máo Zédōng clearly saw himself as a Marxist philosopher and revolutionary, and though

he also experimented with Chinese innovations in both theory and practice, he fundamentally remained a Marxist in his philosophical orientation.⁴² Nevertheless, it is even more significant to note, following Schram's overview of Máo's philosophical development and principles, that this major Chinese Marxist figure emphasized "the importance of 'conscious activity' [*zìjué de néngdòngxìng* 自覺地能動性] and of subjective factors in shaping the course of events."⁴³ While adhering to historical dialectics as a Marxist, Máo was not a strict materialistic determinist either in his reflections on war or on mass movements. In his account of the nature of contradiction, both "the superstructure" and "subjective forces" could "play a leading and decisive role in the process of social change."⁴⁴ "Conscious activity is a distinctive characteristic of man, especially of man at war."⁴⁵ So it is not unsurprising that "the crucial importance of 'conscious action' on the part of the masses in carrying forward the revolution, and the need to guide and inspire the masses so as to release this great force, remained one of the most central themes" of Máo's practical philosophy.⁴⁶ Especially during the height of the Great Leap Forward, Máo insisted that "the spontaneity of the masses has always been an element inherent in communism." Here there is much to consider, especially in the light of the failure of the Great Leap Forward from 1958 to 1962, when the cost in human lives was exorbitant by any standard.

The Great Leap Forward initiated in 1958 marked the advent of "peoples' communes," and was hailed as "great" by Máo in August of that year.⁴⁷ He took their emergence to be a spontaneously creative act of Chinese citizens which might presage a "millennial breakthrough," according to Dikötter,⁴⁸ and so later in that same month made the construction of peoples' communes an official policy of the Chinese Communist Party.⁴⁹ Though many peoples communes during the first few years were created from the joining together of other smaller collectives at the production brigade level in agricultural areas, it effectively created "the lowest level of local government" within a system which lasted "from 1958 to 1982."⁵⁰ By the end of 1958, nearly 26,000 communes had been established outside of the major cities in the PRC, ranging in size from several thousand to as many as 20,000 households.⁵¹ (See table 1 among the Appendices.) Historically speaking, the people's communes were built upon various forms of agricultural cooperatives normally involving two smaller levels of organization which were created during the period from 1953 to 1956. The smallest unit was essentially the equivalent of a rural village and was generally organized out of that pre-socialist institutional setting, being referred to as a "production team." When several of these teams were coordinated together for projects and other public services, they were formed into "production brigades." Representing an even higher level of putative coordination, the peoples' communes were most often constructed out of a set of production brigades.⁵²

Politically speaking, Máo's reception of the advent of peoples' communes was bound up with his intention to "overtake Britain," even as Khrushchev was setting his sights on matching the economic prowess of America. For Máo, this was an ideological battle of the highest order: communism and socialist civilization versus capitalist civilization.⁵³ His Marxist commitments drove him forward, so that even the terminology he and others began to use in 1958 was purposefully peppered with military metaphors.⁵⁴ The communes were a militarization (*jūnshì huà* 軍事化) of normal productive forces in the countryside, and in the euphoria which he helped promote during the summer of 1958, Máo began to believe that the fifteen-year target he had set for catching up with British economic prowess could in fact be achieved in two to three years. Here signs of Máo's utopian mentality manifested itself, being built upon a mixture of values drawn from his Marxist worldview, the giddy influences of a mass euphoria which centered on his political image as the "great leader," and the distortions within multileveled communication networks fueled by competition and fears nurtured through propagandistic techniques. This collage of factors made Máo and his ideological supporters vulnerable to extravagant idealization and grossly misguided judgments. By taking this approach, then, we are challenging the economic model promoted by Justin Yifu Lin in 1990 which claimed that the main cause for the excessive drop in agricultural productivity during the years of the Great Leap Forward was a "change in the incentive structure due to the deprivation of the right to withdraw from a collective," a right which had been permitted between 1952 and 1958.⁵⁵

Taken from a critique of nature of utopian thought and its rationalization procedures, which were reinforced by propagandistic techniques causing exacerbated distortions within network systems, and at times cruel and inhumane treatment of common farmers by cadre leaders within the communes, we can offer an alternative account of why the economic breakdown was so severe. As Máo's modern utopian thought developed during the years of the Great Leap Forward, it revealed an epistemological breakdown between "practice" and "knowledge" which Máo himself had promoted. Rather than relying on empirical information to guide his decisions, Máo began to focus on maintaining the fervency of the attitudes of the people and driving them to achieve idealized targets, rather than seriously engaging the conditions of their living conditions at that time. Precisely in this sense, Máo's communist utopian ideals reveals just how much it was a product of a secularized modern rationalism which has separated itself from its cultural context, what Habermas refers to as "an exclusion model of reason" in which "utopian thought gets completely filled in with an irreconcilable reason reduced to bare power."⁵⁶ Understood from the contexts of propagandistic methods, which Máo clearly supported, this commitment to communist utopian rationalism and its rationalizations produced an immensely ironic situation: the impact of

purposeful misinformation created by the propaganda system to maintain the fever pitch activities of the newly established people's communes distorted communicative networks (through fear tactics and self-serving efforts of cadre to beat their competitors) to the extent that the propagandists themselves were unable to discern willful fictions from the actually more complex and deteriorating situation.

Yet before we explore the problematic of this kind of modern utopian thinking in more depth, I should briefly indicate the multifaceted deterioration caused by this situation during the Great Leap Forward. Based upon past and recent studies relying on relatively new sources of official and critically assessed information, we can now portray the significance of the inhumaneness produced by the systematic distortion of reality in a manner that is more precise, and so can fully reveal its disruptive utopian character.

Part of the problem associated with assessing the actual economic conditions which prevailed during the years of the Great Leap Forward was that the governmental institutions normally responsible for maintaining empirical information were themselves deeply affected by propagandistic motivations. At some points, they became ineffective institutions and left no records. As a consequence, economists' estimates of what actually was occurring during this period vary; because they are based only on selective instances, one can begin to get a sense of the general trends, but up until very recently, it was not possible to be more precise.⁵⁷ (See table 4 among the Appendices.) Yet in spite of this empirical quagmire, Lin could already indicate by 1990 a number of different accounts of why the terrible disaster during the Great Leap Forward resulted in an "estimated 30 million excess deaths" as a "direct result of the crop failures."⁵⁸ (See figure 1 and table 2 among the Appendices.) Since then, further studies into the provincial archives in recent years has made more precise accounts possible, so that Dikötter is able to indicate the multiform character of the social breakdown and come to the following conclusions:

[There] is enough archival evidence, from a sufficiently large diversity of party units, to confirm that the figure of 43 to 46 million premature deaths proposed by Chen Yizi, who was a senior member of a large working group that sifted through internal party documents around 1980, is in all likelihood a reliable estimate. The death toll stands at a minimum of 45 million excess deaths. . . . Some historians speculate that the true figure stands as high as 50 to 60 million people. . . . Yu Xiguang, an independent researcher with a great deal of experience, puts the figure at 55 million excess deaths.⁵⁹

What then were the causes of such an immense tragedy of human suffering within the context of the Great Leap Forward? According to Lin, the four main hypotheses used to explain the cause(s) of this gargantuan disaster are

“bad weather, bad policies and bad management, and the incentive issue arising from the unwieldy size of a commune.”⁶⁰ According to his analysis, reference to bad weather was an unjustifiable excuse camouflaging other far more serious problems; the facts of their being bad policies and bad management during this period are not denied, but they are seen as secondary to the last problem, that of the incentive of the commune workers.⁶¹

Two decades after Lin presented his account of these matters, Frank Dikötter and others were able to review newly available archives at provincial levels across the PRC and determined that there were far more complicated problems involved with the national government policies and mismanagement, while the whole social and political situation was also transmogrified through the use of harsh propagandistic methods. Here the distortions caused by what Ellul refers to as “the technical environment”⁶² have been revealed in ways that justify a thorough reconsideration of Lin’s explanations on the basis of the Marxist utopian goals and motivations which informed the policies of national leaders and the management principles of the large host of local cadres spread across the nation in positions of local leadership.⁶³

Here I will focus on three transmogrifications of the social and political contexts in the PRC during the period from 1958 to 1962 which manifest more poignantly the distorted nature of the utopian values which instigated and exacerbated social deterioration within the peoples’ communes during those years.

Those three transmogrifications are the militarization of Chinese social environments within the communal settings, the use of intense propagandistic modes of motivating, disciplining and punishing the common farmers and workers within the communal settings, and the breakdown of communicative and economic networks resulting from forcing mass engagement with target-oriented projects under intense propaganda which neglected other minor tasks which were needed for the sustenance of these mass movements and their logistical infrastructure.

Militarization of normal life is a purposeful effort in the context of “total propaganda”⁶⁴ which seeks to achieve a higher level of efficiency for the sake of specified targets and goals. Yet to militarize normal life is to declare war on normalcy for the sake of what is portrayed to be a “higher peace,” a “greater glory,” or a supreme goal. In Máo Zédōng’s case, he was convinced that the “subjective will” of the masses of Chinese people in the countryside had spontaneously responded to collectivization and were surging forward to achieve a fully communist form of collectivization. For this reason, he began in the summer of 1958 to promote the fever pitched “will to power” of peoples’ communes, believing it would leap beyond a normal period of mechanization (according to Soviet versions of the route toward communalization) and so quickly reach the stage of a true communist society, where

each worked according to their capacity and received according to their need under conditions of the complete public (and so non-privatized) ownership of the means of production. It is important to note that this development reversed a previous arrangement by which the common farmers had been granted ownership of land during the redistribution of land rights between 1950 and 1952, and so even though various forms of collectivization proceeded afterward, these rights to the land remained untouched until the peoples' communes were created.⁶⁵

Why was the higher level of communal life promoted? In fact, the initial stages of collectivization experienced between 1953 and 1957 was "surprisingly successful," so that agricultural production was significantly larger than the population growth for this period.⁶⁶ Having been encouraged by these signs, the previously cautious and gradualist policies of the central government shifted into a faster and utopian mode. Lin offers the following explanation for this policy change:

[They believed] mobilizing rural surplus labor would increase rural capital formation and, hence, increase production. However, although a collective farm of 150 households provided a basis for mobilizing labor for work projects within the collective, the collective farm did not solve the problem of mobilizing labor for large projects, such as irrigation canals, dams, or the like. These kinds of projects would in general require the simultaneous participation of laborers from several dozens of collective farms. The obvious solution for a large-scale labor mobilization was to pool 20 or 30 collective farms of 150 households into a larger unit.⁶⁷

As a consequence, a number of massive projects between 1958 and 1960 were conceived by national and local leadership, seeking to overcome limitations to the nation's current agricultural needs. These included mobilizing hundreds of thousands of workers for water control and irrigation projects, intense fertilization, close cropping, deep ploughing, and backyard steel furnaces.⁶⁸ Because caution had been thrown to the wind once the utopian desires had been fueled across the country, many of these projects took on the aspect of pseudo-scientific strategies for increasing productivity. For example, experimental plots of land were set aside for scientific experimentation, used both for experimental methods and as show cases to commune residents about what might be possible.

During the fever pitch of Marxist utopian mobilization, Féng Yǒulán and other faculty and staff from Běijīng University were taken into a commune in nearby Héběi province, where they were told how everything would be provided at the commune. Regarding food, communal kitchens were in operation, and it was proclaimed that not only that everyone in the commune could

find something to eat within that public facility—a matter of great importance for people who knew of extensive deaths due to famines across the centuries—but that ultimately a person could go anywhere throughout China and without having to pay any cash would be provided food to eat. “The commune places all of the needs of the commune residents under its authority; all facets of the residents life—living, aging, sickness, death, clothing, food, housing, and work—were covered within its institutions.”⁶⁹ Introducing the guests from Běijīng to the experimental plot (*shìyàn tián* 試驗田) which had a placard announcing that it was intending to produce 2,200,000 caddy of produce from that one field, a secretary of the commune announced that he had developed a special technique for increasing agricultural productivity. When asked about his method, he revealed his secret: within each plot a dead dog had been buried.⁷⁰

This form of rationalized pseudo-science is an extreme illustration of what Ellul refers to as the inherent “technological bluff” involved within techno-scientific institutions.⁷¹ Claiming to be capable of achieving idealized goals reflecting work efficiency, lowered costs, and timeliness, these systems actually involve large amounts of unanticipated waste and lead to costly negative social consequences. What is far more nefarious about these claims is revealed by Dikötter when he illustrates how the whiplash of harsh public discipline driven by propaganda and punishing attitudes adopted by local cadres created a nightmare of fear and dehumanization under these conditions. In one fertilization project, persons who had died by beating, because they had opposed cadre directions or were perceived as being laggards, had their bodies made into fertilizer.⁷² “The worst form of desecration was to chop up the [human] body.” This was illustrated by the death of Deng Daming, who was beaten to death because his child has stolen a few broad beans. His body was “simmered down into fertilizer” to be spread over a pumpkin field.

Accompanying these deceptive and cruel methods of enhancing an over-idealized agricultural production was also the employment of intensive propaganda. Propaganda cadre teams reinforced the current policies and production targets by constantly quoting current slogans, repeating the quota targets, and creating fear among all by stifling dissent whenever it became manifest, all for the sake of mobilizing “the masses” of common Chinese persons. Though these could not always be effective at the level of complete brainwashing, it did mobilize commune residents, often moving them to do things they would not normally do under harsh conditions,⁷³ many times leading to illness or even death due to over-exhaustion.⁷⁴

What was also prompted by these propagandistic methods of terrorizing those who were working in these contexts were efforts by local cadre to offer the appearance of “being competitive” in seeking to achieve high production

targets, even when the reality was far less sanguine. For example, as Máo and other key leaders from the national government toured communes to observe their progress, local cadres mobilized communal residents to stage what appeared to be overwhelmingly positive scenarios of productivity. Only a few national leaders were self-conscious of this deceptive strategy at the time; subsequently, it was realized that most cadre operated in these ways in order to impress higher leadership and to gain privileges from them for political promotion and other kinds of support.⁷⁵ As a consequence, the sub-project of making surreal scenes of overwhelming successes became the fodder for mass media frenzies, increasing the competition between different communes and their cadre leadership. Ultimately, the disinformation became so obvious that national leaders determined to set two levels of “targets” for production: one that reflected their ideals and another which they considered to be more “realistic.” According to Dikötter, this effort at reigning in ridiculous production targets later in 1959 ended up creating three other subordinate levels of misinformation and deception, reinforcing a robust form of hypocritical disinformation. Essentially what happened is that at each level, the received target was taken to be too idealistic, and a more “reasonable” target was set, but all was still driven by the total propaganda which made even these reduced projections unrealistic.⁷⁶

Under the seething pressure of designated quotas for production, communalized living, and the fear and threat of cruel treatment and deportation into Chinese gulags, the mass mobilization of workers (which included during this period not only adult males but also the elderly, women, and children in many places) created a series of social disruptions that hastened the social deterioration leading to extensive problems in obtaining basic provisions. Militarized mobilization of multitudes of workers effectively emptied the normal economic institutions and networks of their staff, and so made the regularity of their services vulnerable to the current drives for achieving certain major communal projects. As a consequence, fissures in the assumed linkage points within different levels of society began to appear. These resulted in an imbalance of interlinking economic systems, so that while human resources were mobilized for particular major tasks, other smaller tasks were neglected, leading at times to devastating results. The natural cycles of crop harvesting was overlooked or left to the elderly, women and children, who had neither the skills nor the strength required for this labor; continued punishment meted out against perceived laggards and those in resistance intensified the state of fear that prevailed during these periods. As a consequence, some fields ready for harvest were left to rot; other grain, having been harvested, was left at the railway stations in bags, but because they were not transported in time, they also ended up rotting on the platforms or in nearby warehouses. The combination of these various conditions led to the point where essential services were

left ineffective for critical periods in some places, leading to breakdowns in food supply chains, health services, and education.⁷⁷ The results of these and other factors led to a decrease of over 25 percent of the agricultural output achieved in 1958; in 1961, it had been decreasing for three years and had reached a level even below 1952 standards. This is to say that for two years, even though the population had increased by more than 100 million, the resulting famine brought about intense suffering, so that vast multitudes starved to death. (See table 2 among the Appendices.) Even though this was not the case everywhere, local cadre administrators who feared punishment if they revealed the full extent of the disasters in their area created falsely lowered numbers for the official records; archival research has exposed these statistics as accounting for less than one-third of the actual total number of deaths.⁷⁸ Dikötter describes how the holocaust-like disaster was not merely due to deaths from starvation and disease, but also included numerous accidents due to problems of mobilizing so many persons, suicides of the despairing and desperate, murders in the communes perpetrated by the violence of cadre against “laggards” and “rightests.” This was done even while the lower cadre themselves feared punishing reprisals from their own bosses if they did not force the commune residents to increase their efforts at work; sometimes they demanded compliance even though the workers had not been fed previously for various disciplinary measures tied to “not meeting daily quotas.” Beyond these cruel scenes are the more terrifying situations of the Chinese gulags, where hard labor often led to completed exhaustion, over exposure, and death, as well as the breakdown of all basic civility due to starving groups of peasants who sometimes resorted to cannibalism in order to survive.⁷⁹

What, then, was the impact on personal well-being of Chinese citizens, especially those in the rural communes, during the Great Leap Forward? They had undoubtedly lost any normal sense of personal security, and even though the propaganda could not change the overall situation, it drove many to act out of desperation in ways that not only lowered productivity but also manifested their despairing attitudes. This was much more than a problem of loss of incentives due to the lack of consonance between a particular person’s workload and the number of work points (the equivalent of wages, but no longer put into monetary terms) which Lin describes.⁸⁰ The larger context shaped by utopian policies, total propaganda methods, militarization of the local commune populace, and cruel reprisals for any dissenters were far more significant, and led to an intensely felt loss of personal meaning for multitudes, including a good number of the cadres themselves when the extent of the famine and its terrifying toll among the common people was beginning to be revealed. Certainly, the ultimate indignity resulting from periodic cadre violence on some commune residents was the use of the dead human bodies for fertilizer, and so reifying all persons into mere chemical elements.

Regarding the well-being of family units during the Great Leap Forward, however, we face a notable irony. Even though personal threats and arbitrary punishments increased the pain and suffering of many rural families, including watching the murderous beatings and other inhumane treatment of family members, most families in the rural area remained self-conscious of their identity and maintained a subsidiary order of mutual protection even in spite of threats which came from propaganda wielding cadre officials. As Féng Yǒulán indicates, even the internal structures of leadership within the communes still ran on the basis of the elderly being the communal leaders, and so it maintained the structures and values of extended family institutions in spite of the “collectivization efforts.”⁸¹ Families were often put into tension because of the larger social and political contexts, but their basic intergenerational relationships and more or less traditional forms of respect and concern were maintained among communal residents who were not necessarily cadre administrators or leaders. Here we see the ineffectiveness and limits of total propaganda which Ellul insightfully delineated in his appendices to his work on this theme.

Ultimately, Máo Zédōng did become aware of the problem, but he came to his senses only at a time after many millions had already deceased. His personal doctor, Lǐ Zhìsuī, claimed that Máo finally became aware of certain failures during the second year of the Great Leap Forward (in 1959) when he visited his own home village in Sháoshān 韶山, Húnán.⁸² Sensing that he was in fact receiving distorted news from the official sources, he became convinced that only if he visited those he knew personally over many years would he receive an authentic picture of the whole situation. After spending time with local people there in late June 1959, Máo was in a gloomy mood, but initiated new directives which abolished the public dining halls, halted many of the massive projects that were “completed” but were in different degrees of dysfunction, and ordered the cessation and dismantling of backyard steel furnaces. Afterward Máo adjusted his utopian ideas, but only to the point of rectifying the procedures and timing of the approach to communism. Máo believed that the people’s commune was the right organizational step, but the means by which it was employed and the lack of internal coherence had caused an obvious problem. Nevertheless, a comprehensive account of those years of disaster was not fully known until more than two decades later and is still being worked out with greater precision and detail. Because of Máo’s ideological strictness on this point, remaining Marxist in orientation and not bending pragmatically toward other forms of economics in order to rectify the situation, this situation stimulated his own further struggle for maintaining his grip on political power, leading ultimately to further devastation during the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976). What has become manifest in retrospective analysis, however, is that the “great famine” was far more

disastrous that the Cultural Revolution when determined by the number of human casualties produced by the utopian policies and propagandistic mismanagement which characterized the Great Leap Forward. In the end, Féng Yǒulán offered a final negative evaluation of Máo Zédōng's philosophical career by means of a poignant question. After citing Máo's own critique of Kāng Yǒuwéi's utopian thought, Féng continued: "Did Máo Zédōng's idea of the people's commune truly reach [the end] of the Communist road?"⁸³

CRITICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE POST-MÁO ERA ONE-CHILD POLICY

In the Spring of 2011, a televised report seen in Hong Kong mentioned how the central government in Běijīng was particularly "pleased" with the recent statistical results drawn out from a report about its "family planning policies," noting that the annual growth of the population for the past five years was gauged at 0.57 percent per year.⁸⁴ Having reached its thirtieth year of implementation in 2010, the one-child policy "ranks among the most ambitious experiments in social engineering every attempted anywhere in the world"⁸⁵ and has been called "the mother of all social experiments in our modern era."⁸⁶ So much has been written, reported, taped, and illustrated in various media about the policy and its implications, it would go far beyond the scope of our chapter to summarize the vast literature in Chinese, English, and other languages which deal with this draconian policy and its social impact. What I will do instead is to focus on a few of the more notable recent studies, adding insights gleaned from our previous analysis of the secularized rationalism inherent in the twentieth-century Chinese utopian visions as they reveal more about the nature of the technological values which produce a distortive impact in human contexts. As in previous cases, after offering a summary of salient points, I will proceed to address the inhumane troubles that were largely unanticipated by the utopian thinkers involved in the conception and initial implementation of this well-known PRC policy, indicating how it affects the well-being of particular persons and families within the country.

The origins of the one-child policy, or what might be called more technically the primagravidization of the PRC (*yītāihuà* 一胎化),⁸⁷ is moored in contexts which Ellul's theses about the technological society and its "technological bluffs" comprehended and anticipated in the 1960s. Rather than coming out of the Marxist social science circles which had been more cautious about these matters, because they realized that the problems of implementation were immense, particularly among families in the countryside, the main proponent of the one-child policy came from an unexpected background. In contrast to the detailed studies and cautious reflections of social scientists in population studies, Sòng Jiàn 宋健 (1931–) was an elite scientist involved in

the PRC's military defense programs who was trained in the Soviet Union, protected from persecution during the Cultural Revolution, and one of the first to employ computerized statistical analysis on the basis of idealized projected scenarios related to population growth and birth rates.⁸⁸ An astute polyglot and impressive scientist in his own field, Sòng and his associates painted a doomsday scenario of an over-populated PRC based on a 100-year projection of different conditions, and so was a major influence in the articulation, justification, and ultimate confirmation of the one-child policy by Běijīng officials in 1980.⁸⁹

Reasons why Susan Greenhalgh (c. 1950-), who has studied Sòng Jiàn's works and life in detail, argues that this policy would be adopted in the Post-Máo age include the prevalence of a "natural scientific imperialism"⁹⁰ and also a major change in the style of policy-making within the PRC in the early 1980s. At that time, there was a "growing participation of intellectuals in the policy process," resulting in a "more systematic, realistic and data-driven process of policy making" rather than the "erratic, ideological, vision-driven mode that had prevailed" when Máo Zédōng was ruling.⁹¹ This not only highlights the distinct character of the Post-Máo age but also underscores a qualitative assessment of Máo Zédōng's governing style which is consistent with what was presented earlier about his utopian attitudes and their influences during the Great Leap Forward. What distinguished Sòng Jiàn's approach to the PRC national leadership within the Chinese Communist Party were his justifications not only based on doomsday scenarios of overpopulation, but also an elaborate global scenario which warned that overpopulation would not only threaten the status of the Chinese nation within the international community, but could also threaten the sustainability of the global environment and its related economies.⁹² It is here that we find once more the global vision employed to justify national policies, and so creating a sense of urgency and desperation which moved leaders of the most populous country in the twentieth century to take up these suggestions as part of their own national policies.

Being what Greenhalgh refers to as a "superscientist" with high levels of "self-assurance" and a rhetorical whip in his mathematical modeling which easily outstripped the less well-trained cadre in national leadership, Sòng Jiàn was employing a form of utopian scientism which Jacques Ellul criticizes as fully embracing the technological values of inhumane efficiency. In Ellul's first book on the character of these technological values and their distortive influences, he added a concluding chapter revealing how Nobel Prize winning scientists viewed the future of humanity, because within their dream-like visions were the same kind of utopian claims which portrayed a world full of joy and happiness, but without revealing all the assumptions of the processes leading to that paradise involving immense suffering and cruelty to the normal humanity which had to be changed to realize that futuristic vision.⁹³ As history has once more proven, Sòng Jiàn's techno-scientific rhetoric not only

won the attention of PRC policy makers in 1980, but also led to profoundly disturbing social enforcement policies and numerous other side effects that are now explicitly manifest after the policy has been implemented for thirty years.

Among the social problems created by the one-child policy in the PRC are the following major issues which social scientists inside and outside of China explicitly note: a growing labor shortage which should be exacerbated by a diminishing younger workforce after either 2015 or 2016, the impact of an aging population which will become an economic burden to the PRC government if it maintains its current approach to pension support without taxation or other management options for pension funds⁹⁴ and accumulative problems associated with the highest imbalance of males over females in the general population in any country within the contemporary world (pegged at the average of 120 males to 100 females or above in 2005).⁹⁵ As mentioned earlier, however, even more inhumane concerns related to this one-child policy occurred in the realm of enforcement methods and the impact on both children's identities and changing family structures and dynamics.

The list of problems noted and described by scholars besides those already mentioned include "health hazards for the mother" due to implementation of forced abortions and sterilization operations, the rising rate of female infanticide, and the "problematic personality development of the only child" or "singleton."⁹⁶ Not only was there a terrifying "mass campaign of forced sterilization and abortion in 1983," accompanied by total propaganda and the use of "five procedures" which punished non-compliant persons by "seizing grain, livestock, and furniture, demolishing houses and putting people in prison,"⁹⁷ but there have been intermittent efforts to silence any protesters even after the PRC joined the World Trade Organization and putatively supported human rights. Philip Pan has followed one particular case in Shāndōng Province in 2004 and 2005 dealing with a blind human rights worker who collected damaging evidence about human rights abuses in his home town, and then was subsequently harassed and imprisoned.⁹⁸ Due to the thirtieth year anniversary of the policy, the most scathing critique has been written by researchers from Washington DC, while more guarded accounts from social scientists now also highlight the multi-faceted repercussions of the policy in contemporary and future PRC society.⁹⁹

How have these policies affected particular persons? Regarding the children themselves who live as the only child in the context of their nuclear family, and possibly also the only child present for two generations of elders (parents and grandparents), their personality growth has been both positively and negatively affected by the attention they receive. On the one hand, some are allowed to become "child emperors and empresses," so that they take up very willful attitudes which become part of their normal character.¹⁰⁰ Parents' lives are also affected due to their loneliness in aging and the impact of "child-centered" lifestyles which add anxiety to their relationships with the

child and with their spouse.¹⁰¹ Anxieties about aging in loneliness and without sufficient pension support from the government due to economic and other developmental factors add to these insecurities for elderly persons, who now constitute a more and more sizeable portion of the Chinese populace on the mainland.¹⁰²

The impact on contemporary family structures and the dynamics within the family are nothing less than profound as well. After thirty years of implementing this one-child policy, Chinese social scientists notice the emergence of a number of “non-traditional families” including “unintentional single male families” (*fēi yìyuánxìng nánxìng dānshēn jiātíng* 非意願性男性單身家庭), families created by earlier marriages, “old husband and young wife” families (*lǎofū shǎoqī* 老夫少妻), broken families (putatively due to divorce or separation), child marriage families, and unwed mother families.¹⁰³ With the high rate of male births over females, options related to interracial marriages should also be considered but the “understood choice” in this Chinese social studies literature is for men to remain unmarried rather than taking part in cross-cultural miscegenation; in fact, even though cross-cultural marriages are also starting to appear even in mainland Chinese society, they normally involve Chinese women marrying foreign men rather than Chinese men marrying foreign women. Because marriages become all the more significant under the context of single child familial structures, many younger persons wait longer to get married, hoping to find a “most suitable mate.”¹⁰⁴ As a consequence, they may risk having not so much time to be married, and also may become involved with pre-marital sexual relationships. The gender bias favoring male children creates a host of familial problems, including seeking abortions for unwanted conceptions of female children, rejections by older family members of female children and husbands seeking extra-marital alliances in order to have a son after a daughter is born, leading often to spousal tensions that end up in the family courts.

Far more ponderous social problems have involved the adjusting of filial responsibility of children for a large group of elders. For example, if a singleton marries another singleton, under normal circumstances they will have at least two pairs of parents to care for (assuming the modern break down of the patriarchal pattern of traditional families, which is currently occurring, though not at all completely generalized) and also some who are grandparents.¹⁰⁵ The direct implications regarding health care for an aging population, especially as they have impact on family economics, reveals how family groups which seek to uphold children’s responsibility for the elderly will be living under an unsustainable financial burden, especially as medical services privatize.¹⁰⁶

From all the evidence Greenhalgh has amassed regarding Sòng Jiàn and his associates, they were uninformed about these social consequences of their projected population growth studies and at times were willfully neglectful.

Yet this is exactly the kind of techno-scientific mentality which Ellul warns will bring inhumane consequences to social development and are the direct result of what Greenhalgh herself refers to as “natural scientific imperialism” within the PRC during the Post-Máo era. This form of utopian rationalism, I have argued here on the basis of Habermas’ account of the standards of communicative rationality which overcome the weaknesses of subject-centered rationality, does not engage in a communicative form of self-critical reflection, but rushes ahead in bold gestures, and ultimately departs from its own basis in cultural lifeworlds which cannot be merely summarized in mathematical formula, especially with regard to implementation.

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS: MODERN CHINESE UTOPIAN PROJECTS AND THEIR TRANSMOGRIFICATION OF PERSONAL AND FAMILIAL WELL-BEING

By discussing the nature of the rationalizations and policies promoted within three major Chinese utopian projects in the twentieth century, I have argued that within the cultural contexts where concerns for economic development and moral justifications rely on specific forms of global and political justice, there come distortive claims of a specific form of secularized rationalism which is reliant on various forms of scientific imperialism. The impact of Ellulian like forms of “total propaganda” within these three different kinds of utopian projects during the twentieth-century China was at times profoundly devastating, carrying practical consequences that involved the imposition of inhumane and cruel methods that these idealized plans justified in order to reach their techno-scientifically supported and politically enforced goals.

As I have documented and explained above, the impact of these utopian global visions and their justifications on the personal well-being of Chinese citizens, as well as their individual human dignity was often nothing less than a gross reification of personhood. Because a human being can be numbered, tallied, and placed within quotas, they need not even have a name in the records (especially if they are not in the right political mindset). Their physical bodies can be manipulated in order to make them completely the same (Kāng), or suffer under mass mobilized demands promoted through the enforcement of quotas reinforced by propagandistic methods and punishments (Máo), or be placed under natural restrictions including forced abortions and sterilizations which affect their normal abilities to reproduce (Post-Máo policies). Growing up under the total propaganda of the Máo era, many lost their sense of personal dignity and life orientation, and so became part of the so-called “lost generation”; growing up within contemporary Chinese single

child families, the distortions caused by over-concern, attentiveness, and lack of sibling interaction have created a series of psychological and relational nightmares for modern Chinese families. Not only have they had impact on the children themselves, but they set up a number of insecurities and anxieties for those who are part of the aging Chinese population which cannot be easily solved at the level of family relationships, not to mention their work units or other institutional affiliations.

I believe that readers who have come to this point in the chapter will have also seen that in all three cases the traditional extended family was attacked as the source of numerous “traditional ills,” especially in the utopian visions of Kāng and Máo, so that the nature and sustainability of the extended or nuclear family was put into question. Nevertheless, in the Post-Máo era it has been the nuclear family which has gradually become the major form of family life in the PRC, particularly in the first decade of the twenty-first century, even though a number of other “non-traditional families” are also being noticed by social scientists. This major shift in the character of Chinese families within mainland China is a sociological fact often overlooked by philosophers, among others, and so the familial ethics which they promote (generally assuming traditional family structures and even patriarchal values associated with extended families) does not match up to the actualities which the majority of younger people and younger families in China actually experience. Child-centered parents, problems of an aging population, questions of government policies for retirees who cannot rely any longer on a single child for their future financial security, even though they may seek to honor the elderly according to traditional filial standards . . . these stretch the resources of contemporary Chinese families in ways that are simply unprecedented.

In the mid-1980s, Habermas wrote about the problem of modern rationalism, especially as it led in the twentieth century to a form of “subject-centered rationalism” which lost its proper moorings in justified knowledge. Ultimately, this kind of modern rationalism assumes “that the subject of reason wants to owe no one and nothing outside itself,” and so simultaneously sets up itself as its own “ideal” and the source of its own form of “insanity.”¹⁰⁷ So he argues that “subject-centered reason is the *product of division and usurpation*” in which the part which this kind of reason comprehends is taken to be “the whole, without having the power to assimilate the structure of the whole.”¹⁰⁸ In other words, this utopian form of rationalism becomes self-destructive in its willful denial of the way things are and cannot afterward easily find its way back to a more holistic vision of life anchored within vital lifeworlds. Seeking to provide justification for his own understanding of “communicative rationality,” Habermas goes on to argue that “there is no pure reason that might don linguistic clothing” only after it works out its subject-centered judgments. “Reason is by its very nature incarnated in contexts of communicative action

and in structures of the lifeworld.”¹⁰⁹ What we have seen above in the utopian visions of three major thinkers and their works or policies is a form of reason which had rejected its attachment to the empirical realities around it, and so projected into the lifeworld a form of utopian hope and justice that ultimately could only lead to inhumane demagoguery and monumental disasters.

All these conditions have been produced and exacerbated by twentieth-century Chinese utopian rationalism which shaped certain policies, especially in the PRC, and so they should be taken as a major lesson for philosophers who are concerned about questions of justice, the dynamics of economic forces, and the distortions created by the techno-science biases which inform these utopian visions. Though these utopian projects have been justified on the basis of futuristic global visions, they have assumed processes of change that constituted social conditions full of suffering, discouragement, inhumane cruelties, and oppressive enforcement. I have sought to apply a Habermasian critique of subject-centered rationality to these particular cases, indicating how when this form of rational discourse departs from its living context, it becomes dangerously insensitive and uninformed about the actualities by which it might be corrected. In addition, I have appealed to Jacques Ellul’s trenchant criticisms of the values of modern technological systems which lead to these inhumanities whenever they are applied within social and political contexts. As a consequence, they reveal a trend within late twentieth-century and early twenty-first century Chinese philosophical thinking and political philosophy which should move us to take more time to reconsider our own patterns of thinking and practices as they have an impact on the well-being of persons and families both inside contemporary China and in other contexts as well.

(In what follows are five charts added here as appendices related to the arguments presented in the part of the essay dealing with the Great Leap Forward.)

APPENDICES

TABLE 1
THE COLLECTIVIZATION MOVEMENT IN CHINA, 1950–58

	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958
Mutual-aid teams:									
Teams	2,724,000	4,675,000	8,026,000	7,450,000	9,931,000	7,147,000	850,000		
Households per team	4.2	4.5	5.7	6.1	6.9	8.4	12.2		
Elementary cooperatives:									
Co-ops	18	129	4,000	15,000	114,000	633,000	216,000	36,000	
Households per co-op	10.4	12.3	15.7	18.1	20.0	26.7	48.2	44.5	
Advanced cooperatives:									
Co-ops	1	1	10	150	200	500	540,000	753,000	
Households per co-op	32.0	30.0	184.0	137.3	58.6	75.8	198.9	158.6	
Communes:									
Communes									24,000
Households per commune									5,000

Source.—Luo (1985), p. 59; Agricultural Cooperativization in China Editorial Office (1987), pp. 6–7.

Figure 6.1 From Justin Yifu Lin, “Collectivization and China’s Agricultural Crisis in 1959–1961,” in *Journal of Political Economy* Vol. 98, No. 6 (1990): 1232.

TABLE 2
POPULATION, AGRICULTURAL OUTPUT, AND GRAIN OUTPUT IN CHINA

Year	Population (Millions) (1)	Agricultural Output* (1952 = 100) (2)	Grain Output (Million Tons) (3)
1952	574.8	100.0	163.9
1953	588.0	103.1	166.9
1954	602.7	106.6	169.5
1955	614.7	114.7	184.0
1956	628.3	120.5	192.8
1957	646.5	124.8	195.1
1958	659.9	127.8	200.0
1959	672.1	110.4	170.0
1960	662.1	96.4	143.5
1961	658.6	94.1	147.5
1962	673.0	99.9	160.0
1963	691.7	111.5	170.0
1964	705.0	126.7	187.5
1965	725.4	137.1	194.6
1966	745.2	149.0	214.0
1967	763.7	151.3	217.8
1968	785.3	147.6	209.1
1969	806.7	149.2	211.0
1970	829.9	166.4	240.0
1971	852.3	171.4	250.2
1972	871.8	169.6	240.5
1973	892.1	183.8	265.0
1974	908.6	190.1	275.3
1975	924.2	196.0	284.5
1976	937.2	195.3	286.3
1977	949.7	194.3	282.8
1978	962.6	210.2	304.8
1979	975.4	226.0	332.1
1980	987.1	229.2	320.5
1981	1,000.7	244.0	325.0
1982	1,015.4	271.5	354.5
1983	1,025.0	292.6	387.3
1984	1,034.8	328.5	407.3
1985	1,045.3	339.7	379.1
1986	1,057.2	351.2	391.5

SOURCE.—Ministry of Agriculture (1989), pp. 6–8, 112–13, 147–49.
* The output value of village-run industry is not included.

Figure 6.2 From Justin Yifu Lin, "Collectivization and China's Agricultural Crisis in 1959–1961," in *Journal of Political Economy* Vol. 98, No. 6 (1990): 1233.

TABLE 3
NATURAL CALAMITY AND IRRIGATION

Year	Sown Area Hit by Natural Calamity* (%) (1)	Irrigated Area (%) (2)	Power Irrigation in Irrigated Area (%) (3)
1949	8.5	...	...
1950	4.7	...	...
1951	3.7	...	...
1952	2.9	18.5	1.6
1953	4.9	...	...
1954	8.5	...	...
1955	5.2	...	...
1956	8.2	...	...
1957	9.5	24.4	4.4
1958	5.2	...	...
1959	9.7	...	...
1960	15.3	...	...
1961	18.6	...	...
1962	11.9	29.7	19.9
1963	14.3	...	...
1964	8.8	...	...
1965	7.8	31.5	24.5
1966	6.7	...	...
1967	...	...	...
1968	...	...	...
1969	...	...	...
1970	2.3	35.6	41.6
1971	5.1	36.2	45.6
1972	11.6	37.8	46.9
1973	5.1	39.1	50.4
1974	4.4	41.3	52.5
1975	6.7	43.4	52.9
1976	7.6	45.3	53.9
1977	10.2	45.3	54.1
1978	16.8	45.2	55.4
1979	10.2	45.2	56.3
1980	15.4	45.2	56.4
1981	12.9	45.0	56.6
1982	11.2	44.8	56.9
1983	11.3	45.4	56.6
1984	10.6	...	56.4
1985	15.8	...	55.9
1986	16.4	...	59.0

SOURCE.—Cols. 1 and 3: Ministry of Agriculture (1989), pp. 130–31, 318, 354–57; col. 2: Ministry of Agriculture (1984), p. 291.

* Area hit by natural calamity refers to those sown acreages reported to be hit by flood, drought, frost, and hail and to have 30 percent or more reduction in yield compared to normal yield.

Figure 6.3 From Justin Yifu Lin, "Collectivization and China's Agricultural Crisis in 1959–1961," in *Journal of Political Economy* Vol. 98, No. 6 (1990): 1237.

TABLE 4
INDICES OF TOTAL FACTOR PRODUCTIVITY

Period and Year	Tang (1)	Wen (2)	Wiens (3)	Hayami-Ruttan (4)	Chow (5)
Voluntary collectivization:					
1952	100	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1953	100	99.6	99.5	98.7	100.0
1954	100	99.0	98.4	97.3	99.0
1955	104	103.8	103.0	103.2	104.0
1956	102	104.1	101.7	104.3	105.0
1957	103	102.4	100.3	98.5	102.9
1958	102	104.7	97.0	100.7	109.0
Compulsory collectivization:					
1959	85	94.3	89.1	91.0	94.9
1960	74	78.4	73.4	78.6	79.7
1961	76	78.0	76.3	78.9	74.9
1962	78	80.0	79.6	79.3	76.4
1963	83	83.0	82.0	80.2	80.2
1964	89	85.9	83.7	82.2	85.0
1965	92	86.8	83.7	82.2	87.6
1966	95	85.4	81.2	80.2	89.4
1967	94	87.8	84.6	82.2	90.2
1968	90	87.2	85.2	81.7	88.4
1969	87	83.0	80.4	78.2	85.8
1970	93	82.0	77.7	76.5	89.2
1971	91	76.5	72.0	70.2	84.8
1972	88	72.2	67.3	65.8	82.2
1973	91	76.6	71.4	69.4	87.1
1974	92	78.0	72.9	70.2	88.9
1975	92	75.8	70.1	67.4	88.9
1976	91	75.8	70.4	66.9	88.0
1977	89	74.2	68.7	64.8	87.1
1978	92	77.6	71.1	67.2	94.1
Decollectivization:					
1979	96	80.5	73.6	68.8	99.7
1980	91	83.4	76.2	71.1	103.7
1981	...	87.4	80.1	74.4	108.9
1982	...	93.7	85.9	79.6	108.9
1983	...	104.5	96.9	87.7	117.6
Post-household responsibility system reform:					
1984	...	122.7	115.2	100.6	127.0
1985	...	129.3	122.7	104.3	144.8
1986	...	129.7	122.8	103.1	150.6
1987	...	132.6	125.0	105.1	153.6
1988	...	132.6	124.7	104.6	159.8

SOURCE.—Col. 1: Tang (1984), pp. 95–97; col. 2: Wen (1989), p. 123; col. 3: calculated with the factor shares (labor = .35, land = .36, capital = .09, current input = .20) proposed by Wiens (1982); col. 4: calculated with the factor shares (labor = .45, land = .1, capital = .3, current inputs = .15) in Hayami and Ruttan (1985), p. 151; col. 5: used the method of weighted geometric mean proposed by Chow (1985). Cols. 3–5 use the output and input series in Appendix table A1 for the calculations.

Figure 6.4 From Justin Yifu Lin, "Collectivization and China's Agricultural Crisis in 1959–1961," in *Journal of Political Economy* Vol. 98, No. 6 (1990): 1245.

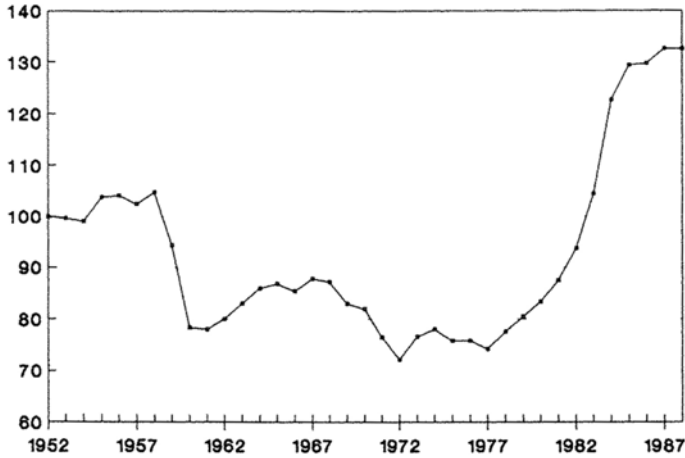


Figure 6.5 From Justin Yifu Lin, "Collectivization and China's Agricultural Crisis in 1959–1961," in *Journal of Political Economy* Vol. 98, No. 6 (1990): 1247

NOTES

1. As argued in Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989). In his "afterthought" regarding the lessons "for the whole of humanity" that can be gleaned from studies of the Holocaust, Bauman points to two important concerns. First, "most people [when] put into a situation that does not contain a good choice, or renders such a good choice very costly, argue themselves away from the issue of moral duty, . . . adopting instead the precepts of rational interest and self-preservation." Second, the fact that there are some even in those conditions who chose "moral duty over the rationality of self-preservation" underscores the fact that "evil is not all-powerful." These reflections reveal how the "cold rationality" of compromised persons within a larger system can be driven by principled injustice. What I will seek to do in the following discussion is to link this particular form of rationality to certain kinds of modern secularism and its utopian form of biotechnical manipulation of human beings, indicating how these principled attitudes taken up as products of a modern secularized philosophical rationality and post-traditional political understanding of justice have ended up producing some devastating economic and moral consequences within late-twentieth-century Chinese society. See the above quotations from the "Afterthought" on *Ibid.*, 206.

2. So, Augustine argues that even premodern rationalized pride, especially in the "heroic Roman character" which is "willing to make high and noble sacrifices in order to bring glory to Rome" as well as to the heroes themselves, produces a cultural paradox. At the same time that it promotes a form of "selfless" justice, it also produces an injustice because it establishes itself as "the criterion or arbiter of value," and so supports a principle where "might makes right," and power prevails over any legitimate form of justice. See these and other comments related to this theme in John C. Cavadini, "Pride," in Allan D. Fitzgerald, ed., *Augustine through the Ages* (Grand

Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1999), 679–84, quotations above found on *Ibid.*, 681.

3. As argued by Jürgen Habermas in lectures presented in 1985, rendered into English as, “An Alternative Way out of the Philosophy of the Subject: Communicative versus Subject-Centered Reason” in his volume, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: Twelve Lectures*, trns. Frederick G. Lawrence (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1995), 294–326.

4. While promoting a New Text (*jīnwén* 今文) understanding of the history of Ruist traditions, Kāng argued that the most reliable historical text was the *Gōngyáng Commentary* 《公羊傳》 to *The Spring and Autumn Annals* 《春秋》, a work that is seldom addressed as even a minor philosophical text outside of China or East Asia. When he became a refugee in Japan after the military coup, which opposed his rule as the effective Prime Minister of the Qīng empire, Kāng did bow to more orthodox sentiments and wrote his own New Text commentaries to *The Four Books* 《四書》, but also added a commentary to a fifth volume, the *Lǐyùn* 《禮運》 (“The Evolution of the Rites”). Notably, these five commentaries have rarely been studied as expositions on these canonical texts by philosophers who study Chinese philosophical traditions, not to mention others. Still it is the case that his works and their positions are regularly summarized in all accounts of the history of “modern” Chinese philosophical themes and writings within Chinese philosophical circles in mainland China.

5. During the last half of the twentieth-century, it was often the case that studies of Maoist thought was generally found in the political sciences, and not within the confines of philosophy. Nevertheless, in China Mao’s works were seen as the new canon on which all knowledge would be reorganized, and so it was considered to including important principles for politics, philosophy, and many other realms of thought. As a consequence, it was not possible for Chinese intellectuals living under the Chinese Communist leadership to avoid the study of Mao’s thought as part of the discipline of philosophy once the modern education disciplines were reestablished in the People’s Republic of China after 1978. So one finds in the last volume of Féng Yǒulán’s (1895–1990) *New Edition of the History of Chinese Philosophy* (*Zhōngguó zhéxué shǐ xīnbīān* 《中國哲學史新編》), the seventh in a series which was published posthumously in Hong Kong in 1992 under the title of *A History of Contemporary Chinese Philosophy* (*Zhōngguó xiàndài zhéxué shǐ* 《中國現代哲學史》), a full chapter devoted to the study of Mao Zédōng’s philosophical ideas, including an important and sustained criticism of his extremist views promoted during his career as the first dictatorial ruler of the PRC. Ten years later, it still was not the norm in foreign language texts devoted to Chinese philosophy to address Mao’s thought as containing anything of substantial interest in relationship to the history and development of Chinese philosophy, as manifest in the very limited references to his work in the volume on *Contemporary Chinese Philosophy* produced under the editorship of Chung-ying Cheng and Nicholas Bunnin (Oxford: Blackwell Pub., 2002). Nevertheless, this trend began to be countered when an article by Stuart R. Schram on Mao appeared in Antonio S. Cua’s *Encyclopedia of Chinese Philosophy* (New York and London: Routledge, 2003), 423–31. While this article tended to be more of a historical biography and did not contain the critical philosophical assessments found in Féng Yǒulán’s essay, it does provide a basis for further philosophical

reflections about Máo Zédōng's utopian attitudes which will be referred to in what follows.

6. Debates over the timing of the publication of different parts have generally come to agreement, since there were at least twice before Kāng Yǒuwéi's death that the initial portions of the volume appeared in print. The first time that the initial two chapters appeared in print was in 1913. The larger question about when the volume was initially conceived was spurred on by Kāng's own claims that he had thought about it and taught about it as early as the late 1880s. Most would now not take this to be the case, since internal evidence indicates that many sections of the work had to have been written after Kāng had travelled overseas (which was essentially between 1902 and 1906). For representative works on this matter in Chinese, consult Zhū Wéizhèng 朱維錚, *Kāng Yǒuwéi dàtóng lùn èr zhǒng* 《康有為大同論二種》 [Two Versions of Kāng Yǒuwéi's Theory of the Great Unity] (香港: 三聯書店, 1998年); Zhū Zhōngyuè 朱仲岳, "Kāng Yǒuwéi Dàtóng shū chéngshū niándài de xīn fāxiàn" 〈康有為《大同書》成書年代的新發現〉 [A New Discovery regarding the Dating when Kāng Yǒuwéi Completed the Writing of his Work, *The Book of the Great Unity*], *Wénwù* 《文物》 [Cultural Relics] 8(3) (1999), 92–3; and Chén Xiùméi 陳秀湄, "Kāng Yǒuwéi de guówài yóulì yǔ Dàtóng shū" 〈康有為的國外遊歷與《大同書》〉 [The History of Kāng Yǒuwéi's Overseas Journeys and *The Book of the Great Unity*], *Shǐxué yuèkān* 《史學月刊》 [Historical Studies Monthly] 1 (1996), 41–5. For helpful studies in foreign languages (not including translations of this work), see Hsiao Kung-ch'üan, *A Modern China and a New World: K'ang Yu-Wei, Reformer and Utopian, 1898–1927* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1975), Lauren F. Pfister, "A Study in Comparative Utopias—K'ang Yu-Wei and Plato," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 16 (1989), 59–117, and Roger Darrobers, "Kang Youwei: Du confucianisme réformé à l'utopie universelle" ("Kang Youwei: From Reformed Ruism to Universal Utopia"), *Études chinoises* [Chinese Studies] 19: 1–2 (Spring/Autumn 2000), 15–66.

7. In Zhū Wéizhèng's modern edited version, the full text is 322 pages in length. See Wéizhèng, *Kāng Yǒuwéi dàtóng lùn èr zhǒng*, 47–369.

8. This being his chapter on Máo appearing in Féng, *Zhōngguó xiàndài zhéxué shǐ*, 144–78. See also chapter 1 in this volume for an account of Féng's life and works that adds additional information to this account of his critique of Máo.

9. Stuart R. Schram, "Mao Zedong (Mao Tse-tung)," in Antonio S. Cua's *Encyclopedia of Chinese Philosophy*, 423–31.

10. The version I have been using is Dr. Li Zhisui, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao*, trans. Tai Hung-Chao (New York: Random House, 1994). First published in 1994, this volume was written by Máo's personal doctor after he emigrated to the United States and was based on his recollections without reference to any diaries and other secondary materials, which Lǐ claimed had been lost. As a consequence, two other members of Máo Zédōng's personal staff have written some refutations of Lǐ's claims in Chinese, but I have not been able to see these volumes. See mention of the controversy in the following Wikipedia article: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Li_Zhisui (accessed April 24, 2011).

11. This volume claims to have come to new conclusions related to the consequences and assessment of the Great Leap Forward because it relies on provincial

archives within China which had not been available for scholarly access until the early twenty-first century. See Frank Dikötter, *Mao's Great Famine: The History of China's Most Devastating Catastrophe, 1958–1962* (New York: Walker Pub. Co., Inc., 2010).

12. Appearing as the second appendix to Ellul's classical work on propaganda, entitled "Mao Tse-Tung's Propaganda," this piece has been well known within communication studies but has never before been applied for the sake of the philosophical analysis of how Máo Zédōng and others attempted to reshaped personal and social consciousness by means of propaganda techniques. Find this piece in Jacques Ellul, *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes* (New York: Vintage Books, 1965), 303–13. One attempt at using Ellul's account of propaganda to understand and assess Féng Yǒulán's experiences under Máo's regime is found in chapter 1 of this volume.

13. Vanessa L. Fong, *Only Hope: Coming of Age under China's One-Child Policy* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004).

14. Consult Wú Hóngdá and Shěn Kuò 吳弘達 沈括著 *Zuì zài dāngdài, yíhuò qiān qiū: Zhōngguó jìhuà shēngyù zhèngcè shíshí sānshí zhōumián yánjiū bàogào* 《罪在當代，遺禍千秋：中國計畫生育政策實施三十周年研究報告》 [The Crime is Present Now, but its Harmful Legacy will Extend through a Thousand Years: A Research Report Produced in the Thirtieth Year of the Implementation of China's Planned Births Policy], Washington DC : 勞改基金會, 2010年).

15. Relevant discussion of this matter has appeared within the broader context of a discussion related to "'Inferior Births': Eugenics in the People's Republic of China," the fourth chapter in a small volume by Frank Dikötter, *Imperfect Conceptions: Medical Knowledge, Birth Defects and Eugenics in China* (London: Hurst & Co., 1998), 119–83.

16. Pan tells the story of a group of human rights advocates in Shāndōng Province and Běijīng during the period from 2004 to 2005, including documentation of the personal, relational, and legal troubles they have faced in seeking to address abuses related to the implementation of the "one-child policy." This account appears as the very last story before his epilogue in Philip P. Pan, *Out of Mao's Shadow: The Struggle for the Soul of a New China* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2008), 301–18.

17. An advocate of what he refers to as "Reconstructionist Confucianism," Fàn Ruipíng 范瑞平 addresses relevant issues in three chapters discussing "health care principles" and "long term care for the elderly" in contemporary PRC, as well as his own account of "Confucian personality" in the context of the perceived "moral vacuum" created by Chinese Communist ideology. See these discussions in chapters 5, 6, and 14 in Ruiping Fan, *Reconstructionist Confucianism: Rethinking Morality after the West* (Dordrecht: Springer Science+Business Media B. V., 2010).

18. Explicitly discussed in Wéizhèng, *Kāng Yǒuwéi dàtōng lùn èr zhōng*, 172–3.

19. Extending only to nine pages. Consult Wéizhèng, *Kāng Yǒuwéi dàtōng lùn èr zhōng*, 170–8.

20. Written and published first in French in the early 1960s, Ellul's statement about the incoherence of these scientists' vision for human development was placed within an appendix at the back of his first major work on the critique of *la technique* or his way in French to refer to the institutions and values undergirding

techno-scientific systems. Consult the appendix to Jacques Ellul, *The Technological Society*, trans. John Wilkinson (New York: Vintage Books, 1967).

21. Mentioned only once and without much fanfare but suggesting a number of problems which will be made explicit in what follows. The affirmation of this specific use of political power is found in Wéizhèng, *Kāng Yǒuwéi dàtōng lùn èr zhōng*, 174–5.

22. While one might credit Kāng for having such foresight, something other scientists may not necessarily consider to be an “efficient” way of handling affairs, it should also be underscored that Kāng was known not to be very astute in either mathematics or technological knowledge. Find these references to this time dimension in Wéizhèng, *Kāng Yǒuwéi dàtōng lùn èr zhōng*, 174–5.

23. This standard for the racial coloring of all persons in the era of the Great Unity is first addressed on Wéizhèng, *Kāng Yǒuwéi dàtōng lùn èr zhōng*, 175, and then is repeated more often near the end of this section.

24. Presented in Wéizhèng, *Kāng Yǒuwéi dàtōng lùn èr zhōng*, 174–5.

25. Promoted in Wéizhèng, *Kāng Yǒuwéi dàtōng lùn èr zhōng*, 175.

26. Describe in Wéizhèng, *Kāng Yǒuwéi dàtōng lùn èr zhōng*, 175–6.

27. Consult Wéizhèng, *Kāng Yǒuwéi dàtōng lùn èr zhōng*, 176.

28. Discussed in detail and at great length in Wéizhèng, *Kāng Yǒuwéi dàtōng lùn èr zhōng*, 179–204.

29. Kāng focuses on many disadvantages for women in marriage which do not allow them to exist as equal partners within heterosexual relationships, using this as a preamble to his radical solutions which will be described in what follows. See his claims in Wéizhèng, *Kāng Yǒuwéi dàtōng lùn èr zhōng*, 211–6.

30. Presented in Wéizhèng, *Kāng Yǒuwéi dàtōng lùn èr zhōng*, 220–4.

31. In the initial part of the sixth chapter dealing with the abolishing of families, Kāng takes an extensive amount of time to describe traditional cultures where families exist, pointing out their strengths and weaknesses, but comes to the conclusion that the “harms” of family ties ultimately lead to so many problems due to nepotistic values that it is best to do away with families in the era of the Great Unity. See the general discussion of traditional families in Wéizhèng, *Kāng Yǒuwéi dàtōng lùn èr zhōng*, 225–45, and fourteen points against nepotistic corruption caused by the existence of families presented on 248–9.

32. See a comparison of these matters focusing on the nature of education in the Republic and the Great Unity in Pfister, “A Study in Comparative Utopias,” 77–9.

33. Described in Pfister, “A Study in Comparative Utopias,” 82. The similarly formative role of teachers will become obvious in the subsequent discussion of public institutions in the era of the Great Unity.

34. Though Kāng did conceive of special roles for elders in the Great Unity, he did not specify any special titles for a three generational spread of human society in this part of his vision. See the discussion about the “Human Foundational Institutes” (*rén běn yuàn* 人本院) and “Infant Care Institutes” (*yù yīng yuàn* 育嬰院) in Wéizhèng, *Kāng Yǒuwéi dàtōng lùn èr zhōng*, 266–71.

35. The three levels of public educational institutes and the roles of teachers are discussed in Wéizhèng, *Kāng Yǒuwéi dàtōng lùn èr zhōng*, 271–9.

36. Notably, this is a dimension of Kāng's educational vision which runs in direct contrast to Plato's utopian understanding of elites in his *Republic*; in this light, Kāng is clearly not an epistemological absolutist as Plato was, but a proponent of "axiological relativity." See discussion of this contrast in Pfister, "A Study in Comparative Utopias," 78–9.

37. Why there would be a need for caring for the poor in his idealized world Kāng does not explain, but he apparently assumes that the common human experiences of his own day may still have their remnants even in the era of the Great Unity. See his description of these last four public institutions in Wéizhèng, *Kāng Yǒuwéi dàtōng lùn èr zhōng*, 279–93.

38. A point elaborated in Pfister, "A Study in Comparative Utopias," 74.

39. Described with regard to these three specific areas of "public institutions" in Wéizhèng, *Kāng Yǒuwéi dàtōng lùn èr zhōng*, 298–315.

40. Eugenic policies including sterilization were already passed into law in 1934 in Sweden and were practiced in varying degrees in Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden even until 1960. See descriptions of these policies, references to other later advocates of "socialist eugenics" in the USSR, as well as other racist eugenics promoted by certain persons in the United States, in Frank Dikötter, *Imperfect Conceptions*, 163–5.

41. Citing a quotation from Máo Zédōng's work entitled *Lùn rénmin mǐnzhǔ zhuānzhèng* 《論人民民主專政》 [On the Dictatorship of the People's Democracy], as quoted in Féng, *Zhōngguó xiàndài zhéxué shǐ*, 170–1.

42. Máo's self-consciousness of his Marxist foundation was so strong that he even deleted a notable passage in a 1938 speech in which he referred to the past revolutionary legacy of Sūn Zhōngsān 孫中山 as "a method that aids considerably in guiding the present great [Marxist revolutionary] movement." Even though he did so, it is the case that in current reflections on the history of international Marxism, Chinese Communist philosophers do talk about "the sinification of Marxism" as a distinct contribution to contemporary philosophical developments. For this particular statement on Máo Zédōng's self-consciousness and the ambiguity of his involvement in the sinification of Marxism, see Schram, "Mao Zedong," 425–6. For a recent example of the promotion of this Chinese contribution to international Marxist studies, see Lǐ Jīngyuán, ed., *Zhōngguó zhéxué 30 nián – 1978–2008* 《中國哲學30年 – 1978–2008》 [Thirty Years of Chinese Philosophy: 1978–2008] (Běijīng: Chinese Social Sciences Press, 2008), where two parts of the first chapter deal with the sinification of Marxism and its harmonization with "Western" forms of Marxism (see 23–7 and 30–5).

43. Quoted from Schram, "Mao Zedong," 425.

44. Cited from Schram, "Mao Zedong," 427.

45. Quoted from Schram, "Mao Zedong," 425.

46. This and the following quotation are found in Schram, "Mao Zedong," 426.

47. Quoting Máo's statement on August 6, 1958, while visiting the Seven Li village in Xinxiang county, Henan Province, as presented in Zhisui, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao*, 269.

48. Dikötter, *Mao's Great Famine*, 48.

49. According to Li Zhisui, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao*, 271.

50. As described in an article by Lu Kejian 魯克儉, “The Village Commune in Contemporary China: Its History and Status,” 3, a paper presented in an International Conference dealing with “What is the Common?” held by the School of Global Studies at the University of Gothenburg in Sweden in October 10–11, 2009. According to the author, at that time he was a professor in the Institute for Contemporary Marxism in the Central Compilation and Translation Bureau of China, and now is teaching in the School of Philosophy and Sociology at Beijing Normal University.

51. Statistics found in Dikötter, *Mao’s Great Famine*, 48. These figures are found to be generally repeated in many related publications. Lu Kejian summarizes this transformation with similar statistics: “By the end of October 1958, more than 740000 [sic] agricultural cooperatives in [the] whole of China were merged into 26000 [sic] People’s Communes, which included around 120 million households, i.e., 99% of rural households in China at that time.” (Quoted from Kejian, “The Village Commune in Contemporary China,” 3.)

52. Summarized from Kejian, “The Village Commune in Contemporary China,” 3.

53. The sense of euphoria and its explicit point of international competition with Great Britain are found in Zhisui, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao*, 276–7 and Dikötter, *Mao’s Great Famine*, 49.

54. For the ideological tone and impact of this militarization of Máo’s language, see Ji Fengyuan, *Linguistic Engineering: Language and Politics in Mao’s China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2004), 88, cited by Dikötter, *Mao’s Great Famine*, 50, endnote 13.

55. This is the citation of the conclusion in Justin Yifu Lin, “Collectivization and China’s Agricultural Crisis in 1959–1961,” *Journal of Political Economy* 98(6) (1990), 1248. This very informative article evaluates other explanations of the crises which will also be referred to in what follows.

56. Cited from Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, 306.

57. See the comparative chart in table 4 of the Appendix for the periods stretching from 1952 to 1988, in which Lin summarizes the economic claims related to “total factor productivity” by five different authors. Found in Lin, “Collectivization and China’s Agricultural Crisis in 1959–1961,” 1245.

58. Quoted from Lin, “Collectivization and China’s Agricultural Crisis in 1959–1961,” 1234.

59. Cited from Dikötter, *Mao’s Great Famine*, 333–4.

60. Quoted from Lin, “Collectivization and China’s Agricultural Crisis in 1959–1961,” 1236.

61. The argument is explained step by step, applying a game theory analysis to explain how the incentive problem arose, in Lin, “Collectivization and China’s Agricultural Crisis in 1959–1961,” 1236–43.

62. Consult the second chapter entitled “Technology as an Environment” in Jacques Ellul, *The Technological System*, trans. Joachim Neugroschel (New York: Continuum Pub. Corp., 1980), 23–33.

63. In this light it is not insignificant that the first of six main sections in Dikötter’s work is entitled “The Pursuit of Utopia.” Nevertheless, Dikötter’s work is

primarily historical in nature, and so while it provides numerous details and examples of the kinds of problems I am discussing in this chapter, my interpretive approach relies on other sources that those he himself employed. See Dikötter, *Mao's Great Famine*, 3–64.

64. The term “total propaganda” is a phrase employed by Ellul to describe how “modern propaganda,” meaning that which was developed particularly after World War II, “must utilize all of the technical means at [its] disposal—the press, radio, TV, movies, posters, meetings, door-to-door canvassing.” To act only sporadically in certain realms is not to produce propaganda, according to Ellul. See Jacques Ellul, *Propaganda*, 9. Precisely in this sense, Ellul’s account of propaganda goes far beyond the normal association of its work within strictly ideologically-loaded contexts; it is a vision of a new kind of “technical environment” which has pervaded modern settings. For discussions of Ellul’s account of propaganda in this light, see Darrell J. Fashing, *The Thought of Jacques Ellul: A Systematic Exposition* (New York and Toronto: Edwin Mellen Press, 1981), Chapter II, “Technology and the Problem of Freedom,” 15–32, and Thymian Bussemer, *Propaganda: Konzepte und Theorien* (Wiesbaden: Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2008), “Das pluralistische Paradigma: Propaganda als Teil der Moderne,” 365–90.

65. This development is described briefly in Lin, “Collectivization and China’s Agricultural Crisis in 1959–1961,” 1230–34, including two charts providing statistics which include this earlier period.

66. “Although the population increased 14.8 percent between 1952 and 1958, the gross value of agriculture measured at the prices of 1952 increased 27.8 percent and grain output increased 21.9 percent in the same period.” Citing from Lin, “Collectivization and China’s Agricultural Crisis in 1959–1961,” 1231.

67. Quoted from Lin, “Collectivization and China’s Agricultural Crisis in 1959–1961,” 1233–4.

68. Each of these projects is described as part of the utopian policies of this period in the first major section of Dikötter, *Mao's Great Famine*. “Close cropping” meant to place seedlings and stocks more tightly together when planting them, so that ideally more plants could be grown and lead to greater productivity from the same plot of land. This was often accompanied by “deep ploughing,” which involved turning over not only the topsoil, but digging down as much as two to three feet into the land throughout the whole of a collective farm, putatively in order to release greater nourishment for plants. Backyard steel furnaces were an innovative development by idealistic leaders who sought to address the need for steel. They encouraged all forms of metal to be melted down in order to provide ore for a future stage of intensive mechanization. Dikötter illustrates in detail the claims made by cadre administrators and the subsequent problems inherent in each of these projects.

69. Quoted from Féng, *Zhōngguó xiàndài zhéxué shǐ*, 170.

70. Summarizing from Féng, *Zhōngguó xiàndài zhéxué shǐ*, 170.

71. As elaborated at length in Jacques Ellul, *The Technological Bluff*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1990).

72. Quoted and summarized in the following statements from Dikötter, *Mao's Great Famine*, 297.

73. See discussion of the effectiveness and limits of propaganda techniques during the Great Leap Forward in Ellul, *Propaganda*, 307–13. A more general discussion of the “ineffectiveness,” “limits” and consequently limited “effectiveness” of “total propaganda” is presented by Ellul in the same text, 277–302.

74. Of the six forms of “ways of dying” during the Great Leap Forward which Dikötter describes in detail, there are diseases caused by over-exhaustion and forced labor, deaths due to the violence of cadre repressions used to stifle dissent, and labor-intensive cruelties found in the Chinese “gulags” created for those who were unwilling workers or persons unwittingly trapped in ideologically unacceptable behavior. Consult Dikötter, *Mao’s Great Famine*, 274–306.

75. See the descriptions of staged tours and the suspected deception identified by one of Mao’s troop named “Lin Ke” in chapters 31 and 32 of Zhisui, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao*, 268–84.

76. Described in Dikötter, *Mao’s Great Famine*, 36.

77. Descriptions of the modernization of midwifery during the period from 1952 to 1957 indicates how some successes could be documented, but also how the whole system of midwifery was in the midst of immense changes and required interactive management at provincial, district, and local levels for training, keeping records, and providing appropriate facilities. Most of these became tenuous situations after 1958, a situation which is not described in any detail in the following work: Gail Hershatter, “Birthing Stories: Rural Midwives in 1950s China,” in Jeremy Brown and Paul G. Pickowicz, eds., *Dilemmas of Victory: The Early Years of the People’s Republic of China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), 337–58.

78. As described in Dikötter, *Mao’s Great Famine*, 329–30.

79. Elaborated with numerous personal stories as well as statistics and vignettes drawn from provincial archives in Dikötter, *Mao’s Great Famine*, 269–323.

80. See his description and argument related to his claim that the “deprivation of the right to withdraw [from the commune had] a significant impact on the incentive structure of the collective.” I consider this claim to be a reasonable account of this particular phenomenon, but it pales in significance when compared to the other factors already described. Consult Lin, “Collectivization and China’s Agricultural Crisis in 1959–1961,” 1240–3.

81. Described and evaluated in Féng, *Zhōngguó xiàndài zhéxué shǐ*, 171. He describes the situation in the communes as maintaining a “feudal extended family” (*fēngjiàn dàjiātíng* 封建大家庭).

82. Described in Zhisui, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao*, Chapter 37, 301–5.

83. Quoted from Féng, *Zhōngguó xiàndài zhéxué shǐ*, 171.

84. Heard from the Late News on ATV, Hong Kong, airing at 11:00–11:30 pm on Thursday evening, April 28, 2011.

85. Cited from Pan, *Out of Mao’s Shadow*, 301.

86. Quoted from the initial paragraph of an article by Nicholas Eberstadt, “China’s Family Planning Goes Awry,” *Far Eastern Economic Review* 172(10) (December 2009): 24–6.

87. It is notable to point out that the technical Chinese term used for the policy during the initial years it was being discussed and finally confirmed did not only

talk about “one child,” but was more specific in referring to “one birth,” where the term for birth is actually the verbalized term which could also refer to the uterus. In medical terminology, this is the Latin term *gravida*, giving birth as opposed to simply having a conception, and so the “first birth” is referred to as *primagravida*. The longer term suggests the policy of “limiting women to one birth,” and so it is notable that a married couple are not necessarily included, though it was the case that also sterilizations of both adult men and women have been ordered and authorized by the government over the years of this policy’s implementation. Developments in the conception and implementation of the policy are covered in Susan Greenhalgh and Edwin A. Winckler, *Governing China’s Population: From Leninist to Neoliberal Biopolitics* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005).

88. This unusual person is the key figure in the article by Susan Greenhalgh, “Missile Science, Population Science: The Origins of China’s One-Child Policy,” *The China Quarterly* 182 (June 2005): 253–76.

89. Sòng is consequently one of the main figures addressed in Susan Greenhalgh’s major volume entitled *Just One Child: Science and Policy in Deng’s China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), where she applies a Foucaultian account of power structures in institutions to elaborate her interpretation of his role as a proponent of “natural scientific imperialism.” For another account, see Tyrene White, *China’s Longest Campaign: Birth Planning in the People’s Republic, 1949–2005* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006).

90. This is a major theme in Greenhalgh, *Just One Child*, but is also explicitly referred to as an excessive form of secularized rationalism, given the names “scientism” and “scientific imperialism” in Greenhalgh, “Missile Science, Population Science,” 269 and 275.

91. Cited from Greenhalgh, “Missile Science, Population Science,” 255. She cites there in the attached footnote the works of Carol Hamrin and Nina P. Halpern who describe this shift in styles of policy in their own research.

92. Described with details and a graph in Greenhalgh, “Missile Science, Population Science,” 263–74.

93. See “A Look at the Future” in Ellul, *The Technological Society*, 428–36.

94. Presented succinctly in Nicholas Eberstadt’s “China’s Family Planning Goes Awry” and Cai Fang, “Pay-Back Time for China’s One-Child Policy,” *Far Eastern Economic Review* 170(4) (May 2007), 58–61.

95. As recorded in Yáng Jūhuá 楊菊華, Sòng Yuēpíng 宋月萍, Zhái Zhènwǔ 翟振武 and Chén Wèi 陳衛, *Shēngyù zhèngcè yǔ chūshēng xìngbié bǐ* 《生育政策與出生性別比》 [Fertility Policy and Sex Ratio at Birth] (Běijīng: Social Sciences Literary Pub., 2009), 244. The general conclusion includes numerous other indications of troubling consequences at the personal, familial and social levels; see *Ibid.*, 255–62. See also Li Guanghui, “The Impact of the One-Child Policy on Fertility, Children’s Well-Being and Gender Differential in China.” PhD dissertation, University of Washington, 2004.

96. Find an initial listing of eight problems in Esther Ngan-ling Chow and S. Michael Zhao, “The One-Child Policy and Parent-Child Relationships: A Comparison of One-Child with Multiple-Child Families in China,” *International Journal of*

Sociology and Social Policy 16(12) (1996), 35. See also Hong Zhang, “From Resisting to ‘Embracing?’ the One-Child Rule: Understanding New Fertility Trends in a Central China Village,” *The China Quarterly* 192 (December 2007), 855–75.

97. Pan, *Out of Mao’s Shadow*, 303.

98. Elaborated in Pan, *Out of Mao’s Shadow*, 307–18.

99. Consult Yáng Jūhuá, Sòng Yuēpíng, Zhái Zhènwǔ and Chén Wèi, *Shēngyù zhèngcè yǔ chūshēng xìngbiè bǐ* and Fán Míng 樊明 and others, *Shēngyù xíngwéi yǔ shēngyù zhèngcè* 《生育行為與生育政策》 [Fertility Behavior and the Fertility Policy] (Běijīng: Social Sciences Literary Pub., 2010).

100. See for example Fong, *Only Hope*, where the chapter titles reveal some of the major problems involved: “Great Expectations: Singletons as Vanguard of Modernization,” “Heavy is the Head of the ‘Little Emperor’: Pressure, Discipline and Competition in the Stratification System,” “‘Beat Me Now and I will Beat You When You’re Old’: Love, Filial Duty and Parental Investment in an Aging Population,” “‘Spoiled’: First World Youth in the Third World.”

101. As described in Chow and Zhao, “The One-Child Policy.” Questions of modern loneliness in China are also involved, but in some recent literature the relationship to the one-child policy is not directly mentioned, but only the “modern urban context in China” is indicated as having a particular effect on psychological feelings of loneliness. In fact, it should be made clear that this is a major part of the assumed relational structures found in the “modern urban context” within contemporary China. See Tian Xiaoming, “Loneliness: A Psychological Turning Point in the Reconstruction of the Urban Order in China,” *Social Sciences in China* 31(4) (November 2010), 147–64.

102. Described succinctly in Fong, “Pay-Back Time for China’s One-Child Policy.”

103. As listed in Yáng Jūhuá, Sòng Yuēpíng, Zhái Zhènwǔ and Chén Wèi, *Shēngyù zhèngcè yǔ chūshēng xìngbiè bǐ*, 257. At the end of this long list is also mentioned homosexual (including male and female forms) people groups (*tóngxìngliàn rénqún* 同性戀人群), but these are not described as “families” as in the other cases.

104. These and the following situations are described in Yáng Jūhuá, Sòng Yuēpíng, Zhái Zhènwǔ and Chén Wèi, *Shēngyù zhèngcè yǔ chūshēng xìngbiè bǐ*, 258.

105. Fan recognizes this problem, but because he is a self-proclaimed “familist,” he argues that there is no other possibility for virtuous Chinese children. See his descriptions of the problem and his further analysis in Ruiping Fan, *Reconstructionist Confucianism: Rethinking Morality after the West* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2010), 89–102.

106. See Fan’s characterization of the many dimensions of this problem in Ruiping Fan, *Reconstructionist Confucianism: Rethinking Morality after the West*, 69–72.

107. At this point in his work, Habermas was citing from a work by two philosophers by the name of Böhme who were critiquing Kant’s form of transcendentalism in this manner. Quoted from Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, 305.

108. Quoted from Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, 315.

109. Quotations both here and above from Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, 327.

110. These English renderings are produced by this author, with an earlier version of this summary appearing in Pfister, “A Study in Comparative Utopias,” 65–66.

Chapter 7

Post-Secular Critique of the Contemporary Phenomenon of “Human Flesh Search [Engines]” in the PRC

That the use of internet has changed the ways we who engage in the “have” side of the digital divide express ourselves in our daily existence is now well recognized.¹ While some digitopian claims continue to laud this social transformation as the newest stage in human evolution,² others are concerned about the unforeseen impact and some relatively new problems³ that are associated with the multi-tasking mentalities of the “digitally native”⁴ and those who have adjusted to the “habits of the high-tech heart.”⁵ An unusual feature of cyber-engagement has become a notable phenomenon in mainland China, and though this form of “crowd-powered” cyber activity may be found elsewhere, it appears for a number of reasons to be described below to have a distinctively strong presence among netizens who are active on social networks in the PRC.⁶ Whether this relative freedom online will continue after new internet laws have been established in the PRC in 2017 has been a matter that I have not been able to assess at this time.⁷ What is described here below is a form of active online vigilantism that has previously not been generally constrained by any specific legal restrictions within the PRC.⁸

A good amount of descriptive information has been documented by academics in computer and sociological studies related to these phenomena, but the related ethical questions and even meta-ethical reflections on these relatively new online social experiences generally have not been provided.⁹ Here I will seek to offer an initial attempt from Chinese and European comparative ethical and meta-ethical perspectives to provide some basic concepts and values for advancing analyses and reflections on the impact of these contemporary Chinese phenomena.

A COMPARATIVE ETHICAL APPROACH ACCOMPANIED BY META-ETHICAL CONCERNS

Though there has been some brief references to historical parallels found in the Bǎojiǎ 保甲 system of community support established first in the Sòng dynasty (c. eleventh century CE), which was also at times used as the basic unit for communal defensive strategies and economic organization, the communicative breadth and social impact of Human Flesh Search and their “engines” suggests that this historical linkage is much weaker than those who would assert this claim.¹⁰ In fact, the very nature of the technical environment¹¹ (in which these internet connections are just one part) actually enable far more complicated forms of communication and coordination, extending to the point of erupting into social shame campaigns in local communities where a “targeted person” is identified.¹² I will describe these phenomena in greater detail later on, but here I would like to point toward some ethical principles which may help to explain a deeper cultural background and some motivations of Chinese persons who participate in these Human Flesh Search Engines, while also providing a critical framework by which I will address certain ethical and metaethical questions from a comparative philosophical perspective.

To initiate some Chinese perspectives related to comparative ethical concerns, I will refer first of all to teachings found in an important text in traditional Ruist (“Confucian”) canonical literature. In the value system of *The Zhōngyōng* 《中庸》, which I will refer to here as *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*,¹³ the most central virtuous state for humans is found in “becoming authentic” or *chéng* 誠.¹⁴ Because the text of *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony* became one of the key scriptures promoted by the Sòng Ruist, Zhū Xī (1130–1200), as one of *The Four Books* or *Sìshū* 四書, which Zhū claimed could lead one assuredly on the way toward sagehood, this canonical text and its claims have had an immense significance in traditional culture. Though post-traditional China had already begun to move beyond the previous mainline influences of traditional Ruist values in the early twentieth century, the reemergence of Ruism or “Confucianism” as a value system to correct the “moral instability” of social life in the early twenty-first century within contemporary PRC contexts indicates the way in which this moral value of “becoming authentic” can be one among a number of major contested value systems within contemporary Mainland China.

There is no question that the Human Flesh Search is generally held to be an online social coordination of information in search of “revealing the truth,” and many times, exposing “ugly realities” about certain people and various situations revealed initially through online media.¹⁵ Notably, then, there is a moral motivation moving Chinese netizens to become involved

with these “crowd-empowering” events; when they become offline “engines” supporting these searches, they demonstrate that they are driven by a moral sentiment affirming some form of justice or moral uprightness. This leads them either to help those who have requested offline support in responding to a particular situation or to aid in exposing those who have claimed to have done unrighteous, unethical, or illegal actions, especially among those who are considered to be corrupt officials.¹⁶ In other words, these “engines” provide a “free service” for what are perceived to be “righteous moral causes,” replacing what in other cultural and political contexts would require the help of a private detective or an interstate police effort supported by appropriate legal warrants.

To set oneself right and so be right with others—this basic moral orientation of a person within Human Flesh Search “communities”—is also at the heart of the teaching about authenticity within *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*. In order to highlight some of the ethical motivations and practical attitudes that have shaped a general vision of “a moral person” in contemporary China, I will refer to certain teachings from this classical Ruist scripture, not because those who are involved in the Human Flesh Search technique are self-conscious of these moral teachings rooted in this particular canonical work, but because a simplified understanding of these motivations and attitudes has shaped a particular expression of post-traditional moral life that is often found among intelligent young Chinese university students who want to be considered as “moral persons.” In this context, then, I do not intend to evaluate the claims of *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony* or to explore the more complicated teachings that involve its own account of a sagely exemplary person in this chapter,¹⁷ but to use these classical Ruist moral teachings as a means to initiate an exploration of the motivations and actions of those involved in online Human Flesh Searches.

Within the long 20th chapter of this well-known Ruist scripture within *The Four Books*,¹⁸ it is stated that any persons who “do not understand what is good” cannot become authentic and will not be able to achieve this moral orientation in any of the key relationships that traditional Ruist-inspired culture upholds, that is, in the relationships with one’s parents and other family members, one’s friends, and one’s political sovereign.¹⁹ There is evidence that in the contemporary PRC setting, persons who become involved with Human Flesh Searches are perceived as moral and upright persons, and sometimes are even lauded as “moral heroes” and “righteous knights”;²⁰ this being so, these basic moral claims of *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony* appear to be even more pertinent.

Yet there is still more to reveal here from the Ruist canonical text. It also suggests some principles for moral practice, many of which are also at work within Human Flesh Search Engines—though mostly without a

self-conscious awareness of such principles among post-traditional twenty-first-century Chinese persons. As a consequence, I will explore some meta-ethical problems within these teachings that lead to some genuine public quandaries about certain documented cases where the Human Flesh Searches Engines have failed to achieve their intended righteous goals.

Within *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony* there is a recognition that “common people” may not easily attain to authenticity, and so there is an inherent moral elitism involved in its teachings. Notably, it is stated in the seventh chapter,

The Master said, “Humans all say, ‘We are wise,’ but being driven forward and taken in a net, a trap, or a pitfall, they do not know how to escape. Humans all say, ‘We are wise,’ but happening to choose the course of the Mean, they are not able to maintain their moral orientation even for a month.”²¹

Obviously, this is a perceptive comment about those who share well-intended actions, but end up failing to achieve their intended goals. In some cases where persons become “engines” for a particular Human Flesh Search, they are actually unable to solve the problems they intended to address because the original situation is more complicated than what they had originally surmised from online information. Though these situations may not be precisely parallel to the concerns addressed above in this section of *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*—claiming to be “wise,” but failing to realize that wisdom in normal living conditions—these teachings do suggest that there is a need for moral discernment, especially in these online situations that may require more insight and practical wisdom than some netizens have assumed they did possess.

This contrast between the desire to become authentic and the attainment of authenticity is also part of the discussion in latter part of chapter 20 of *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*. Those who have already become authentic are sages who “without any special effort identify what is right and apprehend the situation without any need to exercise their thoughts.”²² Those who face situations where they need to study relevant materials, also should ask appropriate questions and consider the overall situation, scrutinizing the details, so that when they recognize that a particular approach can be taken, they should do so with “all earnestness.”²³ This suggests how moral assertiveness must be applied even for sages who do not have immediate insights into those situations. This being the case, these requirements become all the more pertinent for those who have not yet become fully authentic. The concern to commit oneself unwaveringly to a cause to which one is committed—even if one is not as strong, informed, or wise as others—is made even more explicit when a subsequent scriptural passage urges persons on with the following words:

What other men may master in a single try, you yourself must strive to attain with efforts increased a hundredfold; and what others may master in ten tries, you must strive to attain a thousand times over.²⁴

This voluntaristic appeal to moral attainment in authenticity is capped by the final paragraph of this same chapter:

Let a person proceed in this way, and, though dull, s[he] will surely become intelligent; though weak, s[he] will surely become strong.²⁵

Needless to say, such a promise would and does inspire many Chinese students, even though they do not self-consciously know and reflect on these ancient teachings, so that they are encouraged to persevere in their academic efforts. In the same way, this teaching put into a popular cultural expression emboldens otherwise passive Chinese netizens to take up a request and become an “engine” for a particular Human Flesh Search. Yet, anyone experienced in whole person cultivation (*xiūshēn* 修身) understands that if one does not have the appropriate moral, intellectual, and spiritual orientation for certain ethically motivated creative tasks placed before them, it is not uncommon for them to face problems in seeking to realize authenticity during the processes of pursuing those tasks. In this regard, there may also be a question of “moral luck” that should be considered,²⁶ but here instead we will consider some other related meta-ethical concerns, focusing on what happens when there is a painful realization that one’s moral commitments have been misguided.

It is especially with those various matters in mind that I would like to consider claims made by the Danish Christian philosopher, Søren Kierkegaard (1813–1855). During one part of his relatively short but prolific life, Kierkegaard became the target of social criticism and public sarcasm. He was attacked in essays and images published in the tabloid-like journal named *The Corsair*,²⁷ a journal that constituted a new form of mass medium created at that time. That public shame campaign has become a major area of discussion in Kierkegaardian studies and is normally referred to as “The Corsair Affair” of 1846. (Please see Appendix 1.)

Kierkegaard’s reflections about this painful experience in his life revealed a number of factors in “crowd behavior” related to the mass media involved in that nineteenth-century Danish context. These provide some interesting and disturbing insights into the moralistic²⁸ and vigilanti-style attitudes that can be supported by those who appear to be ethically-minded, but end up producing anxiety in the general public and embodying various forms of personal despair in their own lives. In his own pseudonymous accounts of what he referred to as “stages in life’s way,” Kierkegaard has indicated how a

principled ethical life that seeks to achieve moral perfection on its own necessarily falls into despair, precisely because of its inability to achieve this goal; it is only in this context that a form of anxiety may arise that will allow for what Kierkegaard describes within his Christian writings as a more humble and consistent form of religiously inspired moral living.²⁹ While anxiety and despair are not the same personal or social phenomena within Kierkegaard's writings, they do refer to states of mind that touch on basic elements within human existence.³⁰ They function differently due to the various possibilities of a person's relationship to oneself and one's relationship to other selves,³¹ including the divine.³² What I find conceptually helpful here is the way in which an ethical form of life can take on an overbearing moralism that ultimately—and quite ironically—generally creates a very unethical situation. As a consequence, it also creates destructively chaotic despair within the actor's consciousness. This occurs, according to Kierkegaard, because those actors are driven to justify their moral assertions about things in which they are ultimately misinformed or they are proudly resistant to admitting that they themselves are in the wrong. This is also what is suggested as occurring in the passages of *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony* seen above, but is developed with far more psychological depth and social power in Kierkegaard's writings.

CHARACTERIZING THE RECENT PHENOMENA OF CHINESE "HUMAN FLESH SEARCH [ENGINES]"

In my introductory statements, I have already briefly described what in Chinese is referred to as *rénruò sōusuō* 人肉搜索 (subsequently RRSS, lit. "human flesh search" and so also abbreviated as HFS).³³ Though it is described as a "Web-facilitated crowd behavior" that employs a "crowd-powered searching method," the metaethical questions that arise immediately from this description involve defining exactly what kind of "crowd" or "community" the online searches actually engage.³⁴ Phenomenologically speaking, those who get on line with the purpose of looking through requests put up in RRSS websites do not belong to any face-to-face community, and generally will not know the persons they are contacting by this means, or even know if these persons are using aliases or other means to hide their identities. Though there are groups of people who may be mobilized by these HFS through the online communication of specific requests, complaints, or criticisms, normally they do not belong to any locally identifiable community nor do they belong to any identifiable social circle where the participants are mutually recognizable to each other.³⁵ This is part of the "anonymity" of the online "crowd" that parallels what Kierkegaard called the "facelessness"

and “anonymity” of the “public”; they take up roles where they can incite or produce repeatedly barbed comments made with malevolent intent because they represent the “impersonal authority” of “The Press” (as in “The Corsair Affair,” described in Appendix 1), and in the parallel situation, those who participate in the RRSS.

If the RRSS “community” in fact is not any normal gathering of friends or people sharing a shared geographical space in real-time, what is it that the RRSS manages to achieve in spite of these shortcomings inherent to the virtual environment? Generally speaking, the RRSS is an online forum where inquiries (most likely made by previously unknown persons) can be made, inquiries which regularly appeal to the moral interests of those who are members of that particular social network. They seek to ignite a shared sense of moral conviction or even outrage among those netizens, so that some will respond to requests to locate and identify “targeted persons” by means of offline searches. These so-called human flesh search engines are online members of the website, who willingly take up these specific requests and perform the offline searches for the sake of the inquirer.

The larger social and political context of the PRC makes this kind of alternative method for overcoming complexities in personal situations very attractive. It has been public knowledge for many years that many PRC citizens have sought to appeal to government officials by writing lengthy complaints in letters about particular problems, and having very little opportunity to have these situations addressed in any public setting, not to mention in a court of law. So, the RRSS also serves effectively as an outlet for public frustrations over the lack of governmental response to felt needs, providing what remains a legal way to seek out redress of perceived wrongs or help in specific cases where people have limited means to achieve what they consider to be legitimate and even morally upright goals. That public officials are now very aware of these actions taken by citizens, and are required to be aware of them, is an indirect indication that the government is allowing these phenomena (at least until 2017) to continue serving their own stated purposes in spite of some of the negative social impacts that they also create.³⁶

Normally, if requests made by means of RRSS websites are fueled by an anger against the “targeted person” who hurt the inquirer in some way, and the request is seen as a justified claim by those who read the online posts describing the illegal or immoral activities of that “targeted person,” the netizens who become “engines” for this investigation do more than just locate that person. Regularly they will post many personal details locating the person in an offline community, and sometimes will go further (whether by themselves or with others who become similarly involved through online connections) in seeking to fulfill “personal requests for vengeance or punishment.” These kinds of RRSS requests may consequently stimulate the

coordinated amalgamation of “large mobs of Chinese netizens” who start to “hunt” for the targeted person and end up creating extremely uncomfortable social smear campaigns in offline settings where the targeted persons live and work.³⁷

Notably, those who seek to promote the positive values inherent in the RRSS refer to some “key benefits” that it provides. These benefits include “revealing the truth” about various questionable situations, offering netizens the chance to “fight illegal behavior,” and so to “deter unethical and yet lawful behavior,” such as expressed in animal cruelty and adulterous promiscuity.³⁸ What they tend to overlook or neglect to point out is that due to privacy laws that have been enacted in other national contexts, the RRSS would be illegal in those other international venues as offenses against personal privacy, but laws of this sort have not yet being applied in the PRC.³⁹ This is because those who become mobilized by this means and serve as “human flesh search engines” for a particular request regularly will locate the personal information of a targeted person—their ID number, residential address, place of work, phone numbers, and other information—and post it all back onto the RRSS website for the sake of others who may go offline to vent their anger, displeasure, and criticisms against the targeted person.⁴⁰ It is important to note, then, that there are “primary engines” that initiate these offline searches, but oftentimes there are different persons who become “secondary engines” and engage in further offline harassment of the targeted person, sometimes extending their actions to affect the lives of family members, friends, and coworkers of the targeted persons. As a consequence, the RRSS does have its own peculiar status and role in the contemporary PRC, particularly, but not only, because of its effect on revealing corruption among government officials.⁴¹ As far as I am aware, there has been no legal judgment or political effort by Běijīng officials to hinder this online form of “Chinese democracy” to search out, find, and help others, or in some cases to expose and shame targeted persons.

SOME POIGNANT EXAMPLES OF HUMAN FLESH SEARCH ENGINES IN THE PRC

Some cases of the impact of the RRSS which do not deal necessarily with public officials are worth considering, in order to further our discussion of the ethical and meta-ethical questions related to some rather ponderous problems that are associated with this phenomenon. A few well-attested cases will be referred to initially, and then a more focused discussion of a particular case will be presented. This is a case that occurred in July 2007 in the province of Húnán 湖南省, dealing with what was referred to as “the worst step-mother in history.”

Chen and Sharma have listed twenty-one cases of aggressive RRSS campaigns occurring between 2006 and 2010, and then focused on four of those cases to indicate the impact made on the lives of targeted persons.⁴² These cases involve alleged extramarital scandals, drunk drivers hitting and hurting pedestrians (but caught on surveillance cameras or by personal videos made on hand-held phones), images of child molestation, and animal cruelty. In an early case involving the killing of a kitten by a woman named Wang, the outrage shown by netizens against her cruelty to this animal resulted in both her and the photographer being suspended from their work.⁴³ What is not mentioned in the summary of the case provided by Chen and Sharma, but revealed by Herold, is that the woman was a nurse and was acting out her frustrations over her failed marriage.⁴⁴ In another case, a male inquirer named Lin described “his ex-girlfriend” named Zhou as “an unrighteous person” and requested public assistance in locating her. In the end, Lin used this means to find her and murder her. Though he was apparently later put in jail for his crime, those involved in this RRSS event were not considered to be legally culpable of assisting in the crime.⁴⁵ Online “mob criticisms” and offline shame tactics lead sometimes to persons who have committed crimes being charged and taken to jail, while other offline criticisms—by phone, complaints sent to workplaces or schools, and even posters put up on the doors of residences that declare those persons to be “evil” and “immoral”—may lead to disciplinary actions taken at the targeted persons’ workplace or school.⁴⁶

A more tragic case involves a situation where a woman in Húnán was claimed in July 2007 to be “the worst step-mother in history” (*shǐshàng zuìdú de hòumā* 史上最毒的後媽, literally “the most poisonous step-mother in [human] history”).⁴⁷ The whole process of this particular RRSS was initiated by posting pictures of a young girl on a website, showing her body to be severely bruised, and at one point also coughing up blood.⁴⁸ Apparently, one hospital official had noted down on an earlier report that this might involve “a case of family violence.” The netizen who found the materials assumed this to be the case. Outrage resulted in offline attacks of the parents of the child but stimulated a subsequent online video prepared by the father/husband to deny that these claims against his wife were true. Later on, neighbors also joined in these online counterclaims, but netizens remained skeptical; not only did those vigilanti netizens refuse to believe the husband or neighbors, they also began criticizing all those who supported the mother as people colluding in the abusive behavior. After some further inquiries were done at the local hospital, it ended up being demonstrated that the young girl was a hemophiliac, that is, a person with an unusual physical condition that made it very easy for her to be bruised and to bleed. Nevertheless, even this information was not enough to stop the “carneavalesque riot” of Human Flesh Search Engines that had been initiated by the claim that the step-mother had inhumanely beaten

the girl. Finally, the mother herself taped a video where she was on her knees, crying, and begging others online to stop the cruel harassment she and her family had received by vigilanti “engines,” insisting once again that she was innocent. Only at that point in time did the situation begin to subside and the social shame tactics were voluntarily stopped.

ETHICAL AND METAETHICAL QUANDARIES CREATED BY RRSS IN THE PRC

As the above summary of this unusual case of “the worst step-mother in history” has sought to indicate, a basic irony regarding some elements of RRSS engagement is revealed. Essentially, the moral irony can be described in the following way: Those who wanted to protect a young girl from abuse became abusive themselves, causing social instability within the family and community of the stepmother who was the targeted person in their RRSS.

Though Chen and Sharma rank among the “major drawbacks” of RRSS the invasion of privacy and the moralistic violence that it sometimes perpetrates, they include only later in their list concerns about the “low information quality” and “discouragement” felt by other PRC citizens in adopting the internet for their own daily uses.⁴⁹ In my ethical and meta-ethical reflections about these matters here, I concur with the moral concerns related to the loss of personal privacy and the vigilanti-style attacks rendered by RRSS “engines” in the PRC. Nevertheless, the former problem is really part of a larger problem related to governance: this is a situation created because there are not yet enshrined in law protection for these basic human rights in the PRC.⁵⁰ The fact that the more vicious forms of social shame tactics have been generally permitted in the recent past by government officials, along with all the other revelations that occur by means of RRSS, is also ultimately a matter of balancing certain kinds of “freedom of speech” with justice for the innocent. These do involve concerns that should be addressed at the level of legal development backed by ethical and philosophical reflections on the special nature of the internet, as well as the personal and social impact of RRSS when they fail to achieve their intended goals for one reason or another. As a consequence, then, I will pursue some of these ethical and philosophical reflections in my concluding statements, hoping that these might become stimuli for further discussions leading to those legal developments.

In commenting on the specific case of “the most evil step-mother in history,” it should be remembered that it was the case in 2007 that the majority of the general populace in the PRC had not received an education that would be equivalent to a high-school diploma. This adds to the quandary that some of those who are netizens willing to become “engines” for RRSS may not have had much education, and so they may lack a self-conscious awareness

of the complexities of the internet environment in which they are taking part. Though this should be taken not as a general criticism of all PRC netizens, since a good number of them are also university graduates, it would be important to consider and know more precisely in contemporary China the level of education of those who are regularly involved in RRSS activities. It may be precisely for this reason that some of the misinformation created by the case under consideration was able to spread online without further empirical investigations to prove whether or not the claims were substantial.

Epistemologically considered, it is also significant to note how the low level of the quality of online information could cause further problems in clarifying the true nature of some RRSS cases. Because of this factor, some information could be misread, especially when a netizen who comes across a hospital document suggesting that “there might be family violence” takes this as a statement of fact. There apparently was no special effort on the part of involved Chinese netizens, who probably also knew of no other authoritative means to verify these matters within the governing institutions in the PRC context, to confirm whether the suspicion was in fact a true assessment of the whole situation. Nevertheless, rather than taking up moral restraint in such a case, Chinese netizens left to the conclusion that family violence was involved. Having come to this conclusion, the problem became how to prove conclusively by means of online information that there was in fact no family violence involved in this case. The ethical quandary that resulted is worth reconsidering in some detail.

As was noted in the summary statement above about this case, there were direct online assertions claiming that the charges made against the step-mother were untrue. Nevertheless, since netizens had already “determined” that family violence was involved, counter-claims made by the husband of the step-mother and father of the child were considered unconvincing. It was apparently believed that the father had reasons to cover up the case, and so could be lying. When further counter-claims were made also by neighbors of the couple, the online netizens involved in the RRSS as “secondary engines” could simply reply (and with what appeared to be sufficient warrant for their claims) that all those people were simply colluding in order to protect themselves and their village interests. In other words, their counter-claims could only prove that there were questions to be raised, but it could not provide conclusive evidence that there was no family violence involved.

When a more precise medical diagnosis was reported, it is not completely clear that all those who were online would understand what hemophilia is, but it is notable that this information still did not bring adequate counter-evidence to the public arena in order to conclude that there had been no family violence. Some might even argue that precisely because the child had this physical condition, she suffered all the more because of the family violence that had putatively been occurring in her home against her.

This sets up an epistemological quandary that has been referred to as “low information quality” by those studying the RRSS phenomena, but it has an ethical dimension to it that is both startling and frustrating. Those serving as RRSS engines were adopting a form of moralistic insistence based upon their assumption that family violence had been involved. They could always justify their own shame tactics by claiming that all of these counter-evidence that has been gathered online by the husband, neighbors, and hospital staff were only part of the story; in fact, they could claim that the counter-claims were camouflaging the real problem, which was the physical abuse of the child by the “evil stepmother.”

Ultimately, only when the stepmother debased herself in an online video, begging others to stop the unjustified criticisms against her and her family, and appealing to them to prove her righteousness, did the chaos begin to subside. Here there seems to be an ethical breakthrough, but it came at the cost of taping a humiliating scene of crying and begging, and only after there had been some weeks of intense social criticism experienced by the woman, her family, and the neighborhood around her.

Here the metaethical matters I have raised previously become all the more important and can now be extended into realms that draw upon the Kierkegaardian reflections on the cruelty that may be perpetrated by certain forms of anonymous mass media.

The impact of such a failed RRSS is (at the very least) twofold. First of all, it produces a major wave of social anxiety, filling other netizens with concerns that they might become illegitimate targets of some future RRSS actions. To them, these actions appear to be more like cyber-stalking and cyber-bullying than a righteous public outrage about a justified cause. As a consequence, rather than promoting virtuous living, these RRSS actions ironically result in a greater amount of social instability. At the same time, they reveal some of the ethical limitations tied to assessment of information posted on RRSS websites and the need to be more cautious in initiating and carrying out Human Flesh Searches by means of offline “engines.”

As I have also indicated earlier, the very nature of the “crowd” or “community” that becomes involved in RRSS should be reconsidered. Most of the time these are not persons who are living in the same venue or persons who know each other in offline real-life situations within the same geographical setting. As a consequence, their “mob-action” appears to be more like a coordinated anarchistic event, rather than a communal (or even democratic) judgment that is guided by moral principles such as those found in *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*. Put in other words, mediated cyber-relationships have far less means to check the excesses of “group activity” and prove difficult to manage because the accountability of those who form online “relationships” is in fact minimal, if not nonexistent.

In addition to these social impacts, there is also the despairing attitudes that can overwhelm those who served as Human Flesh Search Engines in cases where the RRSS has actually failed to serve righteousness or morally upright values. Having become aware that their moral campaigns had in the end become unjust and evil actions in themselves, the impact on the lives of those who supported these actions as either “first engines” or “secondary engines” should not be overlooked. Having become sources of social unrest and ethically questionable activities, their subsequent self-reflections could lead them into a form of moral despair, and otherwise have a deleterious effect on any morally sensitive persons (which I have assumed here and continue to assume is the case for those involved with RRSS activities).

Here I want to underscore what Kierkegaard was particularly aware of regarding these possibilities. It is not only the case that these perpetrators of RRSS offline shame campaigns may themselves fall into a debilitating despair due to the misjudgments and failures of their actions. Other possibilities also could be conceived. Persons who have served as “engines” for RRSS could become hardened to the fact that such things might happen as a matter of lacking moral luck in a particular situation. As a consequence, they may simply continue to do what they have done before, leaving in their wake a larger realm of social anxiety that would be fully justified because such vigilante moralism would continue to threaten anyone who might be unnerved by such online “crowd-powered” investigations.

All these ethical and metaethical reflections suggest that there are indeed needs for developing legal guidelines for the protection of basic human rights related to personal privacy within the PRC, because these would most likely have a positive result in deterring the excessive offline social smear campaigns that accompany some of the most notorious cases of RRSS. How the PRC government handles the principled claims related to balancing freedom of expression with protection for personal privacy online and offline, as well as protecting those who are wrongly attacked by RRSS engines, is a matter we should all consequently be very glad to see addressed in future legal developments.

APPENDIX 1

A Historical Account and Brief Meditation on The Corsair Affair of 1846

Being a sharp observer of people, and being able to create colorful portraits and even caricatures of persons by means of his witty prose and poignant sarcasm, Søren Kierkegaard during the first part of his authorship also

initiated a vast project of “indirect communication” produced under the guise of pseudonyms.⁵¹ One of the consequences of this multifaceted perspectival authorship was that it was highly possible to misinterpret what he had presented; another consequence was that it could easily provoke opposition, not only due to misunderstanding the significance of his writings, but also in response to sharply worded criticisms Kierkegaard (often masked by a pseudonym) published within newspapers and tabloid-like journals produced in Copenhagen. Such was the case in 1846 with what has been referred to as “The *Corsair* Affair.”⁵²

In the words of Joakim Garff (1960-), this public “affair” engaged in by three relatively young and heady Danish literary intellectuals set off “the great reversal”⁵³ in Kierkegaard’s life as an author during the “Golden Age” of nineteenth-century Denmark.⁵⁴ Historically speaking, the event involved a vicious triangle created out of apparent envy and wounded egos:⁵⁵ Søren Kierkegaard (1813–1855), the “eccentric” and “genius”; Peder Ludvig Møller (1814–1865), an “eroticist and child of the proletariat,” whose polyamorous relationships led to a fatal venereal disease;⁵⁶ and Meir Aron Goldschmidt (1819–1887), the founder and editor of *The Corsair*, an “ambitious Jew” who “hated” Kierkegaard’s “arrogance” and “patronizing manner.”⁵⁷ The affair itself was constituted by a series of articles that descended from literary criticism into personal attacks, ultimately crossing lines of contemporary literary courtesy by revealing private secrets about the two key interlocutors (Kierkegaard and Møller) including Kierkegaard’s pseudonymous authorship. More devastating for Kierkegaard, it led to his being characterized publicly as an awkward genius idiot with a few distinctive physical deformities and a megalomaniacal personality.⁵⁸ In fact, it was Goldschmidt who decided in favor of producing caricatures of Kierkegaard;⁵⁹ these led to the public mockery of Kierkegaard that continued long after the *Corsair* affair had taken place.⁶⁰ Ironically enough, under the pseudonym of “Frater Taciturnus,”⁶¹ Kierkegaard had complained sarcastically in January 1846 that “it is really too much to be made immortal by *The Corsair*,” and so he fed the fires of personal attack by pleading, “Please throw abuse on me!” As Alastair Hannay (1932-) summarily comments, “*The Corsair* did so with a vengeance.”⁶²

Kierkegaard later became much more painfully aware of how “the Press” (which was his indirect way of referring to *The Corsair* and other tabloid newspapers who took up a pitiless attack on his person and character) attracted readers primarily on the basis of the “creation of opinions.” What Kierkegaard had not previously anticipated was how his own involvement in that process would backfire on himself in very personal ways. In this sense, then, the playful creativity of his pseudonymous efforts in “indirect communication,” which had a deeper seriousness in confronting the lack of

human authenticity in various spheres of Danish cultural and religious life during that period of vast modernization and change (including the so-called Industrial Revolution and its cultural impacts), was exposed and distorted by the tabloid press. In spite of his own intentions, Kierkegaard's efforts in literary creativity were being essentially derided, revealing that through the institutions created by modernization (including the tabloid media in which he had willfully participated as an author), a new inhumane and impersonal environment had been created that reinforced the cultural superficiality of "the crowd."⁶³

Though Kierkegaard realized the elitism inherent in the "literate crowd," which did not embrace "the whole of humanity" even within Denmark, he saw that it created a seemingly unquestioned gap between the "common man" (who was generally illiterate) and the educated elite of his day (of which SK was clearly also a member). What should be emphasized here (as elaborated also in the film by the Danish filmmaker, Anne Wivel (1945-), entitled simply *Søren Kierkegaard* (1994)) is that "the crowd" or "the public" was not the equivalent of the Marxian laborer or "common man": this was a literate and educated crowd, those belonging to an educated elite who were primarily also petite bourgeois in status, much like Kierkegaard himself. When he later began to claim that he was identifying himself with the "common man," this was an effort within his own propagandistic concerns as editor and writer of *The Moment* (another journal he created during the last year of his life to become the institution which would attack the Danish state church) to embrace all persons in Denmark, and especially those who were semi-literate or uneducated. In this sense, he was moving beyond an authorship that addressed literary elites in order to promote a particular form of Christian practice. He knew that it was being done within the very media he realized could be misused for other elitist interests, but he had hope that his messages might still be spread by other means (primarily by verbal summaries passed among others) to those who would not otherwise purchase or read such materials.

In this sense, then, the phenomena linking "the press" to "the crowd" not only smacks of the problem of moralism, but also produced the conditions noted by Kierkegaard in the volume entitled *Stages on Life's Way* (and discussed subsequently by philosophers and cultural critics) that led to a moralistic wallowing in cultural *Angst*, a deep existential despair on the part of those attacking, as well as profound agony and anxiety on those who are victimized by these attacks. Kierkegaard knew this very well, because he was at times both the victim and the perpetrator (as some have tried to argue about his attack on Danish Christendom during the last years of his life).

It is this form of cultural *Angst* that I have sought to explore within the vigilanti chaos caused at times by Human Flesh Searches, what David Herold has referred to as "carnival-esque riots" within an unsettling kind of "Chinese

democracy” he sees arising through the promotion and relatively unrestricted social platforms which contain venues where Human Flesh Searches are initiated.⁶⁴

NOTES

1. The term “digital divide” is used in current literature as a sociological description of a new form of technical elitism, involving various kinds of biases and troubles that many who originally promoted the use of the internet did not anticipate. For discussions of these matters, consult Linda Leung, *Virtual Ethnicity: Race, Resistance and the World Wide Web* (Hants: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2005); Cassie M. Evans, ed., *Internet Issues: Blogging, the Digital Divide and Digital Libraries* (New York: Nova Science Pub. Inc., 2010); and Mark Baurlien, ed., *The Digital Divide: Arguments for and against Facebook, Google, Texting, and the Age of Social Networking* (New York: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin, 2011). An informative and pensive study including considerations of these problems is also provided by James Curran in “Rethinking internet history,” found in James Curran, Natalie Fenton and Des Freedman, *Misunderstanding the Internet* (Milton Park: Routledge, 2012), 34–65.

2. The digitopian claims that are already imbedded in the descriptive term, “World Wide Web,” had their heyday in the 1980s, as described in Peter Ludlow, ed., *Crypto Anarchy, Cyberstates, and Pirate Utopias* (Cambridge, MA and London: The MIT Press, 2001), but were brought into mainline capitalist ways of conceiving the world as seen in works such as Bill Gates, Nathan Myhrvold and Peter Rinearson’s *The Road Ahead* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1995). This utopian discourse can be located in a good number of works merely by their titles, such as in Christian Crumlish’s tome, *The Power of the Many: How the Living Web is Transforming Politics, Business, and Everyday Life* (San Francisco and London: SYBEX Inc., 2004) and Michael Chorost, *World Wide Mind: The Coming Integration of Humanity, Machines and the Internet* (New York: Free Press, 2011). Similarly, utopian claims can be found in the texts that appear to be scientific, but embody the full rhetoric of what appears to be the uncritical acceptance of internet phenomena. See for example Huanshuang Ning, *Unit and Ubiquitous Internet of Things* (Boca Raton: CRC Press/Taylor and Francis Group, 2013). The dystopian side to these claims is revealed in just one trenchant instance, when cell phones in the PRC were used to track down the location of potential Covid-19 infected carriers in the early months of 2020. Anyone close to a person (whose cell phone was known and its locations determined during the previous two weeks) confirmed to be infected was notified by this cyber-tracking system to go to the hospital and be tested, or face other consequences. Is this a “good ubiquity” or a nefarious one?

3. For example, one very remarkable pedagogical challenge has recently been made by a contributing writer and editor of the *Scientific American*, who has summarized nearly 30 years of research dealing with some of the subtle shortcomings of

those who have been shifting toward “reading on screens” rather than reading items in hard copy paper formats. See Ferris Jabr, “Why the Brain Prefers Paper,” *Scientific American* 309, no. 5 (November 2013): 48–53.

4. Playing with the catchy phrase employed in the work by John Palfrey and Urs Gasser, *Born Digital: Understanding the First Generation of Digital Natives* (New York: Basic Books: 2008).

5. Here I am drawing on the title of the thoughtful work produced by Quentin J. Schultze (1952-), *Habits of the High-Tech Heart: Living Virtuously in the Information Age* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2002). More critically oriented studies of various phenomena within cyberspaces have grown in number over the past ten to fifteen years. Some of the most revealing deal with the studies of “withdrawn youth” or the *hikikomori* phenomenon documented in Japan (and observed in other cultural settings as well), along with studies revealing problems related to the compulsive preoccupation with online games, cyberborn, and mobile portal texting. See, for example, this general trend of interpretation in Fred Turner, *From Counterculture to Cyberculture: Steward Brand, The Whole Earth Network, and the Rise of Digital Utopianism* (Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 2006) and a more popular study of questions dealing with ethical concerns in Sherry Turkle, *Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other* (New York: Basic Books, 2011). Consult also the studies on withdrawn youth and internet addiction in the following works: Saitō Tamaki, *Hikikomori: Adolescence Without End*. trans. Jeffrey Angles (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2013) and Kimberly S. Young and Christiano Nabuco de Abreu, eds., *Internet Addiction: A Handbook and Guide to Evaluation and Treatment* (Hoboken: John Wiley and Sons, 2011).

6. The phrase “crowd-powered” appears in studies by Qingpeng Zhang, both in a dissertation as well as an online article. Consult Qingpeng Zhang, “Analyzing Cyber-Enabled Social Movement Organizations: A Case Study with Crowd-Powered Search,” PhD dissertation, The University of Arizona, 2012; and Qingpeng Zhang, Fei-Yue Wang, Daniel Zeng, and Tao Wang, “Understanding Crowd-Powered Search Groups: A Social Network Perspective.” *Plos One* 7(6) (June 2012): e39749. See also Zhuo Feng, “A Behavioral Study of Chinese Online Human Flesh Communities: Modeling and Analysis with Social Networks,” PhD dissertation, The University of Arizona, 2012.

7. Having officially retired from full-time teaching in the fall of 2017, I have had less opportunity to explore these matters with students, but have noted some strange phenomena that illustrate some of the darker sides of internet-savvy netizens: the use of encrypted online systems to instigate flash-mob-style protests in Hong Kong in 2019, and the shutting down of online worship services during the stressful conditions of the Covid-19 epidemic in Wūhàn 武漢, by officials who watched these events attract many thousands of more-or-less-desperate netizens in that metropolitan setting, and so going far-beyond the techno-scientific control and theological influences preferred by the politically powerful.

8. Up to the end of 2018, I found that there were even justifications of this phenomenon written in legal journals because it promoted the “public good,” something

that will appear to be quite an ironic and rather utopian judgment in the light of what I will consider here on the basis of other studies.

9. In this regard, I want to thank my Department of Religion and Philosophy at Hong Kong Baptist University, as well as my students from the period between 2011 and 2016, for allowing me to explore these issues by creating a course in our General Education offerings entitled “Virtuous Living in a Virtual World” (GCVM 1075). This particular problem arose in the context of students’ research papers, which prompted my own further research, and so I am particularly grateful to those “digitally-born” classmates who have revealed something about the nature of these problems to me and others in our class. Nevertheless, the presentation of the ethical and metaethical questions related to the Human Flesh Search Engines I offer here is limited to my own reflections on these matters, and so any misrepresentations or lack of insight into these matters is due to my own misjudgments or limitations.

10. See this comparison mentioned in the “history” section of the article “Human Flesh Search Engine” in the English Wikipedia (accessed on May 11, 2013). Consult http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Human_flesh_search_engine&printable=yes

11. See works by Jacques Ellul and Han Jonas in relationship to the transformed nature of the modern “technological environment.” In particular, books by Ellul include *The Technological System* (New York: Continuum, 1980) and *The Technological Bluff* (New York: Continuum, 1990), with a helpful introduction to that concept found in Jacques Ellul, *What I Believe* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Company, 1989), 99–103 and 134–41. For a seminal statement by Hans Jonas (1903–1993), see “Toward a Philosophy of Technology” in Robert C. Scharff and Val Dusek, eds., *Philosophy of Technology: The Technological Condition—An Anthology* (Southern Gate: John Wiley and Sons, Ltd., 2014), 210–23.

12. For discussions of some of the harsher dimensions of the Human Flesh Search Engines, consult David Kurt Herold, “Human Flesh Search Engines: Carnavalesque Riots as Components of a ‘Chinese Democracy’” in David Kurt Herold and Peter Marolt, eds., *Online Society in China: Creating, Celebrating, and Instrumentalizing the Online Carnival* (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), 127–45.

13. This is the preferred title for the text translated by James Legge (1815–1897) in English, which in 1861 he first called *The Doctrine of the Mean*, but by 1885 he change the title (of the “old version” of the text) as it is found in *The Record of the Rites (Liji 禮記)* to *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*. See his note about this matter in the 1893 revised version of the text in James Legge, trans. *The Chinese Classics*, Vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1893), p. 383. Subsequently, this text will be referred to simply as CC1. It is this version of the text that is normally reprinted in other forms and under titles, such as the Dover Press which gives the text the title *Confucius: Confucian Analects, The Great Learning and The Doctrine of the Mean*. Other titles for this same text have been suggested by persons presenting new translations and interpretations of this Ruist scripture in English, as will be seen in what follows.

14. How this term should be rendered is a question debated among contemporary sinologists and translators, including those with philosophical training. The

great Scottish missionary-scholar, James Legge, rendered the term as “sincerity” and its superlative *zhìchéng* 至誠 as “the most entire sincerity” (as in Legge, CC1, *Zhōngyōng*, Ch. 24, p. 417). In French, the Jesuit missionary-scholar Séraphin Couvreur (1835–1919) presented the denotation of the term as “la vraie perfection” and its superlative as “un homme vraiment parfait” (a person / human [who is] truly perfect). Not to be left aside in this matter, the German (and former Lutheran missionary scholar), Richard Wilhelm (1873–1930) offered instead the option “Die Wahrheit,” that is simply, “the truth.” At the beginning of the twenty-first century, Roger Ames and David Hall suggested in 2001 that the term should be translated as “creativity,” while admitting that the previous renderings of “integrity” and “sincerity” were also suitable alternatives. Andrew Plaks’ bold translation preferred to reveal the term’s meaning in the phrase, “the perfect state of integral wholeness,” suggesting the specific kind of anthropocosmic vision which served as the interpretive framework for his rendering of the whole text. Being so contested in translation, Johnston and Wang in their renderings of the old and new text of the *Zhōngyōng* (that is, the text as found in the *Lǐjì*, and the reorganized text promoted much later by Zhū Xī) have left the term only in transcription as “cheng” and “perfect cheng.” My preferred rendering for *chéng* is “becoming authentic,” and for *zhìchéng* is “complete authenticity.”

Find these various renderings in the citations of the 20th and 24th chapters of the new text version of the *Zhōngyōng* or in their explanatory notes in the following works referred to above: Séraphin Couvreur, trans., *Les quatre livres* (Héjiān: Jesuit Mission Press, 1895), 51; Richard Wilhelm, trans. *Li Gi: Das Buch der Sitte des Älteren und Jüngeren Dai—Aufzeichnungen über Kultur und Religion des Alten China* (Jena: Eugen Diederich, 1930), 13; consult the glossary where an essay on the rendering of this term appears in Roger T. Ames and David L. Hall, trans., *Focusing the Familiar: A Translation and Philosophical Interpretation of the Zhongyong* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2001), 61–3; Andrew Plaks, trans., *Ta Hsüeh and Chung Yung (The Highest Order of Cultivation and On the Practice of the Mean)* (London: Penguin Books Ltd., 2003), 43 and 45; Ian Johnston and Wang Ping, trans. and annot., *Daxue and Zhongyong: Bilingual Edition* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2012), 457 and 467.

15. It is notable that in the general account of RRSS presented in Rui Chen and Sushil K. Sharma’s article entitled “Human Flesh Search—Facts and Issues,” the first “key benefit” they cite (out of five) which the RRSS provides is that people involved seek to “reveal the truth.” Taking this to be the case, and that this is generally the highest goal of those who get involved with these events, I assert that this is actually the moral core of the RRSS/HFS phenomenon in contemporary China. Find this claim in Rui Chen and Sushil K. Sharma, “Human Flesh Search—Facts and Issues,” *Journal of Information Privacy and Security* 7(1) (2011), 56.

16. The revealing of damaging evidence against corrupt officials in the PRC is noted as one of the main functions of RRSS in Herold, “Human Flesh Search Engines,” 136–9.

17. See chapter 8 in this volume for a related discussion of these traditional philosophical concerns.

18. Here as well as in what follows we will be referring to the “new text” edited and employed by Zhū Xī, and not the “old text” as found in *The Record of the Rites*. The clarification of these two textual traditions and their philosophical import is explained and explored in chapter 4 in this volume.

19. As described in Legge, CC1, 412–3 (Ch. 20, para. 17).

20. Guobin Yang cites a case which started in September 2005 when a young woman claimed her mother was dying of liver cancer, and that because she could not cover the cost of the medical bills, her mother was dying. Many persons began to get involved, including offering funds (217 persons donating funds to a designated bank account that reached a sum of RMB 114,550). Subsequently, two men from one of the networks decided to travel at their own expense to meet the woman and her mother, and they uncovered the fact that, generally speaking, the mother was sick, but that the young woman had overstated the case. Once this was reported, the donations quickly stopped being offered. Those two men were subsequently hailed as “knight-errants” or “righteous knights,” because they helped to clarify the situation and verify the actual need. See the full description of this example of a Human Flesh Search in Guobin Yang, *The Power of the Internet in China: Citizen Activism Online* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 175–8.

21. Here using the basic text of Legge, but changing its renderings in certain places. See Legge, CC1, *Zhōngyōng*, Ch. 7, 388.

22. Based on Legge, CC1, *Zhōngyōng*, Ch. 20, 413. Plaks renders the same passage as follows: “[Being authentic] means a state of centred [*sic*] balance requiring no striving, complete attainment requiring no mental effort.” See Plaks, *Ta Hsüeh and Chung Yung*, 42.

23. Summarizing the text in Legge, CC1, *Zhōngyōng*, Ch. 20, paragraphs 19–20, 413–4. The quoted phrase is cited from Plaks rendering, 42.

24. Citing from very close to the end of chapter 20 of *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*, Plaks’ rendering, 43. Legge puts the same passage in the following way: “If another man succeed by one effort, [the committed person] will use a hundred efforts [to achieve the same goal]; if another man succeed by ten efforts, he will use a thousand” Citing Legge, CC1, *Zhōngyōng*, 414 (Ch. 20, para. 20).

25. Citing Legge, CC1, *Zhōngyōng*, 414 (Ch. 20, para. 21), with emendations made by this author. Ames and Hall offer something quite similar, but with a more modern phrasing: “If in the end people are able to advance on this way, even the dull are sure to become bright; even the weak are sure to become strong.” Ames and Hall, *Focusing the Familiar*, 104.

26. Here I am thinking of the argument provided in the award winning paper by Jesse Ciccotti (1980-), “The Mengzi and Moral Uncertainty: A Ruist Philosophical Treatment of Moral Luck.” This essay won the Charles Wei-hsun Fu Foundation prize and was presented at the meeting of the International Society for Chinese Philosophy in Buffalo, New York, July 21–24, 2013.

27. Notably, the “public entertainment” provided by the tabloid as a form of public mass media was a new technological advance made possible by develops of the so-called Industrial Revolution, and so the sense of the newness of the media and its impact on particular lives suggests that it serves as a mid-nineteenth century parallel to the advent of the WWW (“world wide web”) in the late twentieth century.

28. Reflections on “moralism” have been garnished from a set of three articles produced in the August 2005 issues of the *Journal of Applied Philosophy*. These are Julia Driver, “Moralism,” *Journal of Applied Philosophy* 22(2) (August 2005): 138–51; Taylor, “Moralism and Morally Accountable Beings,” 153–60, and Lovett, “A Defense of Prudential Moralism,” 161–70.

29. The difference between these two stages of ethical life is described as “first and second ethics” in Kierkegaard’s writings. See this elaborated in Arne Grøn, *The Concept of Anxiety in Søren Kierkegaard*, trans. Janette B. L. Knox (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1994), 135–42.

30. As described insightfully in Dan Magurshak’s article, “Despair and Everydayness: Kierkegaard’s Corrective Contribution to Heidegger’s Notion of Fallen Everydayness,” in Robert L. Perkins, ed., *International Kierkegaard Commentary: The Sickness unto Death* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1987), 209–37.

31. In this regard, some may be surprised that Kierkegaard’s highly individualistic conceptualizations of anxiety and despair could in fact have a social interpretation, yet this has also been convincingly addressed by others, especially as it is developed in his Christian discourses. For discussions of these aspects of Kierkegaard’s ethical and religious works, see Stephen Crites, “*The Sickness Unto Death: A Social Interpretation*” in Daniel W. Conway, ed., *Søren Kierkegaard: Critical Assessments of Leading Philosophers—Volume II, Epistemology and Psychology: Kierkegaard and the Recoil from Freedom* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 35–48.

32. I have been helped in dealing with this theme by the discussions found in three articles: first, Gregory Beabout’s article, “Drawing out the Relationship between Anxiety and Despair in Kierkegaard’s Writings,” in Daniel W. Conway and K. E. Gover, eds., *Søren Kierkegaard: Critical Assessments of Leading Philosophers – Volume IV, Social and Political Philosophy: Kierkegaard and the “Present Age”* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 51–66; then Alastair Hannay’s piece, “Kierkegaard and the Variety of Despair,” and then Philip L. Quinn’s elaboration in “Kierkegaard’s Christian Ethics,” both found in Alastair Hannay and Gordon D. Marino, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Kierkegaard* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 329–48 and 349–75 respectively.

33. A general account of this phenomenon is presented in the article already cited by Chen and Sharma, “Human Flesh Search – Facts and Issues,” 50–70.

34. Herold points out that Google in the PRC has its own website dedicated to RRSS, and the “largest and most popular RRSS in China” is found in Mop.com. See Herold, “Human Flesh Search Engines,” 128.

35. Having made this assertion, it is also clear that some netizens involved in these RRSS websites do come to know some of these persons as a consequence of being involved in numerous of these HFS activities, and so whether they end up forming offline communities as a consequence of their online activities after participating in such events is a matter worth investigating. So far, I have not seen any study indicating whether this is the case or not.

36. This is the emphasis of the end of the article by Herold. See Herold, “Human Flesh Search Engines,” 139–40.

37. Quoting from statements in Herold, “Human Flesh Search Engines,” 130.
38. Summarizing from Chen and Sharma, “Human Flesh Search,” 56.
39. Herold claims that the RRSS “would be a cause for legal action in most other countries but are an acceptable (and almost mainstream) part of the Chinese Internet.” Cited from Herold, “Human Flesh Search Engines,” 128. More elaborate discussion of this point appears in Chen and Sharma, “Human Flesh Search,” 62–3, where it is pointed out that privacy laws in the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Germany, among other places, have restrained this form of Human Flesh Search activity, even though there are some notable cases where even private information was put up on line for a short period of time, and then deleted afterward. Whether the new internet laws established in 2017 do add some new conditions to these situations is a matter worth knowing, but I have not yet been able to confirm the relevant details about those new laws.
40. See discussion of these various kinds of forceful offline techniques associated with RRSS in Jinglan Wu, “Angel or Demon: An Examination of the Development and Impact of the Online ‘Human Flesh Search’ in China,” MA thesis, The State University of New York at Buffalo, 2011.
41. Herold tends to emphasize this aspect of the RRSS, especially in his conclusion. To the contrary, Chen and Sharma, as well as Guobin Yang, describe and underscore the diversity of the cases found online in Chinese settings, starting in 2005 and 2006.
42. See Chen and Sharma, “Human Flesh Search,” 53–4.
43. Described in Chen and Sharma, “Human Flesh Search,” 54.
44. As described in Herold, “Human Flesh Search Engines,” 133.
45. Described in part in Chen and Sharma, “Human Flesh Search,” 57.
46. As summarized in charts found in Chen and Sharma, “Human Flesh Search,” 54.
47. Cited in the Chinese press in Liú Jìng刘静, “Shìshàng zuìdú hòumǔ” 〈史上最毒后妈〉 [The Worst Stepmother in [Human] History] 载 *Yángchéng wǎnbào* 《羊城晚报》 [The Guǎngzhōu City Evening News] (July 24, 2007), first page.
48. Images, a video and written discussion of this case in Chinese can be viewed and read at http://news3.xinhuanet.com/video/2007-08/01/content_6461189.htm, while a series of images taken from relevant sources can be reviewed by means of the following URL <https://www.google.com.hk/search?q=%E5%8F%B2%E4%B8%8A%E6%9C%80%E6%AF%92%E5%90%8E%E5%A6%88%E5%9C%96%E7%89%87&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ei=T1NAU6OaHsOgigfk8oAY&ved=0CFMQsAQ&biw=1224&bih=520>
49. As found in Chen and Sharma, “Human Flesh Search,” 56–7. They site six “major drawbacks,” the first two being “privacy invasion” and “violence,” while placing the other two items as the fifth and sixth drawbacks.
50. Once again, I would want to indicate that I have not been able to peruse the changes to internet laws made in the PRC in 2017, and so this situation should be investigated further by those who are interested in the current situation in 2020 and afterward.

51. This is the focal point of the study by Roger Poole, *Kierkegaard: Indirect Communication* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993).

52. The whole set of articles produced in the tabloid journal, *The Corsair*, as well as elsewhere in the printed media of the day, along with suitable explanations and historical notes, has been described in Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, eds. and trans., *The Corsair Affair and Articles Related to The Writings* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982).

53. Find this poignant phrase at the head of a section indicating how at the end of this public polemic, Kierkegaard in early March 1846 also started a new series of journals, indicating to a large extent how he realized that his life had entered into a new and seemingly unalterable stage of public abuse. Consult Joakim Garff, *Søren Kierkegaard: A Biography*, trans. Bruce H. Kirmmse (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 411–8.

54. The phrase describing this period in Danish history is drawn from Bruce H. Kirmmse, *Kierkegaard in Golden Age Denmark* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990). Poole describes this challenge to Kierkegaard's previous mode of life, an indirect communication which Kierkegaard himself felt had been "functioning more or less perfectly," as the "gravest crisis that [his] authorship even had to endure." Quoted from Roger Poole, *Kierkegaard: The Indirect Communication*, 201.

55. Summarized with quotations from Garff, *Søren Kierkegaard: A Biography*, 406.

56. Find a contemporary image of Møller in photograph 19, located in Garff, *Søren Kierkegaard: A Biography*, following 519 (and actually 522, but without a page number). He is described there by a contemporary as an "unsympathetic personality," "Kierkegaard's demonic *doppelgänger*" and "was known for his malicious tongue – and for his insatiable desire for women."

57. Summarized with quotations from Garff, *Søren Kierkegaard: A Biography*, 406. See an image of the young Goldschmidt in photograph 20, located in *Ibid.*, following 519 (and actually 523).

58. A historical sequence of this series of the writings and articles that constitute "The *Corsair* affair," starting in December 1845 and ending in March 1846, is presented as part of the larger chronology found in Hong and Hong, eds. and trans., *The Corsair Affair*, xliii.

59. Five of the caricatures are found in Garff, *Søren Kierkegaard: A Biography*, 521–3. These personal attacks through caricature became the precedent which made Kierkegaard the butt of public mockery and jokes in Copenhagen, with references occurring in writings from many sources years following these events.

60. In more recent times one can recall the impact of the twelve caricatures of the prophet Mohammad produced in a Danish newspaper in September 30, 2005, and the cross-cultural controversy regarding the role of media and religious values that erupted as a result. See discussion related to these and Kierkegaardian themes in Jennifer Elisa Veninga, "The Danish Cartoon Controversy as Viewed by Kierkegaard and Appadurai: The Social Imagination and the Numerical" in Robert L. Perkins, ed., *International Kierkegaard Commentary, Volume 23: The Moment and Late Writings* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 2009), 253–82, see esp. 269 ff.

61. This pseudonym is ironically portraying by its name a monkish person who would be known as “Brother Silence.”

62. All previous quotations come from original sources and the author’s comment quoted in Alastair Hannay, *Kierkegaard: A Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 320–1.

63. Here I am using the sense of “environment” described by Ellul in his book, *What I Believe*, 100–3. What this suggests is that Kierkegaard became aware that social and institutional changes had taken place that were destructive of past forms of life, including the civil traditions of a face-to-face society that now was being replaced by “the crowd” and the opinion makers like Goldschmidt who “taught” the crowd what they should think.

64. Citing from the subtitle of the article by Herold, “Human Flesh Search Engines,” 127.

Chapter 8

Post-Secular Ponderings on Sageliness and Saintliness

Having lived and taught as a faculty member at and in affiliation with Hong Kong Baptist University for three decades, and being one of a very few who had not only academic degrees but also a Master of Divinity from a Baptist seminary in the United States, I also was privileged to serve as a deacon within a mainly Cantonese-speaking Baptist church community that met on our campus throughout many of those years. As I traveled, lectured, and taught elsewhere in China during those years, my interests in a broad range of philosophical and religious groups within China became known to many, those interests becoming a vantage point from which I began to ask many questions about the practical ways various forms of life associated with religious communities and persons was being embodied. These were not only academic interests that I observed in other communities, but also questions that I asked of myself within our family, our church community, our faculty and its various institutions. In taking on these reflective and practical concerns, I was not at all alone, but I focused on some persons who were more open and interested in learning and embodying practices that linked sageliness and saintliness, especially among some contemporary Chinese Christians. There were a few others in different circles as well, including some among contemporary Ruist scholars, but as the discussion in this chapter will reveal, their approaches to these matters were shaped even more profoundly by the post-traditional challenges and modern critiques that they and others before them had endured during the vast majority of the twentieth century. The reflections offered here, therefore, stem from all of those long-term personal and relational concerns I have explored in relation to these various Chinese traditions, and so will be readdressed from a more critical interpretive angle in the conclusion to this chapter.

It is a standard classical claim in Ruist traditions that all men (and sometimes more self-consciously state, all humans, including both men and women) can become sages.¹ In the *Mèngzǐ*, this claim is stated in the following manner: “Everyone can become a Yáo or Shùn” (*rén jī kěyǐ wéi Yáo Shùn* 人皆可以為堯舜).² In a similar fashion, but with very different methodological approaches, the *Xúnzǐ* affirms that even the “person on muddy roads” (*tú zhī rén* 塗之人) can learn the key virtues, so that ultimately they can “attain the wisdom of Yǔ” (*qí kěyǐ wéi Yǔ míng* 其可以為禹明).³ No such similar statement is found among Master Kǒng’s recorded sayings in the Confucian Analects, but it was the desire to attain sagehood that mobilized Sòng Ruist intellectuals to find ways to justify their own approach to this goal by reference to a new methodology based on new interpretations of sayings found in the *Dàxué* and *Zhōngyōng*, that is, *The Great Learning* and *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*.⁴ Though these claims would appear to be straightforward in asserting that sages exist and can be putatively found almost everywhere, there are also accounts in both the *Mèngzǐ* and the *Xúnzǐ* that present various hierarchically ordered rankings of humanely cultivated persons (*jūnzǐ* 君子) and even different kinds of sages (*shèngrén* 聖人) that make those more general claims about “becoming a sage” appear to be more complicated than they initially seem to be.

For example, the status of both humanely cultivated persons and sages is not merely a matter about their moral worthiness,⁵ but has educational, political, and even cosmological significance within various periods of Ruist philosophical traditions. From the angle of conceptual clarification, it would appear to be unproblematic to claim that any *shèngrén* is already a *jūnzǐ*, but it is not clear at all, and is probably not the case, that any *jūnzǐ* is a *shèngrén* in the pre-imperial Ruist traditions.⁶ As a case in point, the Scottish missionary scholar in Hong Kong and later professor of Chinese language and literature at Oxford, James Legge 理雅各 (1815–1897) gave a wide variety of renderings for *jūnzǐ* in his English translations of the Confucian Analects that indicate to some degree the complexity of the interpretive problem. A thorough investigation of his English renderings for the term *jūnzǐ* will confirm that his preferred translation of the term, the one most often found in that text as well, was “the superior man.”⁷ Nevertheless, depending on the context of any particular passage in the Confucian Analects and his readings of commentaries dealing with its apothegmic passages, he also produced a host of other renderings of that same term that indicate sometimes the different range of meanings that are not at all consistent with or equivalent to anything “superior” at all. Some of Legge’s alternative translations that are consonant with the elevated moral status of “the superior man” include “a man of complete virtue,”⁸ “men of superior virtue,”⁹ and possibly also “an accomplished gentleman,”¹⁰ but there are other renderings that are more ambiguous, and

some that are clearly not necessarily superlative in their attainments or status. When Legge refers simply to “virtuous men”/“man of virtue” or “student of virtue,”¹¹ their moral status may seem to be less exalted, especially in the last case. A “virtuous prince”¹² may be a “superior man,” along with those who are described as “a man of real talent and virtue” and “a man of virtue and station,”¹³ but it is highly questionable whether those described as being “in high station,” “in authority,” or “of high rank” have any qualities that would be morally worthy or even exemplary.¹⁴ Once again, “the scholar” or “the accomplished scholar” may manifest superior character,¹⁵ but those who are merely described as being in “a superior situation” or simply as having the status of “superiors” may have no moral qualities to commend them.¹⁶

While some might argue that Legge was being too nit-picky in his attempts to portray such distinctions, there are good reasons from within the Confucian Analects to reconsider his alternative renderings as a fair description of the diversity of persons within pre-Qin society. There is found within that same Ruist scriptures references to “petty Ruists” (*xiǎorén rú* 小人儒) and “noble Ruists” (*jūnzǐ rú* 君子儒),¹⁷ suggesting that these distinctions revealed some varying levels of attainment among those who were seeking to become humanely cultivated, even if the distinction did disappear soon after Master Kǒng’s death.¹⁸ Nevertheless, the more significant conceptual distinctions to be clarified relate to the relationship of those with the status of *jūnzǐ* and those who are given the title of “sage.” This becomes all the more important for philosophers who regularly talk about the *jūnzǐ* as “exemplary persons”¹⁹ but do not clarify whether or not they are thereby also discussing those who are to be recognized also as sages.

QUESTIONING THE NATURE OF THE HIATUS BETWEEN THE IDEAL AND THE ACTUAL

Whether dealing with the distinction between a *jūnzǐ* and a sage is done conceptually or existentially, meaning in the latter case that one seeks to discover who might be considered to be one or the other, I have found that some may be identified as the former, but almost no one who is a contemporary would be confirmed by a clear majority of scholars today to be a sage. That is a strange and truly awkward situation for anyone within contemporary Ruist circles, even though one would want to add that this major tradition has been the target of Marxist attacks especially after 1949 and well into the 1980s, so that such claims are considered “utopian” at best and “deluded” or “arrogantly proud” and “anti-revolutionary” at worst.

One of those who has sought to explain this situation, at least in part, is the recently deceased Shu-hsien Liu 劉述先 (1934–2016), formerly for many

years a professor in the Philosophy Department of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and for about fifteen years also an academician in the Institute of Chinese Literature and Philosophy in Academia Sinica in Taipei. Having done his dissertation on themes related to the philosophy of religion, he was an articulate spokesman for Ruist religiousness, while also being a well-recognized scholar of Zhū Xī's corpus, even though he worked on many other figures and themes as well.²⁰ In 1996, he produced an article for a volume edited by Weiming Tu entitled "Confucian Ideals and the Real World: A Critical Review of Contemporary Neo-Confucian Thought."²¹ Based on reflections he had previously published in a Chinese volume three years earlier, Liu argued in the mid-1990s that "Contemporary Neo-Confucians" or those who were advocating Ruist traditions in the 1980s and 1990s were strong on ideals and weak on realizations. For example, following advocates of democracy and science during the May Fourth Movement, he asked poignantly and with a clear sense of disappointment how many Ruist-inspired democratic leaders existed and how many self-conscious Ruist-oriented scientists were taking their places in academic and commercial institutions. Notably, at that time, he could not name any, suggesting the seriousness of the philosophical problem that revealed the glaring gaps between Ruist ideals and actual situations within Greater China. (More than ten years later, he would challenge the values of contemporary democratic nations and suggest that alternative Ruist forms of governance may be more suitable, especially in East Asia, but this was a controversial political perspective that required more justification than he could give at the time.²²) In the midst of that discussion, Liu presented his own understanding of the nature of sageliness, referring to it in Tillichian terms as an "ultimate concern" that involved an "unending" pursuit of the value of *rén* 仁, which is embodied in humane benevolence that intends and seeks to realize benefaction. Put in other words, first published in 1980 in Chinese and later in 1987 in English, Liu asserted the following claims without any direct reference to either being an "honorable man" (his rendering for *jūnzǐ*)²³ or a sage:

Based on my personal lived-experience, the essence of Confucian learning is none other than man's direct and intimate embodiment of *jen* (humanity) [*rén* 仁] within his mind-heart. By extending this mind-heart of *jen* one can metaphysically realize the inscrutable Way of Heaven [*tiāndào* 天道] in terms of ever-creative production and reproduction of things [*shēngshēng* 生生]. With such a lived experience, one can naturally feel that one has no regret in living his life[,] and one's (Confucian) Way is self-sufficient.²⁴

This claim appears to be one related to the fulfillment of sageliness, something that is explicitly described as being determined not by anyone's natural

endowment according to Master Mèng,²⁵ but among a number of human experiences that are determined by *mìng* 命, which may be taken in this context to refer to “fate” or some uncontrollable limitation, or at a more metaphysically significant level, interpreted to be the Heavenly Mandate (*tiānmìng* 天命). Because that passage involves the norms for a flourishing life in five dimensions within that passage,²⁶ I agree with James Legge that it should be viewed as the results of the Heavenly Mandate and believe also that this is what Shu-hsien Liu intends when he speaks of the “Heavenly Way,” since that is found in this passage as the goal of a sage.²⁷ Notably, it is the process of “production and reproduction” that would make the expression of sageliness an on-going and never-ending expression,²⁸ but this also becomes the point where numerous questions would arise.

In Liu’s portrayal of what I take to be Ruist sageliness as an unending process, or perhaps only fulfilled when dying,²⁹ I found myself in an interpretive quandary. If the pursuit of *rén* is indeed a pursuit that is never-ending, when does a person (assumably a *jūnzǐ* of some sort) self-consciously know that they have attained sageliness? Since it is a matter that is not determined only by human nature, does that attainment come along with the self-conscious awareness of fulfilling some destiny, or even the heavenly mandate (*tiānmìng* 天命)? Or does it occur under other conditions? Is it possible to do so while one is still living? Or does death determine the end of the pursuit, and it is in the estimation of others that sageliness is either confirmed or denied? Since the vast majority of twentieth-century and twenty-first-century Ruist scholars would not advocate another level of persistent existence occurring after death (whether in the form of reincarnation or an elevated status that is an eternal or unchanging transformation into a spiritual form of existence), Shu-hsien Liu’s position leads to a kind of practical skepticism with regard to the attainment of sageliness in any form.³⁰ All this being so, nevertheless, Shu-hsien Liu’s critical reflections are arrestingly honest, suggesting both the possibility of sageliness and a quandary in how it may be realized.

Others’ New Contemporary Ruist claims about how Ruist sageliness can be obtained are less satisfying. For example, Weiming Tu at times appears to be more responsive to various kinds of critical reflections, especially from other religious traditions, but at other times, he remains resistant to those critical questions that challenge how one should understand the attainment of sageliness. Very early on, he had characterized sageliness in terms of being exemplary in the obtaining and maintenance of “personal knowledge,” suggesting a wide range of human epistemological states.³¹ Nevertheless, in his resistant phase, Tu makes claims that seek to highlight what appears to be a humanistic perfectionism, as extreme in its claims for any human as would be expected from the most optimistic of philosophical anthropologies. In the end, argues Tsung-I Hwang, the resistant Tu’s account of human perfectionism leads to a

repressed form of self that is harmful to those who adopt such a worldview, a repression that has been cited in many kinds of Chinese sociological and psychological literature and has very negative impacts on the lives of some post-traditional Chinese persons and their families.³²

In order to overcome either the skeptical or the perfectionist account of Ruist sageliness as presented in Shu-hsien Liu's and Weiming Tu's presentations, I want to take another interpretive route that will involve several steps. First of all, I will illustrate how there are different strata of *jūnzǐ* found in pre-imperial Ruist texts, revealing how the conceptions of a humanely cultivated person (*jūnzǐ*) and a sage may be more carefully defined and delimited. Second, I intend to present an alternative account of sagehood as found in the Confucian Analects and contrast it with other later Ruist traditions, so that an alternative account of sageliness can be critically reconsidered. Having done this work, I will then explore in a similarly critical fashion the nature of Christian saintliness, which in Chinese uses the same phrase as the term for "sage" (*shèngrén* 聖人). With this interpretive work completed, I will then finalize the discussion of this chapter with reflections on how a comparison and even a possible symbiosis between sageliness and saintliness might be conceived.

RANKING HUMANELY CULTIVATED PERSONS (JŪNZǏ) AND SAGES (SHÈNGRÉN)

Generally speaking, within the major pre-imperial Ruist texts—the Confucian Analects, the *Mèngzǐ*, and the *Xúnzǐ*—there is a consistent pattern where *jūnzǐ* are spoken and written about more often than *shèngrén*.³³ More precisely, the paucity of references to the term "sagely" (*shèng*) and "a sage" or "sages" (*shèngrén*) in the Analects (only five instances) is complicated further by the fact that Master Kǒng more than once demurs in speaking about himself as having reached such a high attainment.³⁴ In one recorded case within the Analects, the disciple Zígōng 子貢 refers to him as "nearly a sage" (*jiǎng shèng* 將聖), leading to another comment by Master Kǒng that demurs from even this claim.³⁵ All of these above examples suggest that when Shu-hsien Liu describes the process of becoming a sage as an unending affair, there is much to be considered in his relatively more skeptical account of sageliness.

Moving on toward the conceptual distinctions I will explore here, there are interestingly at least two passages within the Confucian Analects where an implicit difference is posited between *jūnzǐ* and *shèngrén*. In the first passage, Master Kǒng underscores that he would not see a sage in his own lifetime, but if he saw "a man of real talent and virtue" (*jūnzǐ*), he would be satisfied.³⁶ This suggests that a *jūnzǐ* may appear more frequently in normal life than a

sage. Also, in the second passage that many scholars would see as representing Ruist teachings after the death of Master Kǒng,³⁷ it is claimed that among the “three awes” (*sān wēi* 三畏) maintained by a *jūnzǐ*, one would be to stand in awe of “the words of sages.”³⁸ Here again the underlying assumption is that the moral worth and historic character of sages is higher and more influential than that of most *jūnzǐ*.

When these matters regarding becoming a sage are followed in the *Mèngzǐ* and the *Xúnzǐ*—forming a classical watershed in approaches because they reflect very basic differences in whole person cultivation, levels of rationalization and justification, as well as historical influences³⁹—there is also found that both of the authors of those works reveal that they do perceive and confirm a hierarchy of varying kinds of humanely cultivated persons called *jūnzǐ* and recognize some interesting differences among those recognized as sages.⁴⁰ In that process of listing hierarchies, there are qualitative definitions of the various stages presented that also help in deciphering to some degree the relationship between *jūnzǐ* and *shèngrén*. In the *Mèngzǐ*, there are extended passages where qualitative distinctions between various past *jūnzǐ* and sages,⁴¹ as well as contemporary scholars (including Master Mèng himself)⁴² are discussed in some detail, but the passage I want to focus on here is one delimiting six levels of Ruist attainment. This hierarchy of six levels of Ruist attainment emerges in the context of an answer to a question given to Master Mèng to evaluate the character of another person. There he states that the most basic quality is that of a person of goodwill (*shàn* 善),⁴³ next there is a trustworthy one (*xìn* 信), and then one who is admirable (*měi* 美),⁴⁴ subsequently one who is considered to be great (*dà* 大), leading to one who is sagely (*shèng* 聖) but ending with one who is so marvelous (*shén* 神)⁴⁵ that others find the person to be inscrutable.⁴⁶ These list of qualities are apparently intended to build upon each other, a factor made explicit in the descriptions within this passage of the last three qualities: one who is great has added brilliance to the realizations of the admirable person; the sage transforms those persons and things that have been attracted to her/his greatness; and the marvelous person is sagely but inscrutable (*bù kě zhī* 不可知) to others, though it is not clarified whom those “others” might be. Though there can be sageliness that surpasses common knowledge, and may even fit into realms that would be qualified as spiritual in character, what becomes clear from this listing is that there are four stages before sageliness that do not belong to that higher category. Though the term *jūnzǐ* does not appear in this passage, I believe it is justified to claim here that there are varying degrees of humane worthiness attained by *jūnzǐ* that are not yet at the stage of sageliness. Whether a sage is also considered to be a *jūnzǐ* of an elevated sort is not addressed here or suggested by any other related discussions, but there would seem to be this logical possibility.

In the *Xúnzǐ*, there are four stages of growth that appear to be based on Master Xún's rationalistic standard of human excellence. They appear in the 9th chapter of his work, *Rúxiào* 儒效, and are ranked in stages from the elementary learner to the sagely knower: the learner (*xuézhě* 學者), the scholar (*shì* 士), the humanely cultivated person (*jūnzǐ*), and the sage.⁴⁷ There seems to be no good reason to assume that these rankings were shared between Master Mèng and Master Xún, since they are not based on the same standards of differentiation, but it is interesting to at least note some of the interrelationships and differences in these rankings. In this ranking articulated by Master Xún, there appears to be a clear conceptual distinction between a humanely cultivated person and a sage, based upon his presumed attainment of rational powers and their embodiment. His is an epistemological ranking, where Master Mèng's takes on moral and cultural enrichment as the standard of delimiting each stage of his own hierarchy. Within the rankings presented by Master Xún, there are two stages identified before the achievement of a *jūnzǐ*, yet it is unclear whether Master Mèng would not consider a scholar to be a *jūnzǐ* of some sort. Comparatively assessing those two lists, it might be possible to rank goodwilled and trustworthy persons as "learners," and at least the admirable person as equivalent to a "scholar." If so, then a *jūnzǐ* would at least need to be considered great by his contemporaries; others, in spite of any skills or notable qualities they possessed, may not yet be considered truly cultivated, exemplary, or honorable persons of that more elevated sort. If this kind of analysis bears scrutiny from other angles within Ruist traditions, then, the sage would be of another qualitatively different person and would have transcended the stage of the *jūnzǐ*, standing at the pinnacle of Ruist society.

Such a hierarchical vision of cultured and rationalized achievements is nothing less than elitist at its heart, and so sets out in full array the problem of explaining what it exactly means that "everyone can become a sage." At minimum, it must only assert that such a personal transformation of any person is possible, but it cannot assure its realization, or claim that it is a necessary result of any person's natural growth. The standards used by both Masters Mèng and Xún have little to do with physical growth, but much to do with cultural engagement and an increase in understanding, something that most often would not be the result of a self-generated search for sageliness. If humanely cultivated persons are honed for leadership in a community, then a sage is distinctive in exemplifying their own culture's most eminent qualities in concern for others, insight into others' ways, and courage to realize what must be done rightly and justly for others.⁴⁸ With this understanding, then, it would seem that the classical Ruist position regarding sageliness is that it would be possible for anyone, but only a few actually reach that attainment. There are more humanely cultivated persons that are on the way toward sageliness, but they are also among the elite and the minority of persons

in any community. In addition, there should be no simple juxtaposition of humanely cultivated persons and sages; they possess different qualities of life and wisdom and should not be simply or imprecisely overlapped in their basic conceptualization.

[RE]MAKING SAGELINESS: MASTER KǒNG THE SAGE AND WAYS OF SEEKING SAGELINESS

While it is the case that in the *Mèngzǐ* it reiterates the fact that Master Kǒng demurred from allowing himself or anyone else to proclaim him to be a sage, as already mentioned above,⁴⁹ but that demurring occurs precisely after the disciple Zǐgōng declares that because Master Kǒng is both profoundly caring (*rén* 仁) and wise (*zhì* 智), he is in fact a sage. Master Mèng goes on to elevate the stakes in this matter, referring to Master Kǒng as the most flourishing and consummate (*shèng* 盛) of all the sages,⁵⁰ and metaphorically as a “complete concert” (*jídàchéng* 集大成) of all the sagely virtues.⁵¹ In this vein, then, there would seem to be nothing to obstruct Master Mèng from declaring that “the sage is the teacher of a hundred generations.”⁵² Something of a more preternatural transformative influence is being indicated by this declaration and was augmented further by Master Xún when he declares that a sage (and even a *jūnzǐ*) “forms a three-in-one power with Heaven and Earth” (*yǔ tiāndì cān* 与天地参). Very significantly, this was a phrase that is also used once in the later text that became a major part of *The Four Books*, the *Zhōngyōng* or *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*,⁵³ but it appears in the *Xúnzǐ* at least three times.⁵⁴ Even though the worldview presented in the *Xúnzǐ* is largely naturalistic, this aggrandizement of sages (and in the *Xúnzǐ* also of the *jūnzǐ*) tends toward an idealization that was beyond any mundane human strength. There manifestly appears to be an elevation of sageliness in these two third-century BCE Ruist texts that projects images about sageliness that are idealized, tending even toward a Euhemerization or deification, and so would also be ultimately unrealizable.

These kinds of images were intensified in the philosophical system of Zhū Xī nearly 1,500 years later, especially in the remarkable claims about sageliness found in his “appended chapter” to the New Text *Dàxué*, the fifth chapter of the commentarial section.⁵⁵ Though they reflected some Buddhist conception of enlightenment, there was here a strong rationalist underpinning to the experience of sageliness that mirrors not a little of Master Xun’s vision of sageliness:

This is why the initial teaching of the greater learning must be to cause the person learning to approach all the things in the world and, on the basis of the

principles which he already knows, to increase his thorough investigation of them in order to seek to reach this limit. If he exerts his strength on this over a long time, he will suddenly come to understand how things are and will have a thoroughgoing comprehension of them. Then, for the multitude of things, what is manifest or hidden, what is fine or coarse, will in all cases be reached, and his mind in its whole substance and great workings will be entirely illuminated.⁵⁶

It is notable here that Zhū Xī does not use what could be seen as “process metaphysics” in this account of reaching sagehood.⁵⁷ Once one exerts one’s strength in thoroughly investigating the principled patterns in things (*qiǒng lǐ* 窮理), the understanding comes “suddenly” and in a “thoroughgoing comprehension” of everything. One’s own heart-mind (“mind”) is “entirely illuminated”; it does not occur in a piecemeal way, or through a processual revelation, but in a moment and comprehensively. Yet, this is where the portrayal of sageliness becomes so elevated that it is nothing other than a form of human perfectionism.⁵⁸

All these examples of the elevated accounts of sageliness in the *Mèngzǐ*, the *Xúnzǐ*, and Zhū Xī’s appended chapter to the New Text version of *The Great Learning*, obviously, underscore the nature of the problematic hiatus between the ideal and the real that Shu-hsien Liu struggled with. Here, however, there is also another insight into Liu’s dilemma: he relies on Ruist teachings that come only from texts and figures associated with the pre-imperial classical, the Sòng and Míng (generally speaking, the tenth through twelfth and fourteenth through sixteenth-centuries CE) and contemporary periods,⁵⁹ and so he binds himself to a particular account of orthodox Ruism that does not include the critical rejection of Sòng-Míng Ruism justified through critical textual analysis and further conceptual challenges of their claims, a dimension of Ruist developments that became a major sub-tradition within Qīng Ruist scholarship (from the middle of the seventeenth century to 1911). Here a new insight can be gained about how I will choose to proceed in addressing these heightened images of sageliness, and then considering the possibility of linking it also with a critically received account of saintliness.

A MODERN CRITICALLY ASSESSED CONCEPTION OF RUIST SAGELINESS AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

It is well-known in the history of Chinese philosophical traditions that there have been sayings “put into the mouth of Master Kǒng” by early Daoists and by later Ruist writers in *The Record of Rites* (*Lǐjì* 禮記) that are often in stark contrast with the recorded sayings considered to be authentic accounts of Master Kǒng’s teachings in the Confucian Analects.⁶⁰ In these cases,

I believe a hermeneutics of suspicion is justified, and textual criticisms should be applied in order to verify and justify what would be considered reliable accounts of the teachings and claims of the historical person, Master Kǒng.

With regard to the conceptual ambiguities within pre-imperial Ruist texts related to the nature of *jūnzǐ* and *shèngrén*, I prefer to distinguish them by means of the logical relationships that inhere between them. That is to say, a sage must be a humanely cultivated person, but it is possible to be a humanely cultivated person and not be a sage. What seems central to the character of any sage is that they have a transformative impact on those people, things, and institutions around them, so that this marks them off in a category that is distinct from other levels of cultivation. With regard to the elevation of Ruist accounts of sageliness into an idealized state that contrasts sharply with claims made in the Confucian Analects, I believe there can be a justified way to reassert a conception of sageliness that is both this-worldly and more realizable, but only if a critical historical textual hermeneutic is applied to the various canonical and ancient Ruist texts already cited above. The statements that elevate Master Kǒng to be a sage, and in addition proclaim heightened accounts of sageliness within the *Mèngzǐ*, the *Xúnzǐ*, and the *Zhōngyōng* as already documented above, should be critically rejected as not representative of the conception of sageliness presented in the teachings of Master Kǒng himself within the Confucian Analects. In this manner, too, Zhū Xī's claims about sagehood must be deemed bound up in a human perfectionism that makes the projects of becoming a sage all but impossible to realize. It adds to the weight of criticisms laid against the elevation of Master Kǒng during the Hàn dynasty that the early Féng Yǒulán took to be nothing less than an "apotheosis."⁶¹ To return to a more livable form of wisdom that is truly sagely, genuinely transformative, but not aggrandized into an idealized and unattainable state of sageliness, is true to teachings in the Confucian Analects and those critical of the Sòng and Míng Ruist traditions published during the Qīng dynasty. Those later Ruist critiques take the lead in returning to a more livable account of sageliness, one that is still based upon, but also transcending, a hierarchy of *jūnzǐ* attainments, but one that would not require any sage therefore to be so unusual as to be superhuman or preternatural.

COMPARING CRITICALLY RECEIVED TRADITIONS ABOUT SAGELINESS AND SAINTLINESS

If the critically assessed conception of sageliness and its concomitant relationship to humanely cultivated persons (*jūnzǐ*) can be received as a justified and warranted alternative to the mainline orthodox traditions shaped particularly by Zhū Xī, then a new approach to comparing Ruist sageliness

and Christian saintliness could be initiated. Nevertheless, even with that possibility being confirmed, there are some important confusions that would need to be addressed at the outset, in order to free such a comparison from being moored either to accounts that assert absolute differences, or to those that might equate any Ruist sage automatically or naturally with attaining Christian sainthood.

One major issue that causes confusion is that in modern Roman Catholic renderings in European languages of the term *shèngrén* or “sage” as found within Ruist scriptures, especially in Latin or French,⁶² but also as in the German renderings of Ruist canonical texts by the former Lutheran missionary in the northeastern city of Qīngdǎo 青島, Richard Wilhelm 衛[尉]禮賢 (1873–1930),⁶³ use explicit Christian terminology, translating that term regularly as if it is the equivalent to “saint” or “saints.” Here there can be a number of confusions that appear simultaneously, because the New Testament term in Chinese for *ho hagnios* (ὁ ἅγιος, “the holy one”) and for *hoi hagioi* (οἱ ἅγιοι, “the holy ones” or “saints”), is precisely this term for “sage” (though another rendering is *shèngtú* 聖徒, a preferred translation in this case). Nevertheless, in the biblical text, there is a clear distinction between the singular term used with a definite pronoun, “the holy one” and its use in the plural as a substantive with a definite pronoun: the former is used exclusively for Deity, and the singular adjectival use of the term (“being dedicated or consecrated to the service of God”) is used with a definite pronoun to describe the “Holy Spirit” and “the Holy servant/son” who is Christ. In the New Testament use, only the substantive plural with the definite pronoun as seen above is used for “the saints.”⁶⁴ This distinction between the Deity and saints is maintained biblically in a manner that is not found within Ruist scriptures,⁶⁵ but I will use the singular “saint” and “saintliness” here below to refer to the basic concept that is found only in the plural biblically, but has a long history in a number of Christian cultural traditions of another sort to be described a little later.

What is of interest can be drawn out from responses to this putatively cultural affirmation in the foreign translations above that has in fact often lead to an interpretive quandary in cross-cultural conceptual conflicts about the relationship between sageliness and saintliness. It is a complicated conceptual problem that provokes some reactions that have been largely negatively, especially among secularized Ruist scholars, and somewhat more positive (even though confusing) for Ruist sympathizers among Chinese Christian thinkers. Here below I want to offer a way toward suggesting how a variety of such cross-cultural symbioses, or even syntheses, might be achieved in this specific realm, but only after further conceptual clarifications have been pursued. This is done in part to offer my own post-secular response to whether or not sages can exist and do exist.

A biblically oriented Protestant understanding of the Chinese terms, *shèngrén* and *shèngtú*, focuses on the inner life of a person for the starting points that lead to a form of whole person cultivation called “sanctification” in Protestant theological terminology. In that Protestant cultural setting, the *shèngtú* may in fact be only a learner and not yet anything close to a *jūnzǐ*, though they might reach the point where they could attain humanely cultivated character; in contrast, a *shèngrén* should manifest qualities of spiritual life that would minimally place them among those of goodwill and trustworthiness and could grow into authentic representatives of their communities and traditions. Anchored in a salvific relationship with the Lord of creation and redemption, a mature Protestant saint may not be a sage at all, but may develop gifts that lead to sageliness. She or he is rooted to the world around them, seeking to bring the holiness, discipline, compassion, and joy they experience within to those around them. Put in the words of the epistle to the Ephesians, they are to “learn the Christ” (*emathete ton Christon* ἐμάθετε τὸν Χριστόν) based on the truth in Jesus (lit. “truth in the Jesus” *alētheia en tōi Iesou* ἀλήθεια ἐν τῷ Ἰησοῦ)⁶⁶ and so are transformed into new selves (lit. “the new man” *ton kainon anthrōpon* τὸν καινὸν ἄνθρωπον) in “righteousness and true holiness” reflecting the creative transformative work of God in their lives.⁶⁷ This leads to a host of personal, relational, and civic virtues and duties they are to embody, as they seek within the Christian community to “be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ has forgiven you all.”⁶⁸ In most of these Protestant expressions of saintliness, there is also an expectation that a post-death transformation will take place. According to those traditions, then, the earthbound saint will receive a new resurrected body, completing the realization of God’s grace within each life and enriching that person’s glorification with a “joy that is in God, and in one another in God.” That is to say, they will experience this not only at a personal level, but also in a corporate context of relationships with “the God” and with a multi-aged and polyethnic glorified church community.⁶⁹

Generally speaking, in the post-biblical developments of different Christian cultural traditions, the traditionally oriented Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, and Oriental Christian set of understandings of the term “saint” normally involved a process of not only having seen a living Christian adherent within their communities stand out as exemplary in some particular spiritual manner, but also to have confirmed this through suffering and possibly martyrdom, leading in some cases to a further process of assessing whether that person through their special consecrated relationship with the divine had actually achieved an exalted status of a “heavenly saint.” In this context, and especially with regard to the Roman Catholic traditions, there are a series of steps taken before a formerly-known pious Christian can posthumously be “beatified,” and then subsequently canonized as a truly “heavenly saint.”

Their own post-death expectations may include those visions of eternal life that Augustine had described so vividly, but only for these “higher saints” who have already achieved such blessings; others may first pass through a period of purgatorial refinement before being granted those privileges. Because of these special developments with the term “saint” in these Christian traditions, they often deviate from the biblical distinctions mentioned earlier, and so lay Christians are subsequently taught to pray to heavenly saints, pin “holy cards” of these saints on their children’s clothing for protection, and wear bracelets with images of these saints as prayer reminders. All this is done so that they can seek blessings from those heavenly saints for various needs, as if they have powers to act on behalf of the requestor before the Deity.

Precisely because of these differences among Christian communities with relationship to the nature of saints and the process of a person being recognized posthumously as a saint, it is important to underscore specific conceptual differences related to sainthood even among Chinese Christians. For example, a typical Chinese evangelical Protestant would be quite ready to call herself or himself a “saint” on the basis of biblical principles and would be encouraged to do so from the pulpit where they attend worship. On the other hand, once again generally speaking, a seriously pious Chinese Catholic, Orthodox, or Oriental Christian lay person would quickly demur from ever making the assertion that one or more of them are “saints,” because first of all they are thinking of “heavenly saints” and not living Christians, and secondly they are not authorized to say this of themselves. Ultimately, since they are still living in this world, such a self-proclamation would most likely be considered an act of hubris (i.e., unjustified pride) and so constitute the commission of a major sin against God, themselves, and others. Consequently, if there was no communication between representatives of these different branches of Christianity about their own distinctive understandings of saintliness, there could be many misunderstandings that would take place if references were made to “the saints” in the context of religious worship.

From my own perspective, drawing upon both my experiences of Chinese philosophical circles and various kinds of Chinese religious communities for more than three decades, and also seeking to work out in various ways my own expression of a Ruified form of Protestant Christianity within the Chinese contexts where I have lived,⁷⁰ I would want to affirm that I take a more qualified sense of “humble sageliness” to be a realistic goal within both Ruist and Christian circles. In this regard, my own philosophical anthropology rests upon a confirmed awareness that repentance of one’s brokenness in life and subsequent transformations offered graciously by God in Christ’s Spirit are wise and real dimensions of living well.⁷¹

This suggests to me that in the current post-secular context of contemporary China, it would be still possible to be an intransigent secularist in many

Chinese philosophical circles, but it is even more important to recognize that there are many open and sympathetic secularists that live and work as philosophers in China. So I assume that one could also still find many secularist Chinese Ruists who would have no interests at all in linking sageliness to saintliness; among these would be some of the “lost souls” that John Makeham has identified with a particular discursive trend within “Confucianism” in academic settings, though I am personalizing what he takes to be a discursive feature of academic discussions in Chinese and not primarily of Chinese persons themselves.⁷² Also, there are admittedly many Chinese Christians of both Protestant and Roman Catholic traditions in Greater China (as well as Chinese Buddhists, Daoists, and Muslims) who have either no interest in, or have never been self-conscious of any indebtedness they have, to any kind of Ruist traditions. Nevertheless, there are spiritually-minded Ruist scholars in contemporary universities and within broader society in China and elsewhere, as well as cultivated and wise Christian intellectuals and scholars in universities and within broader society in China and elsewhere. What I would like to explore are the possibilities of a variety of syntheses between what I have sought to clarify above as a particular critically-assessed account of sageliness and a biblically-based concept of saintliness, and subsequently to indicate the degree of realization that I sense would be involved in those syntheses in contemporary cultural settings. Having done this work of clarification and exploration, I will point to a few examples of what these various syntheses might look like within the scholarly lives and works found among contemporary Chinese philosophical settings.

FOUR POSSIBILITIES OF SYNTHESIZING SAGELINESS AND SAINTLINESS

Literature on sageliness goes far beyond Ruist traditions,⁷³ and that on saintliness goes far beyond Christian realms,⁷⁴ but here I will focus on these two major traditions and the critically assessed conceptions of sageliness and saintliness previously worked out in this chapter in order to consider four possible syntheses between and within these two major and multiform traditions. Consequently, this discussion will not include the cultural canonization processes found in the posthumous honoring of Ruist sages or Christian heavenly saints from Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Oriental Christian traditions.⁷⁵ On the basis of what has been explained and evaluated previously, I do assert that living Ruist humanely cultivated persons (*jūnzi*) and sages can exist and do exist, and that Christian saints in the mundane world also can exist and do exist. Yet what I will focus on in what follows are various possibly synthesis from these two cultural traditions that include both sageliness and saintliness.

So, what I intend to discuss here in the following paragraphs are four possible sage-and-saint syntheses on the basis of the critically-assessed and delimited definitions of these terms presented earlier in this chapter. Here I also want to explore how they might be synthesized, and to what extent they might appear in contemporary cultural settings. Examples that are mentioned within each discussion are not intended to be comprehensive, and cannot be so, due to my own very great limitations in both cross-cultural experiences and the multifaceted dimensions of relevant historical research. Nevertheless, I will at least offer some examples that I take to be exemplary, for the sake of furthering the discussion in each case. The four syntheses I propose to discuss are the following: a synthesis of specific Ruist sages / *jūnzǐ* and a more general sense of saintliness; a synthesis of specific Christian saints and a more general sense of sageliness; a synthesis within particular persons who embody Ruist sageliness and Christian saintliness; and finally a synthesis within particular persons who embody Ruist saintliness and Christian sageliness.

With what kind of saintliness could a Ruist sage or humanely cultivated person be transformatively harmonized? If a conception of a saint or literally “a holy one” in the biblical traditions includes anyone who is consecrated to the service of the Deity, Ruist monotheists such as Master Kǒng, Master Mèng, Zhāng Júzhèng 張居正 (1525–1582), Xú Guāngqǐ 徐光啟 (1562–1633), Luó Zhòngfān 羅仲藩 (active c. 1850), and Káng Yǒuwéi 康有為 (1858–1927) might be conceived as having achieved such a synthesis. Notice, this is not employing a Protestant Christian form of saintliness as the standard for Ruist saintliness, but a more general standard of “holiness” that even in early Christian times was also applied to other cultures and religions within the Mediterranean world of the first century CE. Even as writers in the New Testament described ancient Jewish prophets and Jewish believers as “saints,” though they were not at all Christians, so too those in ancient China who understood their lives as serving the Heavenly Mandate could be also considered to be saintly in a particular Ruist manner. This is precisely why I have mentioned Master Kǒng and Master Mèng among them. If any of these persons were also considered to be authentic sages, then it would be assumed at the minimum that their transformative influence on their contemporaries was demonstrable, and that in addition to that distinctive cultural impact, they would also be considered to be great persons by those same persons (following the criteria of greatness and sageliness as defined in the *Mèngzǐ*). Therefore, on the basis of this broader definition of saintliness, I confirm that it is not only possible that there could be Ruist sages / *jūnzǐ* who are saintly in previous centuries, but that such a possibility is feasible in contemporary cultural settings as well. Whether there have been many of such persons in past centuries, I have little means to assess, but I suspect that they may have formed only a relatively small sub-tradition within Ruist schools of their own day. That there could be even more of such persons in

the post-secular settings of our contemporary age—not only in China but also in Korea, Japan, and Vietnam in particular, where Ruist traditions have had relatively long influences, but also possibly in other cultures where Ruist traditions have had a more recent impact—is something also that I would believe to be possible.

Can there be a synthesis of Christian saintliness and a general sense of sageliness or humane cultivation? Here on the basis of both my own experiences and my understanding of these matters drawn out of studies of biblical wisdom literature, I can respond with a strong affirmation. Many Christian saints are still in the learning and maturing stages of life, and so they could not be considered suitable to be named within this synthetic category. Nevertheless, among my encounters with various kinds of Christian leaders, educators, writers, publishers, philanthropists, cultural exemplars, social service specialists, missionary-scholars, and theologians, I have met quite a few among these persons who would qualify as those who have synthesized saintly and humanely cultivated virtues in some very remarkable and admirable ways. How many of these, however, would be counted as sagely Christian saints would have to be determined by the two previous criteria already mentioned—that they are recognized as being great among their contemporaries, and that their lives, teachings, and writings have had a transformative impact at least on their own contemporaries, if not even more generations of learners. From my own limited resources and experiences, I am able to identify those who would be considered such synthetic sagely Christian saints from ages past and into the twentieth century, including Augustine of Hippo (354–430), Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), Martin Luther (1483–1546), Phillip Melancthon (1497–1560), Blaise Pascal (1623–1662), Søren Kierkegaard (1813–1855), Solomon Caesar Malan (1812–1894), James Legge (1815–1897), Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906–1945), C. S. Lewis (1898–1963), Lam Si-chai 林思齊 (1923–2010), and Desmond Tutu (1931–). It would take me more time and space that I would have available to illustrate why I would nominate such persons for this elevated synthetic achievement, but there are also more persons that I myself would also want to affirm besides these, including a number of modern Christian women that would include at least Florence Nightingale (1820–1910), Mildred Cable 蓋群英 (1878–1952), Amy Charmichael (1867–1951), Isobel Kuhn (1901–1957), and Edith Schaeffer (1914–2013). As in all previous cases, the sagely are a rare breed, and so sagely Christian saints are not as common as humanely cultivated Christian saints. Nevertheless, I once more am able to confirm that such a synthesis of Christian saintliness and sagely or humanely cultivated lifestyles is possible, and actually realized by a good number of persons. I believe, in fact, that there may well be many more that I have never had the chance to meet, or read their writings (because they are in languages I cannot comprehend), or hear about their achievements. So, in

these realms, I leave readers the opportunity to add suitable persons to this and any other of these lists found in these discussions.

The third synthesis is more narrowly defined, combining symbiotically the lifestyle of a Ruist sage or cultivated person and a Christian saint. Such a person would rely self-consciously on Ruist teachings that characterize their thoughts and actions, while also affirming their consecration to the service of the Christian Deity. In most cases, I would assume that these persons—wherever they grew up, whether in China, Korea, Japan, or elsewhere—were educated by means of studies of several key Ruist classics, and then subsequently adopted Christian commitments that added to those Ruist cultural and humane virtues. Among the earliest of the Chinese Roman Catholic followers was the Míng Ruist, Xú Guāngqǐ (1562–1633), mentioned already in the first category of synthesis, but here is a paradigmatic figure, a truly exemplary person who synthesized sagely Ruist and Christian saintly dimensions of life into his own personal expression. Scholars of Chinese, Korean, and Japanese Christian history would be able to add a number of other persons who were as transformative or nearly as influential as Xú, and so I must defer to their judgments in these matters. Whether in the twenty-first century such persons can emerge appears to me to be a more difficult task, even though possible. It involves a number of complicated cross-cultural conflicts, in addition at times to political and ideological hindrances that would make such a synthesis impossible for most normal Ruist scholars of our day.

Could there, finally, be a possibility of finding a synthesis of Ruist saintliness and Christian sageliness or cultivated humaneness? How would one even conceive of such a synthesis? One way it might be portrayed is in a life where one is convinced of being consecrated to the Heavenly Mandate and fulfills that mandate through Christian institutions based upon creative and wise principles. Another way would be to create a lifestyle in which Ruist traditions that include reverence of Heaven, honoring ancestors, seeking wisdom, and courageously caring for the needy would be harmonized with Christian philosophical studies and devotion to loving one's neighbor as oneself that strengthen those resolves. This is indeed a truly rare breed of synthesized cultural attainment, but I believe I have encountered a few persons I would count as having worked out a synthesis approaching this goal, if not actually reaching it. In a volume produced in Chinese by Thomé Leung In-sing and Jeremiah Chu Chai-sei in 2012,⁷⁶ there is mention of three Chinese Protestant philosophers who do serve as humanely cultivated Christian intellectuals, and so may also be considered possible candidates for this synthesis of Ruist saintliness and Christian sageliness. Intriguingly, the these three persons have done so in very different ways, explained at some length in chapters devoted to their lives and works in the volume mentioned above. Besides Leung, In-sing himself as a creative writer and cross-cultural philosopher,⁷⁷ there is

also Lo Ping-cheung (Luó Bǐngxiáng 羅秉祥) who is both a Chinese ethicist and theological ethicist with two earned doctorates in both realms,⁷⁸ as well as Milton Wan Wai-yiu (Wēn Wěiyào 溫偉耀) who earned doctorates in Christian theology at Oxford University and then in Sòng Ruist philosophical studies at the Chinese University of Hong Kong.⁷⁹ All three are mature contemporary Chinese Christian intellectuals who have taken extensive effort to study Chinese Ruist traditions and adapt them critically to their Evangelical Protestant lifestyles and worldviews. Liberal Protestant intellectuals who may also fit into this special synthesis of Ruist saintliness and Christian sageliness could be the prolific theologian and philosopher, Robert C. Neville,⁸⁰ and the process theologian and Zhū Xī specialist, John Berthrong.⁸¹ Among Roman Catholics there are some very notable figures as well, about whom I have written at length elsewhere,⁸² the avid Zhū Xī scholar and New Scholastic philosopher, Archbishop Stanislas Lo Kuang 羅光 (1911–2004),⁸³ and the Sòng-Míng Ruist historian and Catholic scholar, Julia Ching 秦家懿 (1934–2001).⁸⁴ There are others who can be mentioned, but they are among a rare group of unusually gifted persons. So, once again, I confirm the possibility of this synthesis and would believe that those who prove worthy of being named in this category are the fewest among the four categories of synthetic sageliness and saintliness that have been discussed above.

PONDEROUS PONDERINGS? SOME BRIEF CONCLUDING SUMMARIES AND REFLECTIONS

To draw this discussion to a conclusion, let me assert again that I hold there is the possibility of attaining sageliness, even though it is a rare achievement, while humanely cultivated persons would be relatively more numerous. Having reconfirmed this conviction on the basis of the previous arguments and examples, I still must underscore that in my own inquiries and studies of these kinds of persons, they are rarely found among contemporary Ruist scholars or among the majority of Chinese Christians. I am sure that this has occurred because of the impacts of modern secularist worldviews upon Chinese communities across the breadth of the twentieth century, so that those who have taken up these forms of life that come from the more traditional teachings of classical Ruist scriptures and biblical texts have necessarily also adopted a self-conscious post-secular awareness of how they have chosen to live.

So far in my experience, I have not found many who would claim that one or another person would qualify as a contemporary Ruist sage, though I occasionally am told that such and such a person is a “true *jūnzǐ*.” Comparatively speaking, from my own very limited cross-cultural experiences, I so far have

found that there are a good number of candidates for sageliness within various Chinese and foreign Christian circles, but those I know are mostly philosophers. Those who adopt a self-consciously Ruified form of Christianity are not many, but they do exist, so that expressions of a saintly sageliness can be found among Chinese Christians, especially in leadership positions. I do believe also that a saintly Ruist exemplary person could be possible, but I do not find many among my contemporaries who would refer to others of their Ruist friends and colleagues as having attained such a synthesis.

My own approach to these matters—and with the four syntheses that I suggest could be possible within cultural pasts and also in our contemporary age—is based on careful studies of pre-imperial Ruist texts and studies of relevant biblical passages in their original languages. My motivations have been intensified due to living for about three decades within Hong Kong and other places in China. Nevertheless, this approach to readdressing the nature of the *jūnzǐ* and the sage and their interrelationship along lines of a hierarchy of realizations have convinced me that they are not only possible, but they are also relatively rare achievements. As a consequence, the classical sayings that circulate around a basic principle that “all humans can become sages” is a claim that I understand as only dealing with the basic possibility of this transformative achievement, and not something that is normally probable for most people.

Nevertheless, I have taken it upon myself to also explore the possibilities of the four synthetic connections between sageliness and saintliness within Ruist and Christian traditions, because I have found that these matters are sometimes simply avoided, and other times viewed as being inherently contradictory. On the basis of my own determinations of the meanings of these terms in varying contexts, and from my exposure to a variety of persons during my philosophical career for the past thirty years, I have argued that each of those four synthetic lifestyles are not only possible, but also have contemporary candidates that may well exemplify them. For many readers, I can imagine that a good number of the persons and works mentioned in these discussions have never before been heard of or seen, and so I sincerely hope that these post-secular ponderings will stimulate further reading and studies in these important, but also unusual, areas.

NOTES

1. The issue of whether women can become sages has been discussed occasionally, but one of the most recent articles I have found on that matter, and one that also underscores the patriarchal assumptions of mainline Ruist traditions regarding this issue, is Sungmoon Kim's article, “The Way to Become a Female Sage: Im

Yunjidang's Confucian Feminism," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 75(3) (July 2014): 395–416. I will not elaborate the problems and questions involved in this question, but they are certainly relevant to the basic issue being addressed in this chapter. My intention is to affirm that both male and female adults can experience and achieve what is described and justified here, though this will not be all adults in actuality, as will be explained later in this chapter.

2. Quoting from the *Mèngzǐ* 6B: 2. My translation.

3. As stated in the chapter on "Nature is Bad" (*xìng è* 性惡), the *Xúnzǐ* ch. 23, para.18, obtained from ctext.org/xunzi (accessed January 21, 2019).

4. Those claims have been described in part, as well as the philosophical controversies that arose because of them, in the chapter 4 of this volume.

5. This is the primary concern addressed in Julia Markovits's article, "Saints, Heroes, Sages, and Villains," *Philosophical Studies* 158(2) (March 2012): 289–311, one made without any reference to Ruist traditions within her discussion.

6. There are, nevertheless, some claims made in sections of the *Xúnzǐ* that appear to assert that a *jūnzǐ* is also (necessarily?) a sage, based on *Xúnzǐ*'s own rationalistic assumptions related to human nature and the impact of the teachings of worthy teachers (*xiánshī* 賢師), a matter that will be reconsidered later in this chapter.

7. According to ctext.org/analects (accessed January 15, 2019) there are 88 passages with the Confucian Analects that contain the term *jūnzǐ*, sometimes having it occur multiple times in the same passage, so that there are nearly 110 times that the term appears in the whole of that Ruist canonical work.

8. See Analects 1: 1 and 14 in Legge's translation.

9. Found in Legge's translations of the Analects 3: 24, and 5: 3.

10. Consult Legge's rendering of the Analects 11: 1.

11. Found in Legge's renderings for the Analects 5: 3, 6: 18, and 3: 7 respectively.

12. Consult the Analects 18: 10, Legge's translation.

13. As cited in Legge's rendering of the Analects 7: 26 and 16: 6 respectively.

14. Other renderings offered by Legge in the Analects 8: 2 and 3; 17: 4; and 20: 2.

15. As presented in the Analects 1: 8 and 2: 12 respectively, Legge's renderings.

16. Cited from Legge's renderings in the Analects 17: 23 and 12: 19, respectively.

17. As found in an exhortation by Master Kōng to Zìxià子夏, recorded in the Analects 6: 13.

18. Consult one or more of the following four worthwhile studies to get a sense of these discussions: Gāo Péihuá 高培華, "'Jūnzǐrú' yǔ 'Xiǎorénrú' Xīnquán" 〈'君子儒' 與 '小人儒' 新詮〉 [A New Interpretation of [the Distinction between] 'A Gentlemanly Ruist' and 'A Petty Ruist'], *Hénán Dàxué Xuébào (Shèhuìkēxué Bǎn)* 《河南大學學報(社會科學版)》 [Journal of Hénán University (Social Sciences Edition)], 52(4), (July 2012): 33–9; Shào Lóngbǎo 邵龍寶, "Rú dé Yuánqǐ yǔ Zhēnyì —— 'Xiǎorénrú' rú hé yuèshēng wéi 'Jūnzǐrú'" 〈儒的源起與真意 —— '小人儒' 如何躍升為 '君子儒'〉 [The Origins and True Meaning of [being a] Ruist: How can 'A Petty Ruist' Ascend Quickly to Become 'A Gentlemanly Ruist'?], *Jìnyáng Xuékān* 《晉陽學刊》 [Academic Journal of Jìnyáng], (2012) no. 2: 51–4; Mǎ Yínqín 馬銀琴, "Zìxià dé Sīxiǎng Tèzhēng jí qí Jīaxué Yuānyuán" 〈子夏的思想特徵及其家學淵源〉 [The Characteristics of Zìxià's Thought and the [Intergenerational] Sources of

his Family's Learning], *Wénxué Pínglùn* 《文學評論》 [Literary Criticism], (2016) no. 1: 182–92; and Sūn Jūnhēng 孫君恆, “Xiánqín ‘Xiǎorénrú’ Shěnsī” 〈先秦‘小人儒’審視〉 [Closely Examining the Pre-Qin [Conception] of ‘The Petty Ruist’], *Wūhàn Kējì Dàxué Xuébào (Shèhuìkēxué Bǎn)* 《武漢科技大學學報(社會科學版)》 [Wūhàn Technical University (Social Sciences Edition)], 19(5) (October 2017): 558–64.

19. Such as Weiming Tu in his works related to his interpretation of *The Zhōngyōng*, but also his explicit effort at analyzing the character of sages. Consult his article, “The Confucian Sage: Exemplar of Personal Knowledge,” in John Stratton Hawley, ed., *Saints and Virtues* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 73–86, and *Centrality and Commonality: An Essay of Confucian Religiousness* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989).

20. Already in the early 1980s Liú had published a major Chinese work on Zhū Xī that became a standard in the field. See Liú Shùxiān 劉述先, *Zhūzǐ Zhéxué Sīxiǎng dé Fāzhǎn yǔ Wánchéng* 《朱子哲學思想的發展與完成》 [The Development and Completion of Master Zhū's Philosophical Thought] (Taipei: Taiwan Student Bookstore, 1982). Later while serving in the Academia Sinica, he also wrote about Zhū's status in the history of Chinese philosophical traditions, as found in “Zhūzǐ zài Sòng Míng Rúxué dé dìwèi Chóngtàn” 〈朱子在宋明儒學的地位重探〉 [A Re-examination of the Status of Master Zhū within Sòng and Míng Ruist Learning]. *Táiwān Dōngyà Wénmíng Yánjiù Xuékān* 《臺灣東亞文明研究學刊》 [Bulletin of Taiwanese East Asian Studies] 5(2) (2008): 1–11.

21. Consult Shu-hsien Liu, “Confucian Ideals and the Real World: A Critical Review of Contemporary Neo-Confucian Thought,” in Weiming Tu, ed., *Confucian Traditions in East Asian Modernity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), 92–111.

22. I am referring to his article published in 2007 in the *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, entitled “Democratic Ideal and Practice: A Critical Reflection.” More recently others have pursued this line of thought in greater detail, including Cho-Wai Chan, *Confucian Perfectionism: A Political Philosophy for Modern Times* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014).

23. As found in Liu, “Democratic Ideal and Practice,” 270.

24. This English rendering of this section of Liu's earlier Chinese publication was produced by Charles Wei-hsun Fu (1933–1996) in Liu, “Democratic Ideal and Practice,” 257. Where there are parenthetical () remarks, these occur in the original text, but those that are bracketed [] are added by this author for the sake of clarification of the claims of this passage.

25. As found in the *Mèngzǐ* 7B: 24, Legge's translation in *The Chinese Classics*, vol. 2, p. 489.

26. Using Legge's rendering here, the five dimensions are “the exercise of love [*rén* 仁] between father and son, the observance of righteousness between sovereign and minister, the rules of ceremony between guest and host, the display of knowledge [*zhì* 智] in recognizing the talented [*xián* 賢], and the fulfilling the heavenly course [*tiāndào* 天道] by the sage.” Notably, this is the only time that the phrase “Way of Heaven” or “heavenly course” is mentioned in the whole of the *Mèngzǐ*.

Cited from Legge, trans. and comm., *The Chinese Classics*, vol. 2, (*The Mencius* 7B: 24), 489.

27. It intrigues me to find that Liu emphasizes the internal subjective experience of the sage “within the mind-heart” in this saying, since this tends to read along lines of Wáng Yángmíng’s account of the approach to sageliness, and not that of Zhū Xī. Since Liu knew Zhū Xī’s corpus very well, this is worthy of further exploration within his own writings, but I will not pursue that task here.

28. The phrase *shēngshēng* 生生 appears only once in the first Appendix to *The Book of Changes*, the first section of the Xīcí Commentary 繫辭上, but is adopted here by Liu (and other contemporary Ruists) as a form of life that is always creative, a way that Chung-ying Cheng in particular characterizes this phrase, linking it also to the process metaphysics of Alfred North Whitehead. See Chung-ying Cheng, “Categories of Creativity in Whitehead and NeoConfucianism,” *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 6(3) (September 1979), 251–74, and “Ultimate Origin, Ultimate Reality, and the Human Condition: Leibniz, Whitehead and Zhu Xi,” *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 29(1) (March 2002), 93–118.

29. The passage referring to “no regrets” comes from the Analects 4: 8, in Legge’s translation, “If a man in the morning hear the right way, he may die in the evening without regret.” Legge, trans. and comm., *The Chinese Classics*, vol. 1, 168.

30. It would be important to note in this context that the Sòng Ruist, Zhū Xī, did believe that the *qi* of recently deceased (or even some more remotely deceased) ancestors could be called back into a spiritual cohesiveness for a temporary period if a person reverencing them was authentically reverent and sincere. This post-humous form of existence, however, was only a temporary state, and not realized in a normal physical form, but in some spiritually transformed expression of the vital energy or *qi* that would dissipate once the ritual conditions that called the ancestral spirit into existence have been completed. He describes this in the third chapter of his *Categorized Sayings* (Zhūzǐ Yǔlèi 《朱子語類》), as elaborated in Daniel K. Gardner, “Ghosts and Spirits in the Sung Neo-Confucian World: Chu Hsi on *keui-shen*,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 115(4) (October 1, 1995), 598–611.

31. As articulated in Tu, “The Confucian Sage.”

32. Find this depiction of Weiming Tu’s arguments and the characterization of the “resistant Tu” in Tsung-I Hwang, “Liberating the Repressed Form of Self in Post-Traditional Ru-Influenced Chinese: A Theoretical Study of the Responses of Tu Weiming and Jürgen Moltmann.” PhD dissertation, Oxford, England: Oxford Centre for Mission Studies and Middlesex University, 2018.

33. In the Confucian Analects, the term sagely/sage only appears five times in five separate passages throughout its twenty chapters, while the term *jūnzǐ* occurs 106 times in 88 passages. In the *Mèngzǐ*, that was initially written about 150 years after Master Kǒng’s death, the occurrences of sagely/sage are 48 times in 18 passages, while those including the term *jūnzǐ* occurs 81 times in 54 passages. Similarly, there are 94 passages that include references to the sagely/sage in the *Xúnzǐ*, a text probably written more than 200 years after the death of Master Kǒng, but there are 150 passages where the term *jūnzǐ* is found. Here there is seen an ever-increasing number of

instances in both cases across the centuries, but also a consistent majority of instances are found using *jūnzǐ* in all these three texts.

34. As seen in the Analects 7: 34 and 9: 6.

35. In reference to the Analects 4: 9 (Legge, trans. and comm., *The Chinese Classics*, vol. 1, 218). In Legge's rendering, Zǐgōng response that Master Kǒng "is about a sage. And moreover, his ability is various (*duō néng* 多能)." It is the latter claim that Master Kǒng denies as necessary even for a *jūnzǐ* (in Legge's rendering here, "superior man"): "Must the superior man have such variety of ability? He does not need variety of ability."

36. Quoting from Legge's rendering of the Analects 7:25 (found as 7:26 in some versions of that work), as seen in *The Chinese Classics*, vol. 1, 203.

37. That judgment is based upon a difference in the reference term for Master Kǒng. Within the first fifteen chapters of the Analects, the introductory phrase when Master Kǒng speaks is *zǐ yuē* 子曰, but in the last five chapters, one finds instead the alternative initial phrase, *Kǒngzǐ yuē* 孔子曰. From a vantage point of textual criticism, dealing with the nature and rhetoric of these texts, specialists in the Confucian Analects sense that this reveals a shift from the recording of spoken words to the recording of remembered sayings after Master Kǒng had passed away.

38. See the Analects 16: 8.

39. Some of those basic differences between the approaches of these two authors is presented in Lauren F. Pfister, "Classical Debates about the Moral Character of Human Nature in Ancient China," in Jörg Hardy and George Rudebusch, eds., *Ancient Ethics* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht Unipress, 2014), 19–31.

40. While the *Mèngzǐ* was ultimately included in Zhū Xī's twelfth-century creation and compilation of *The Four Books*, his rationalistic arguments and general orientation reflect not a little influence from the rationalism and argumentation of the *Xúnzǐ*. This matter of influence has been addressed in an insightful article by John Bertroug entitled simply "Xunzi and Zhu Xi," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 40(3/4) (September/December 2013), 400–16.

41. Consult, for example, the *Mèngzǐ* 4B: 29 (involving three figures), 5A: 7 (involving four named ancient sagely rulers), and 5B: 1 (describing four sages by name and character); found in Legge, trans. and comm., *The Chinese Classics*, vol. 2, 335–6, 364 (para. 7), 371–2 (para. 5–7), respectively.

42. The most extensive passage is the *Mèngzǐ* 2A: 2, organized into 28 paragraphs by Legge, and makes mention of twenty worthy persons other than Master Mèng in the process of the discussions. Notably, in the midst of this long and complicated discussion, Master Mèng underscores the fact that "Master Kǒng would not allow himself to be regarded as a sage" (*Kǒngzǐ bù jū* 孔子不居). The whole passage is presented by Legge in *The Chinese Classics*, vol. 2, 185–96, and the quotation is on *Ibid.*, 196.

43. Applying the third major meaning of this term found in Kroll, ed., *A Student's Dictionary of Classical and Medieval Chinese* (subsequently *SDCMC*), 400.

44. Following one of the adverbial denotations of this term as cited in Kroll, ed., *SDCMC*, 299.

45. Using one of the terms found in the third major area of denotations for the term in Kroll, ed., *SDCMC*, 407.

46. Referring to the *Mèngzǐ* 7B: 25, found in Legge, trans. and comm., *The Chinese Classics*, vol. 2, 490. Readers will note that my renderings of these qualitative descriptions differ from Legge's in a number of ways, some following Kroll's et al. (as in the preceding three endnotes) in their suggestions.

47. Cited from the *Xúnzǐ* 9: 11, following the divisions of the text found in ctext.org.

48. In this depiction of sageliness, I am seeking to reword and interpret the phrase in the *Mèngzǐ* (4A: 2) that sages are the "perfect realizations" of human relations (*rén-lùn zhī zhì* 人倫之至), and that these excellences are expressed in humane virtue, wise and confident living, and courageous pursuit of what is right and just (according to the *Analects* 14: 30, Legge's version being found in *The Chinese Classics*, vol. 1, 286).

49. Seen in the *Mèngzǐ* 2A: 2 (para. 19), according to Legge's text, *The Chinese Classics*, vol. 2, 193.

50. Once again, from the *Mèngzǐ* 2A: 2 (but this time para. 28), according to Legge's text, *The Chinese Classics*, vol. 2, 196, where he renders the term as "complete."

51. Citing this metaphor from the *Mèngzǐ* 5B: 2 (para. 6), according to Legge's text, *The Chinese Classics*, vol. 2, 372.

52. Quoting from the *Mèngzǐ* 7B: 15, according to Legge's text, *The Chinese Classics*, vol. 2, 484. Significantly, Master Mèng uses this to describe two other ancient sages, Bóyì 伯夷 and Huì 惠 of Liǔxià 柳下 (lit. "beneath the willows"), and does not mention Master Kǒng in this context, presumably because he had died only fifteen generations earlier.

53. Found in the New Text of the *Zhōngyōng* created by Zhū Xī, Ch. 22, where it states that the *zhìchéng zhě* (the "perfectly authentic person") would "form a ternion" with "Heaven and Earth" (*yǔ tiāndì cān* 与天地参). Legge, trans. and comm., *The Chinese Classics*, vol. 1, 416.

54. By means of the *Xúnzǐ* text available in ctext.org, I have identified the phrase in ch. 3, para. 5; ch. 8, para. 24; and ch. 9, para. 18. It is in the last of these passages that Master Xún proclaims straightforwardly, "The humanely cultivated person forms a three-in-one power with Heaven and Earth" (*jūnzǐ zhě tiāndì cān yě* 君子者天地参也). This asserts a conceptual overlap between humanely cultivated persons and the sage that he appears in other places to deny, as mentioned previously in his four stages of growth toward sageliness.

55. See the controversy over this passage and philosophical alternatives created because of it described and elaborated in chapter 4 of this volume.

56. Quoting from parts of that infamous fifth chapter of the commentarial sections of the New Text *Dàxué*, or *The Great Learning*, as presented in Johnston and Wang, *Daxue and Zhongyong: Bilingual Edition*, 151. The whole passage is found in the early part of chapter 4 in this volume.

57. I take this to be particularly significant in the light of the influences of Process Philosophy in the interpretation of a "classical Chinese" worldview presented by Ames and Hall in their translation and interpretation of *The Zhōngyōng*, as discussed and evaluated in chapter 5 of this volume. Clearly Zhū Xī also claimed that he was

offering a new rendering of the *dàotǒng* 道統, the standard way of reading the classical Chinese texts, and yet he did not present its vision of reality as something like a process philosophical worldview. Nevertheless, the impact of his re-interpretation of those pre-Qín texts was profoundly influential, and made important counter-claims to what Ames and Hall have presented in their American secularist account of that classical Ruist text.

58. It may be claimed that such an elevated, perfectionist and elitist conception of sageliness could have its counterpoint in the Heart-Mind Centered Learning tradition (*Xīnxué* 心學), particularly as it was promoted by Wáng Yangmíng 王陽明 (1472–1529) in the Míng dynasty. Undoubtedly, the impact of Wáng’s more populist form of becoming a sage had an immense impact as an alternative stream in Ruist traditions, but even in spite of his popularity and the more general application of his teachings, it did not overcome the intellectual impact of Zhū Xī’s claims. This being so, I will leave an elaboration of Wáng’s and other later Ruist scholars’ accounts of becoming a sage for another time and place.

59. He claims (in Liu, “Democratic Ideal and Practice,” 259), “I subscribe to the view of three epochs of Confucian philosophy—Pre-Ch’in [Xián Qín], Sung-Míng [Sòng Míng] and Contemporary . . .” What this means and involves is a reconceptualization of Ruist philosophical traditions, so that those who are Ruists but are not in these eras are either not important or not considered “true Ruists” on the basis of some particular standard. If Liu means that these periods are those dominated by Ruist philosophical thinking, this also would be a problematic claim. Nevertheless, assuming that it is a matter of the importance of those included within the history of Ruist philosophical traditions, this would seemingly arbitrarily exclude those Ruists found in the Hàn dynasty, Táng dynasty, and Qīng dynasty. In addition, though this is not his explicit intention when he makes this claim, it suggests that Ruists and their writings in these three epochs all have a shared worldview or set of values, which is not the case in at least the earliest and contemporary periods, and probably could be argued to also be untrue for the period named Sòng-Míng.

60. Examples of how such sayings are employed in the *Zhuāngzǐ* within the Inner Chapters, where Master Kǒng (many times presented sarcastically by his familiar name, Zhòngní 仲尼) is made to utter claims supportive of a Daoist worldview and values, are illustrated in Lauren F. Pfister, “Dislodging Mundane Wisdom: The Inner Chapters of the *Zhuangzi* and the New Testament Gospels,” in Karyn Lai, Rick Benitez and Hyun Jin Kim, eds., *Cultivating a Good Life in Early Chinese and Ancient Greek Philosophy: Perspectives and Reverberations* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019), 162–3. Similarly, examples of how sayings are attributed to Master Kǒng in *The Record of the Rites* that are inconsistent or contrary to recorded statements in the Confucian Analects are illustrated in Lauren F. Pfister, “Ruist Traditions of Revenge and Alternative Resources for Ruist-Inspired Reconciliation,” in Annika Frieberg and C. K. Martin Chung, eds., *Reconciling with the Past: Resources and Obstacles in a Global Perspective* (London: Routledge, 2017), 74–7.

61. In a section of his first history of Chinese philosophical traditions, Féng documented how Hàn Ruists had made Master Kǒng into “a divine being” (see “The

Position of Confucius in Chinese History,” Fung, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, vol. 1, 46). Later in 1948, Féng went farther to characterize “Confucius’ Spiritual Development” (Fung, *Short History*, 241–2), but rejected the subsequent “apotheosis” of Master Kǒng during the Hàn dynasty (when he claimed, “Confucianism could properly be called a religion,” *Ibid.*, 243). Instead, Feng argued that Master Kǒng was not “a living god among men,” but could be regarded as “the Teacher” (*Ibid.*, *loc. cit.*). These claims, it should be noted, are far more affirmative than what was later written in the first volume of the *New Edition of the History of Chinese Philosophy* published in 1982, one where the image of “Hillock Kong” is determined by Marxist critiques of his class consciousness as a supporter of the slave-owning class (see Féng, *New Edition*, vol. 1, 124–72 and the account offered in Chapter 1 of this volume of this changed interpretation).

62. And so here referring to the seventeenth-century French Jesuit translation project in *Confucius Philosophus Sinarum* (1687), the independent eighteenth-century renderings produced by François Noël, the rigorous Latin translations published along with their Chinese standard texts by Angelo Zottoli in 1879–1882 in which this rendering was consistently used for that key Ruist term. In that light, then, it is worth noting that Séraphin Couvreur corrected this tradition of translation and used the equivalent of “sage” in his modern French and modern church Latin versions of *The Four Books (Les quatre livres)* first published in 1895.

63. Seen especially in his famous rendering of the *I Ging (Yijing)* in 1924.

64. These details have been drawn from the article on “hagios, ia, on” (in Greek script under the letter alpha) found in Frederick William Danker, rev. and ed., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 3rd ed., 10–11. When the term is used as a “pure substantive,” that is, as an adjective preceded by a definite article and forming a noun in that manner, it can refer to “sacrificial meat,” “the sanctuary,” God and Christ in the singular, and in the plural, angels and “believers, loyal followers, saints,” so that it describes “Christians as consecrated to God.”

65. In order to emphasize the uniqueness of the divine presence in comparison to humans who may be transformed and so become consecrated to the service of God, early Christian literature developed technical terms to describe the character and activity of the Deity: *panagios* (“being at the acme of holiness on a scale of extent, [lit.] all-holy”), *panaretos* (being at the acme of excellence on a scale of extent, most excellent”), *pantepoptēs* (“one who sees all, one who is [lit.] all-seeing”), *pantokratōr* (“Almighty, [lit.] All-Powerful, Omnipotent (One)”), and *pantoktistēs* (“creator of the universe,” lit. All-creator). See these items described in detail in Danker, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 753–5 *in passim*.

66. Among the most enlightening accounts of how the Messianic prophecies ultimately became identified with the person of Jesus of Nazareth is presented by the nineteenth-century Jewish Christian scholar, Alfred Edersheim, in his series of lectures published under the title, *Prophecy and History in Relation to the Messiah: The Barburton Lectures for 1880–1884* (New York: Anson D. F. Randolph and Co. and London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1885), esp. lectures 4–5 and 9–12.

67. Quoting from selected phrases found in Ephesians 4: 20–4 *in passim*.

68. Summarizing claims found in a series of exhortations located in Ephesians 4: 25–32, the quoted passage coming from verse 32. The rendering generally follows the New Revised Standard Version, but with some changes made by this author.

69. The longer phrase put in quotation marks comes from a famous saying defining the nature of “eternal peace,” and is found twice in the nineteenth book of Augustine’s *City of God against the Pagans*. One of those places is within the thirteenth chapter. Ironically, though Augustine is often regarded as a Roman Catholic “church father” of the highest order, his impact through Martin Luther has also endeared a number of his works to Protestant thinkers as well, including myself. Consult the appropriate passages in Augustine, *The City of God against the Pagans*, trans. R. W. Dyson (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

70. When I use the phrase “Ruified Christian” (*Rùjiàohuà dé Jīdūtú* 儒教化的基督徒), there are a number of questions that immediately arise from Chinese persons who hear me speak in this way. Most of the time they are wondering what I mean, since most likely they have never before heard this phrase used in modern Chinese. Over the years I have learned that it helps to remind them that in the early Christian centuries many of the church fathers adopted various kinds of philosophical and religious traditions to enhance and enrich their Christian form of life, sometime using Platonic themes and concepts, other times those from Stoics, and in the high Middle Ages, relying much on Aristotle’s writings. In the same way, I have selectively employed some Ruist teachings and practices to buttress my own expression of Protestant Christianity within Chinese settings, and also point out that many of the key terms found in Chinese translations of the Bible include a wide range of Ruist ethical and cultural terms. In this way they begin to understand my own self-conscious effort in seeking to live out my life in this particular manner. Notably, my beloved wife, Mirasy, once asked me if she also “needed” to become a Ruified Christian, and I responded that since this was not part of her training (since she also is not trained in Chinese language and has not studied Ruist traditions as I have done), I did not see it as a requirement in her life, even though I am her husband and she has heard me and seen me live out these things. We have learned to share many of the same activities and expressions of our Christian walk on the basis of different articulations of our faith, something that I see as a strength and not as a weakness.

71. This could be done within a secular context without any religious underpinnings, as in the case of Féng Yǒulán discussed in chapter 1 of this volume, or within religious contexts that include also Chinese Christians.

72. For those interested, consult John Makeham, *Lost Soul: “Confucianism” in Contemporary Chinese Academic Discourse* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008). As can be discerned from my own account here, I do not take Makeham’s analysis to be the final word in this realm, though it reveals the many-sided problems that make identifying contemporary Ruist sages particularly problematic. He would probably say that such a search is completely fruitless.

73. Including Christian, Daoist, Hindu, and Muslim sages. A broader study that develops various conceptions in Ruist, Daoist, and Chinese medical traditions, for example, is Cháng Dàqūn 常大群, “Zhōngguó Chuántǒng Wénhuà dé Shèngrénguān”

中國傳統文化的聖人觀 [Views of Sages in Chinese Traditional Cultures], *Qilū Xuékān* 齊魯學刊 [Qilū Academic Journal] (2007), no. 197, 37–40

74. Such as found in the coverage of Kieckhefer and Bond, *Sainthood*, and Hawley, *Saints and Virtues*. See also Robert Ullman and Judyth Reichenberg Ullman, *Mystics, Masters, Saints and Sages: Stories of Enlightenment* (Berkeley: Conari Press, 2001) and Ian Richard Netton, *The Cult of Saints among Muslim and Jews in Medieval Syria* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

75. One Taiwanese scholar, Chin-shing Huang, has presented his own ideas in Chinese about this particular set of cultural processes of the canonization of Ruist sages and primarily Roman Catholic saints. Consult Huang Chin-shing 黃進興, “‘Shèngxián’ yǔ ‘Shèngtú’: Rújiào cóng Sizhì yǔ Jīdūjiào fēng Shèngzhì dé Bǐjiào” “聖賢”與“聖徒”: 儒教從祀制與基督教封聖制的比較 [Sages and Saints: A Comparison of the Ancestral Reverence Institution in Ruist Teachings and the Canonization of Saints in Christian Traditions], *Zhōngyāng Yánjiūyuàn Lìshǐ Yǔyán Yánjiū Jíkān* 中央研究院歷史語言研究所集刊 [Bulletin of the Institute of History and Philology of the Academia Sinica] (September 1, 2000) 71(3), 509–64; and his book, *Shèngxián yǔ Shèngtú* 《聖賢與聖徒》(Taipei臺北: Yǔnchén Wénhuà 允晨文化 Limited Corporation, 2001, with another version published in Běijīng北京: Běijīng Dàxué 北京大學 Press, 2005. Notably, the two volumes mentioned here only deal with these phenomena within Chinese Ruist traditions, and do not include any reference to Christian traditions, where the former article does both.

76. Consult Thomas Leung In-sing (梁燕城 Liáng Yānchéng), and Jeremiah Chu Chai-sei (徐濟時 Xú Jìshí). *Zhōngguó Wénhuà Chūjīng dé Shénxué Fǎnsī: Zhōnghuá Fúyīn Shénxué Rénwù Yánjiū* 中國文化處境的神學反思 – 中華福音神學人物研究 [Theological Reflections in the Context of Chinese Culture – Studies of Chinese Evangelical Theological Scholars] (Burnaby: Culture Regeneration Research Society 文化更新研究中心, 2012).

77. See representative writings in Leung In-sing 梁燕城 (Liáng Yānchéng), *Huìjìng Shényóu: Mǎnyóu Dōng Xī Zhéxué Zhū Jìngjiè* 慧境神遊: 曼遊東西哲學諸境界 [A Spiritual Journey in Horizons of Wisdom: A Long Meandering Through Various Horizons of Eastern and Western Philosophies] (Taipei臺北: Universal Light Press 宇宙光出版社, 1982), and *Zhōngguó Zhéxué dé Chónggòu* 中國哲學的重構 [A Reframing of Chinese Philosophy] (Taipei臺北: Universal Light Whole Person Concern Organization 宇宙光全人關懷機構, 2004).

78. For some notable academic publications in these realms, consult Ping-cheung Lo, “Zhu Xi and Sexual Ethics,” *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 20(4) (December 1993): 465–77; “Matteo Ricci’s Account that Human Nature is Good: A Debate between “Heavenly Learning” (Roman Catholic Studies in China), Han Learning, and Song Learning” 利瑪竇性善論: 天學與漢學宋學之辯, *Universitas (Philosophy and Culture)* 哲学与文化 37.11 (November 2010): 41–66; and “The Religious Meaning within Zhu Xi’s *Family Rituals* and the Rites Controversy” 朱熹“家禮”之宗教意涵與禮儀之爭. In Luo Bingxiang 羅秉祥, ed., *Christian–Ruist Dialogue: Where are the Problems?* 耶儒對談: 問題在哪裡? Vol. 2, 589–616. Guilin桂林: Guangxi Normal University Press 廣西師範大學, 2010.

79. One notable work indicates the level of engagement that Milton Wan has had with contemporary Chinese philosophers over major areas of philosophical discussion touching also on Christian themes. See Milton Wan Wai-yiu 溫偉耀, “Lùn Jīdūjiào yǔ Zhōngguó Xìnyáng zhōng dé Chāoyuē Tīyàn” 論基督教與中國信仰中的超越體驗 [On Transcendent Experiences within Christianity and Chinese Faiths], in Lo Lung-kong 盧龍光, ed., 基督教與中國文化的相遇 [Encounters between Christianity and Chinese Culture] (Hong Kong 香港: The Chung Chi College of the Chinese University of Hong Kong 香港中文大學崇基學院, 2001), 107–220. Many other major contributions are mentioned in the chapter devoted to his life and works in the volume by Thomas Leung In-sing and Jeremiah Chu Chai-sae.

80. Author of over twenty volumes in English, some of his most notable and important works related to the philosophy of culture and Chinese philosophy include Robert C. Neville, *Normative Cultures* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), being one of three volumes in his philosophy of culture, and *The Good is One, Its Manifestations Many: Confucian Essays on Metaphysics, Morals, Rituals, Institutions and Genders* (Albany: State University of New York, 2016).

81. Among his representative works are John Bethrong, “Master Chu’s Self-Realization: the Role of Ch’eng,” *Philosophy East and West* 43 (1993), 1: 39–64; *All Under Heaven: Transforming Paradigms in Confucian-Christian Dialogue* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994); *Concerning Creativity: A Comparison of Chu Hsi, Whitehead, and Neville* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998); “Inventing Zhu Xi: Process of Principle,” *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 32(2) (June 2005): 257–79; “To Catch a Thief: Zhu Xi (1130–1200) and the Hermeneutic Art,” *Journal of Chinese Philosophy Annual Supplement* (2006): 145–59; and “Xunzi and Zhu Xi”.

82. Consult Pfister, “Zhu Xi and Christianity,” in Kai-Chiu Ng and Yong Huang, eds, *Dao Companion to the Philosophy of Zhu Xi* (Dordrecht: Springer Verlag, 2020), 681–737.

83. Having earned three doctorates in Catholic studies (philosophy, theology, and canon law), Lo was not only a bishop and later archbishop in Taiwan, but became the president of Fu Jen University, holding that position for more than ten years. His complete works fill nearly seventy volumes. Here are some of his representative works: Lo Kuang (Luó Guāng) 羅光 *Rúxué Xìngshàngxué* 《儒學形上學》 [Metaphysics of Ruist Learning] (Taipei 臺北: Chinese Culture Publishing Committee 中華文化出版事業委員會, 1958); *Zhū Xī dé Xìngshàng Jiégòu Lùn* 《朱熹的形上結構論》 [On the Metaphysical Structure of Zhu Xi] (Honolulu: n.p., 1982); *Rújiā Zhéxué dé Tǐxì* 《儒家哲學的體系》 [The System of Ruist Philosophy] (Taipei 臺北: Taiwan Student Bookstore 臺灣學生書局, 1983); *Rújiā Shēngmìng Zhéxué* 《儒家生命哲學》 [Ruist Life Philosophy] (Taipei 臺北: Taiwan Student Bookstore 臺灣學生書局, 1995); *Luó Guāng Quánshū* 《羅光全書》 [Complete Works of Lo Kuang] (Taipei 臺北: Taiwan Student Bookstore 臺灣學生書局, 1996); *Xìngshàng Shēngmìng Zhéxué* 《形上生命哲學》 [Metaphysical Life Philosophy] (Taipei 臺北: Taiwan Student Bookstore 臺灣學生書局, 2001).

84. Among her representative works consult Julia Ching, *To Acquire Wisdom: The Way of Wang Yangming* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976); *Confucianism and Christianity: A Comparative Study* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1978); with Chaoying Fang, trans. and eds., *The Records of Ming Scholars by Huang Tsung-hsi* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987); and *The Religious Thought of Chu Hsi* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

Conclusion

Unconcluding Post-Secular Reflections on Contemporary Studies of Chinese Philosophical Traditions

As I have approached the end of writing out all the chapters for this volume, there was simultaneously an oxymoronic sense of intellectual enrichment, spiritual fulfillment, and existential humility as I have thought about how much more needs and could be done in this realm of exploring post-secular perspectives within Chinese philosophical traditions. The intellectual enrichment has been experienced as I struggled to choose the appropriate topics from a larger group of issues that have animated my research and writing during that same period. The spiritual fulfillment comes because this volume in English sets out a series of studies that represents to some degree the sense of a heavenly mandate that has moved me over the course of three decades as an engaged post-secular Protestant intellectual within the context of Hong Kong and Greater China. That sense of divine guidance has been increased over the past three years when, along with the most recent restrictions of the “pandemic” that brought about the canceling and rescheduling of many things, I have not only had the time to complete and refine this volume, but also was reading and studying works new to me. Some have provoked within me a deep sense of pathos—with the reading of a number biographies about Eric Liddell (1902–1945) and discovering the one book he wrote that dealt systematically and insightfully with what he referred to as Christian “disciplines”—and another that moved me with joy and commitment in comparative philosophical and comparative religious ventures—through the most recent, systematic, and scholarly volume published by the academician from the World Religions Institute of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Shí Héngtán 石衡潭, comparing the Confucian Analects and the Bible.¹ There has also been an existential humility that speaks loudly within my inward person, an experience of the “inner word” that Hans-Georg Gadamer

so elegantly identified and elaborated, a voice within my own heart-mind that points to those tasks and issues that have as yet remained untouched by me, and in some cases, also by others.² I take Gadamer to be a self-conscious engaged post-secular intellectual within his German context, even though he did not use the terminology that Habermas and others employed to describe their situation. Also, it suggests to me the connection with the meaning of the Guān 觀 hexagram in the *Yijing* 易經 or *The Book of Changes*, an insight regarding observation and receptivity elaborated by my Chinese philosophy teacher, Chung-ying Cheng, who also has served as an engaged post-secular intellectual in both American and Chinese cultural settings, as well as internationally.³ In this awareness, I have noticed that my own trajectory of post-secular insights have taken not only different themes than those addressed in the 2012 volume written mostly by sociological colleagues, *The Post-Secular in Question*, but I have also grounded those themes in the lives and works of many Chinese philosophers and intellectuals that are not mentioned, and may well not even be known, by those who contributed to that important volume.⁴ More reflection on those differences will be pursued later below.

POST-SECULAR RECONSIDERATIONS OF CHINESE PHILOSOPHICAL TEACHINGS AND TRADITIONS IN THE PRC

As mentioned in the Methodological Introduction to this volume, I only became aware several years afterward of the other work published in the same year as my own reflections on post-secularity. I have been affirmed by seeing how, in ways that are perhaps somewhat ironic, the four categories that I discerned at that time not only provide insights into contemporary studies of Chinese philosophical traditions, but also a better sociological account of those matters among twenty-first-century Chinese philosophical writers and institutions than are suggested in most chapters within that volume.

Therefore, at this point as I conclude, it is worth reconsidering the parallel claims related to “the American academy” in the chapter written by Schmalzhauer and Mahoney in that volume.⁵ There the two authors described how American faculty members responded to post-secular phenomena in American society as well as in their own academic studies with either “indifference, anxiety or engagement.”⁶ I take this to be a simplistic description of the actual phenomena, not only in the American academy, but particularly in relationship to those who are involved in the study of Chinese philosophical traditions. Within universities in the PRC in particular, there is more than “indifference” in the responses of resistant post-secular secularists; some are outright angry and dismissive, while others become combative, even while

they admit the post-secular phenomena exist (in some form or other). While “anxiety” may be part of the responses of strategic or engaged post-secular intellectuals and philosophers, that emotional description in their account does not anticipate the strategic ways some of these nonreligious philosophers seek to reengage a search for new kinds of spirituality, or even become involved with specific religious communities while refusing to adopt commitments that would identify them as adherents. Here there are a number of subtle and important differences in both thought and action that the term “anxiety” simply cannot encompass.⁷ Finally, the term “engagement” does not indicate in any precise manner the various ways that American faculty members and professional philosophers in many academic settings outside of the United States actually take up these matters. It should be noted that such engagement in Greater China is realized not only through academic creativity in research and writing, but also at times through being personal observers, whether as religious advocates or as sympathetic but not neutral participants (and sometimes doing all of them simultaneously).⁸ In this volume, I have presented materials that document many of these responses in some detail, both within traditional and post-traditional Chinese societies, sometimes involving professional philosophers, and sometimes also in contexts where those we would not identify as “philosophers” were or are at work. Precisely in this sense, I have received not a little intellectual encouragement and enrichment by taking up these themes and presenting them in this volume.

POST-SECULAR AFFIRMATIONS ABOUT CONTEMPORARY CHINESE ACADEMIC PHILOSOPHY AND ITS CONTEXT

There remains in the post-Máo era of the secularist regimes that have led the PRC into an age of “reform and opening up”—with the current regime proving to be less open, though perhaps still to some degree in a reforming but more authoritarian mode—an uneasy relationship within current Chinese academic settings between the modern disciplines of philosophy and religious studies. This is reflected not only in the current institutional arrangements found within PRC universities but also in the context of the study of the history of Chinese philosophical traditions.

It is still the case that most activities related to religious studies occur in departments of philosophy, or even within the Marxist studies divisions, of contemporary PRC universities. Where the highest-ranking institutions may have separated them into different departments, most are linked by the Marxist epistemology that not only delimits the nature of modern academic disciplines, but also continues to be influential in the ways books in libraries

and bookstores are categorized. There has been some reform of these general conditions, especially in research institutions that specialize in particular religious traditions, but still many of them are placed within, even if only tangentially, the bailiwick of the philosophical discipline.

Within the intellectual and publishing contexts of contemporary Chinese philosophical traditions, there is a continual flow of interactions and publications that bridge various aspects of the philosophical and religious, because they are recognized to be overlapped not only due to the Marxian critique of the religious in-and-of-itself, but also because of later Marxist, secularist, and naturalist efforts at either rejecting religious themes on the basis of their philosophical principles or simply avoiding any mention of them because of a form of self-censorship that some in those realms prefer to employ. All that being the case, nevertheless, bookstores have been generally still filled with religiously significant materials in numerous areas of study even into 2019 (including religious themes in such varied realms as art, music, architecture, and literature), and a steady flow of monographic studies especially from university and research institute presses have been and continue to be produced. Nevertheless, the perceived or anticipated censoring of certain “foreign” religious monographs has been growing even in this publishing realm during the period from 2019 to 2020. For many North Americans and Europeans who have never been to Greater China and do not read Chinese, these facts would appear to be astounding, mostly because I perceive that they generally parallel in their minds what they hear about “Communist China” with what they have learned about the Soviet Union in the past. Though there were and are some significant connections due to shared Marxist traditions between Russian and Chinese communist regimes, the departure from Stalinist and Soviet forms of authoritarian culture occurred already during Máo Zédōng’s rule in the late 1950s and early 1960s. From a post-secular perspective, there should be an affirmation that there are a plurality of secularisms (including Marxisms) as well as a plurality of post-secular religious intellectuals and even traditional and post-traditional expressions of religious traditions.⁹ As I have tried to underscore in many of the chapters within this volume, discussions of various kinds of metaphysical and religious questions that are related to traditional and post-traditional Ruist teachings and schools are also among those publications, even though Ruism as a tradition is not recognized as one of the five authorized and legitimated religious traditions in contemporary China.¹⁰

While all these complications and relative openness are issues within mainland Chinese academic institutions and the publishing houses associated (or independent) of them, there are also other factors in the secularist authoritarian environment that prevail and should not be denied factually, historically, or philosophically. My own experiences in China and among philosophical

and sinological circles there and abroad over the past three decades have been shaped by the awareness there are some tragedies, matters that sometimes one can become calloused about, simply to continue one's own work, unless one does further research and publishes about them. In my own case I think about the volume of translated essays I work out with others on the life and works of Zhào Fùsān 趙復三 (1926–2015), a former vice president of the Chinese Social Sciences Academy. Having graduated from the Anglican-based Saint John's University in Shànghǎi in the late 1940s, he became an Anglican priest just before the founding of the PRC, and had a tumultuous career, suffering not a little during the Cultural Revolution.¹¹ As one of the vice presidents of the highest-ranking research institution in the PRC, he and two other persons of the same rank opposed the military suppression of students and workers in the Tiananmen Plaza on June 4, 1989, and as a consequence he was forced to remain overseas, that is to say, politically put into exile as an intellectual and religious refugee, and was never able to return to his home, family, or friends in Běijīng from that time till his death, a period of twenty-six years.¹² Another is the Seventh Day Adventist historian, Gù Chángshēng 顧長聲 (1919–2015), who had written a major work from a Marxist perspective dealing with primarily foreign Protestant missionaries, and later emigrated to the United States, afterward writing his own bitter account of his life as a historian in the PRC context.¹³ Perhaps the most famous religious refugee from the PRC is the Dalai Lama, but there are many others who have suffered within the PRC in the past, and even within recent years. These, too, are part of the post-secular resistance put up by secularist governing officials within a post-secular age; there is too much documentation and personal observations of many that are recorded about these various matters, something that cannot be denied to exist.¹⁴ But there is more to this story, a more complicated set of situations that also need to be considered even when these other tragic situations are confirmed.

Oddly, it is perhaps somewhat strange to find an intellectual fascination among contemporary American philosophers and European sinologists with regard to traditional Ruist canonical literature and later schools as they interacted with early modern and later modern forms of Roman Catholic and Protestant traditions, as at least indicated in part within the volume, *The Post-Secular in Question*. One suspects that the “humanist religious” arguments laid out by Wei-ming Tu in his account of an “anthropocosmic vision” and Roger Ames in his articulation of a “non-theistic religious humanism,” for example, though the two are very different in their articulations and interpretive positions regarding the religious nature of Ruist traditions, parallel the search among some resistant post-secular secularists for a form of spirituality that is post-metaphysical in nature.¹⁵ These accounts are, as expected in the plurality of worldviews that accompany a post-secular environment,

necessarily idiosyncratic according to the particular advocate. What is even more strange with regard to Ruist spirituality is that there is no recognizable community that is or can be formed around these idiosyncratic accounts of religiousness; these humanistic secularist accounts of religious Ruism are not only post-metaphysical, they are also largely post-institutional or post-communal. Though a more popular form of Ruism does exist, and has recently also reinvigorated rituals for various stages of life, this is not the form of Ruism with which either Tu or Ames would generally want to associate.¹⁶ Ultimately, confusions about how the “spiritual” maps onto the “religious” in these discussions produce a plethora of other interpretive problems that require critical assessment and alternative means in defining and elaborating what is at stake.¹⁷

For some it may seem ironic that there is a new wave of intellectual emigration to the PRC by new resistant secularists and open post-secular intellectuals accompanying some of these current philosophical discussion in the PRC. What this normally means is that those who have their permanent residence in other countries also buy a home in mainland China, many times after their retirement from their professional careers in an overseas university, and then become associated with other institutions in the contemporary PRC. For example, Wei-ming Tu had become the director of an Advanced Studies Institute at the prestigious Běijīng University, having left Harvard for that position, and paid by that university; also Roger Ames has become associated with the Philosophy Department of that same university in recent years, after retiring from his post at the University of Hawai’i at Manoa. In another but somewhat similar manner, Chung-ying Cheng interrelates with a number of universities, having purchased a home in Běijīng, but has not yet retired from his post at the University of Hawai’i at Manoa. One of these post-secular intellectual emigrants to the PRC is the engaged post-secular religious German intellectual, Wolfgang Kubin, who has also received an invitation to take up a lucrative post at Běijīng Foreign Studies University.¹⁸ What is most notable about his presence is there is the immense productivity of this unusual Protestant intellectual, who continues to publish in German, and so may not be well-known even among Anglophone circles of Chinese philosophers or those in Chinese Studies. Kubin’s current work involves an extensive and radical early twenty-first-century translation project.¹⁹ As of 2020, he has produced ten volumes of what would be considered primarily ancient Chinese philosophical texts produced in bilingual (Chinese-German) format, and produced by Herder Verlag. Of note here, and of not a little interest for sociologists who speak about the “marketplace of religion(s)” in the post-secular age, Herder is a well-known German Christian publisher and has placed Kubin’s ten translations under the category of “Religion and Spirituality.” Intriguingly, they cover a wide range of ancient

Chinese philosophical perspectives—including Ruist, Daoist, Mohist, and Authoritarian (“Legalist”) schools—making choices from the major texts identified within the history of pre-imperial Chinese philosophical traditions as presented by Féng Yǒulán (1895–1990) in his various histories.²⁰ What is unique and radical about Kubin’s work in this realm is that he has adopted an alternative means to present those ancient texts that does not reflect their standard Chinese texts, but offers instead more readable alternative modern versions, mostly in terms of thematic selections, from most of those texts. Having published the first two volumes in the series in 2011, as of 2020 there have been eight other volumes published, one every year since 2011, but two in 2016.²¹ All of them are presented in a smaller book size, in the form of a “handbook” that is easily accessible and not too long (normally less than 200 pages).²² Most of the titles reflect what Kubin has chosen from within those ancient Chinese texts, so that on the front page and title page it is clarified in German that these texts are “selected, translated, and commented on” by Kubin as the translator and editor of each volume. As an engaged post-secular religious intellectual from a Lutheran background, steeped in wide ranges of Chinese literary traditions and histories, and trained in both philosophical and religious studies, Kubin sets a contrapuntal voice into the plurality of foreign language renderings of classical Chinese philosophical texts.

As two articles I wrote about Kubin’s work in 2007 and 2015 have indicated, this translation project is no ordinary German “canon-in-translation,” because in almost all cases these German renderings are not representing the whole texts in their standard presentation, but in most cases only selections of the larger Chinese standard texts, oftentimes with a particular set of themes guiding the selection. Kubin has normally made these choices and interpretations in discussion and collaboration with a number of contemporary Chinese philosophers and scholars, consulting recent commentaries on each of the specific works, and so making his renderings creative, up-to-date, and insightful. Notably, there has been no German sinologist or translator who has done so much for the popularization and advancement of ancient Chinese philosophical texts since Richard Wilhelm (1873–1930), this being the first time in eighty to a hundred years that any German sinologist would attempt anything like the nonstandard German canon-in-translation of Ruist and Daoist texts that Wilhelm had produced between the years from 1910 to 1930.

Wolfgang Kubin is an unusually gifted and prolific engaged post-secular religious intellectual working as a post-secular intellectual emigrant to the PRC. There are not many others I know about—and my knowledge in these realms is admittedly limited—that have done so much work by means of translation of ancient Chinese philosophical and religious texts.²³ Nevertheless, this too is possible within the post-secular environment of

contemporary mainland China, but notably involving publications overseas, and not many of these same documents in a Chinese version that is available also in Chinese bookstores.

UNCONCLUDING POST-SECULAR HOPES—THINGS YET TO DO

So, with my own (and I would hope, my readers') critical awareness sharpened by these various observations and analyses seen above, I believe it all highlights the vitality and value of the studies presented in this volume. So, then, what can now be taken away from the reading and study of these various Chinese philosophical issues? There are tasks and projects yet to realize, and so in this section I would like to focus on few of those options in very general terms.

There is a need to rewrite histories of Chinese philosophical traditions with a self-conscious philosophy of history appropriate for a post-secular and creative mode of discovery and rich interpretations. So far, what I have seen in the "introductions" to Chinese philosophical traditions is that they follow the trajectories of the more traditional histories of Chinese philosophical traditions produced by Fēng Yǒulán, but have not made any effort to identify—either for the sake of introduction, or for a more sophisticated project in rewriting those histories—a particular and new philosophy of history that would inform their choices and interpretations. I have set out in chapter 2 my justifications for the need of such a new approach, but must leave those tasks for others. May some younger Chinese philosophers take up these tasks in earnest in the coming years!

There are a number of traditional and new philosophical issues that need to be readdressed related to Chinese philosophical traditions within this age. Are there more "Chinese Gadammers" and "Chinese Heideggers," not to mention various kinds of resistant or strategic post-secular Chinese philosophers in Greater China? Indeed, they certainly exist. Yet these issues in particular have been previously avoided or ideologically suppressed themes, shaping the minds and hearts of many philosophy students in the PRC and elsewhere. When a form of "philosophical amnesia" persists, it sustains what is ultimately a distorted understanding of past traditions, texts, institutions, and/or creative efforts. One chapter that has sought to overcome another "forgotten" problem within traditional Chinese philosophical studies is the discussion presented in chapter 4, exploring the philosophical significance of the new text and old text traditions of two still very significant Ruist scriptures.

Undoubtedly, there is a great need to enrich Chinese philosophical traditions with a new range of philosophical questions as well as new sets of

cultural orientations. These issues can be addressed not only regarding Ruist traditions but also in Buddhist, Daoist, and alternative ancient and modern traditions. As has been seen and highlighted here in chapter 2 in part, but also explored in chapter 8, new themes can and should also include the ways Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese Ruists have contributed to Chinese Ruist traditions, as well as international non-Asian philosophers contributing to all of those philosophical traditions within China even today. In fact, however, these are still a rather narrow range of issues. There are new developments in international philosophical circles that could and should be addressed, precisely because they urge all of us on to give our accounts of the general principles of reality and how they lead to or distract from a flourishing form of life. Let the myriad post-secular blooms reveal their complexities, beauty, and insights!

Following those suggestions raised above, I would want to emphasize once again that there is a need to explore various new phenomena with philosophical concern and motivations informed by post-secular perspectives. This has been done in the volume here within the third part of the tome. There are a number of new phenomena that require our attention in our own days, for example, the devastation of natural environments and cosmopolitan-as-environmenting contexts, the reconsideration of the non-neutrality of the contemporary scientific-technological environment (à la Ellul), concerns over the loss of personal dignity in biomedical treatments and forced organ harvesting of criminals, questions regarding how a non-liberal nondemocratic form of governance might still seek justice and the common good, and an aesthetic investigation of a host of new mediated forms of the fine arts. Legal philosophy that investigates the nature of the common good, and its distorted forms as they appear in online phenomena such as the Human Flesh Search Engines, need to be addressed with ethical and cultural sensitivity and sapiential insights. There are a flood of new issues to address, and some in Chinese philosophical circles would do so. Would we follow their steps in these post-secular directions?

Precisely in this vein, then, I would also want to suggest that there is still a great need to reexamine past forms of wisdom as forms of thinking and living that could have an ameliorating impact on our contemporary techno-mediated forms of life. In China, as well as elsewhere within highly developed and still-developing cultural mind-scapes, these new interpersonal or “social” networking technologies are becoming more and more invasive in their personal and relational dynamics. Ellul foresaw these matters decades ago, but there is very little of such a critical perspective within the PRC that addresses these issues.²⁴ Do we need to revalorize the personal, face-to-face engagement over the arbitrarily mediated informationism that prevails in our disjointed “connectivity” within the (deceptively not “worldwide”) WWW/world-wide web

age?²⁵ Do academic institutions and their faculty, especially within philosophical circles in China and abroad, have enough courage and insight to seek to overcome the manipulative opportunism of techno-connectivity and its threats to education, so that there could be a process of redesigning our academic disciplines in order to reflect a concern for our humanness as well as a well-thought out and justifiably desirable humaneness? Would nuggets of ancient traditions of wisdom help us bring warrant to such endeavors?

VITAL POST-SECULAR PERSPECTIVES FROM AN EXISTENTIAL VIEWPOINT

With regard to the post-traditional developments of Chinese philosophical traditions in general, and Ruist traditions in particular, I have adopted interpretive positions of an engaged post-secular intellectual and that of an engaged post-secular religious philosopher to address a number of issues within this volume that are rarely, if ever, addressed philosophically within contemporary Chinese philosophical writings (whether in Chinese or in other languages). My concern about reinterpreting the controversial character of the life and career of Féng Yǒulán, as found in the first part of this tome, has been motivated by a number of issues that I consider to be critical for a salutary development of further post-secular perspectives within contemporary Chinese philosophical realms. These include questions about whether informed professional philosophers can face up to their failures under the political pressures endured within propaganda-infused cultural contexts, and whether those who have failed can later repent, turn away from their failures, and overcome them in a way that resemble philosophers in some German and Japanese philosophical contexts. Here is a matter of the transformative dimension discovered within the lives of professional philosophers that underscores the radical changes that all humans, and so including all who are philosophers, have and do experience. Too seldom has this been addressed with both an understanding of the nature of the techniques inherent in propagandistic contexts as well as a sympathetic but not neutral reconsideration of how philosophers as human persons endure, fail, transform, and inspire others through that process. Similarly, the twentieth-century Chinese utopian projects that have had such an immense impact on both the imagination as well as the relationships and emotions of countless post-traditional Chinese persons deserve to be handled philosophically from an informed post-secular position, and not left only for historians, sociologists, anthropologists, economists, literary and multimedia artists to address in their own ways (as they in fact have done). How this also motivates deeper concerns related to online behavior is another case in point, as I have learned from my own students,

and consequently reflected with them on the larger consequences of such vigilanti-style activities in certain sectors of contemporary mainland Chinese society.

Within my own limited resources I have sought to bring to bear some of those vital post-secular perspectives to reconsider themes within the larger Ruist tradition in particular. As has been seen above, I have sought to reconceive the nature of classical Ruism on the basis of the actual textual evidence, and have even explored synthetic cultural realities and possibilities within Ruist-Christian “dual citizenship” in the light of varying accounts of sageliness and saintliness. I am certain that there is still a strong need to counter a very resistant duality expressed within the fuzzy rubric of “China-West” and “East-West” philosophical research and discussions. Most of these forms of speech are ideological camouflage techniques for promoting gross simplification of cross-cultural issues, if not simply an unannounced but obvious ignorance of those who employ this manner of thinking. Here in this volume I have tried to overcome that fossilized form of unwarranted comparative thinking and so have readdressed in ways that I believe are more careful and insightful, such key Chinese philosophical terms such as (here put in English) “Heaven/heaven,” “spirits/God/ghosts,” and some sacrificial rituals, developing their implications for the reinterpretation and reassessment of previously secularly loaded judgments against past and present Chinese philosophers. Another case in point has occurred in the final chapter of this volume, where I have sought to offer more precise and diversified accounts of “cultivated humane persons,” “sages” and “saints.” In that context, I proposed four possible expressions of Ruist-Christian lifestyle that embody syntheses of sageliness and saintliness, syntheses that could link up wisdom-based learning, sagely discernment, and consecration to the service of Deity. I have argued that these four syntheses are not only possible, but feasible, and in all cases also have precedents that are promising in the specific realms of linking up sageliness and saintliness.

I would hope by this point in this tome I could say without any sense of irony that there could be many other questions raised of this sort as they engage other philosophical and religious traditions. Surely, there are many other scholars better prepared than I who can address post-secular perspectives within the now legally enfranchised religious traditions in the People’s Republic of China. Thereby, these studies would go beyond Ruist and Christian expressions, and address issues within Buddhist, Daoist, and Muslim traditions, at the very least. In addition, it would be important to explore new approaches to the philosophies of religious traditions, and also deal in informed and insightful ways with the marginal, sectarian, and superstitious phenomena that also occur within our age. It is not often that post-secular intellectuals, and specifically post-secular philosophers, will

address seemingly creative cultural developments that should be unacceptable because they are intentionally harmful, evil, self-centered, deceptive, xenophobic, unrighteous, or uninformed, ignorant, or even demonic (in the strong negative sense of that term). Even those seemingly insignificant cultural developments that end up being exemplary and excellent portrayals of Chinese philosophical wisdom, cleverness, and spiritual insight deserve similar post-secular informed studies. Such forms of thinking and living do exist, all of them, and their impacts on personal, familial, communal, national, intercultural, and international settings are not documented enough. There is something yet for us to do if we consider ourselves to be Chinese philosophers, and if we realize the insights and vitality that our post-secular perspectives can bring to bear on these matters.

A FINAL UNCONCLUDING REFLECTION

Søren Kierkegaard once wrote an *Unconcluding Scientific Postscript* to counter the systematic closedness of a Hegelian model of human knowledge. My efforts here have not been so grand, but they have sought to address various prevailing modes of secularist assumptions that have distorted or clouded issues within Chinese philosophical traditions. I take the chapters in this volume to be some initial steps in this direction, and I believe that there are a multitude of other themes and directions that could be addressed. So, too, these are truly unconcluding reflections, because they suggest many new things to identify, create, assess, and advance in critically considered and perceptively justified manners. If this volume spurs some on to those tasks, I will rejoice and be grateful.

NOTES

1. Among the four biographies I look through, I was most moved by the sport's historian Duncan Hamilton's perceptive and thoroughly researched study entitled *For the Glory: The Untold and Inspiring Story of Eric Liddell, Hero of Chariots of Fire* (New York: Penguin Books, 2016). What I discovered that I had not previously known was that Liddell had written a book he used for disciplining younger people and others while serving as a missionary of the London Missionary Society in Shandong Province especially in the nasty period of the late 1930s and early 1940s. None of the biographers, however, offered a thorough account of this one book about Christian life that Liddell had written, something that I found to be odd since it was an obvious source for revealing much about his own Christian commitments. Being sorely provoked to figure out this mystery, then, I found that a copy of the

volume had been published forty years after his death, and so pursued my questions about the quality of his spiritual life as determined from the study of that one work. It proved to be a rewarding discovery and manifested once again the richness of the practical bent of his spiritual life. For those interested, consult Eric Liddell, *The Disciplines of the Christian Life*, previously published by Abingdon Press in 1985, but now available by other means (Escondido, CA: eChristian, Inc., 2011). Referring to Shí Héngtán, *Zhōng Xī yuándiǎn duìdú* 《中西元典對讀》 [Critical Comparative Readings of Chinese and Western Classics] (Běijīng: Chinese Social Sciences Press, 2018).

2. Regarding this concept in Gadamer's work, I have benefited greatly from the study of John Arthos' book, *The Inner Word in Gadamer's Hermeneutics* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2009.)

3. See Chung-ying Cheng, "Inquiry into the Primary Model: The Yijing and the Structure of the Chinese Hermeneutic Tradition," in Ching-I Tu, ed., *Interpretation and Intellectual Change: Chinese Hermeneutics in Historical Perspective* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Press, 2001), 321–41. Other relevant essays by Cheng include "The Yijing 《易經》 as Creative Inception of Chinese Philosophy," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 35(2) (June 2008): 201–19; "Receptivity and Creativity in Hermeneutics: From Gadamer to Onto-Hermeneutics—Part One." *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 42(1–2) (March/June 2015): 10–41, and "Receptivity and Creativity in Hermeneutics: From Gadamer to Onto-Hermeneutics—Part Two." *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 43(3–4) (September/December 2016): 313–35.

4. Referring to Gorski et al., eds., *The Post-Secular in Question: Religion in Contemporary Society*.

5. See Schmalzhauer and Mahoney, "Religion and Knowledge in the Post-Secular Academy".

6. See above, Methodological Introduction, endnote 11, and Schmalzhauer and Mahoney, "Religion and Knowledge in the Post-Secular Academy," 229–32.

7. For example, one younger Chinese colleague who is a specialist researching themes related to Zhū Xī's philosophy was excited to see my article on "Zhu Xi and Christianity," making extensive notes from it for future reference, but then explained that though a Chinese translation should be made of this piece, there was the anticipation that censors who vet all things considered by Chinese publishers would not permit it to be published at this time. Here is displayed a very complex set of issues that are not merely a psychological state of anxiety, but involves also eager, active, alert, and cautious emotions.

8. A good number of my colleagues in Hong Kong Baptist University and in other universities in Hong Kong continue to serve in all these ways, especially during the very difficult periods of the last two years.

9. Precisely in this sense, there remains a sociological disciplinary bias manifest in the volume, *The Post-Secular in Question*, that persists in talking about "religion" only in the singular, and not in the plurality that it actually involves. It is well known now that in the PRC there are five authorized religious traditions, sometimes called the "Great Religions": Buddhism, Daoism, Islam, Protestant Christianity, and Catholic Christianity. These religious traditions have been distinguished by PRC

secularist officials precisely because they are different in character, ritual, doctrine, and institutions.

10. As noted in the previous footnote, Ruism is not recognized as a legitimate “religious tradition” within the contemporary PRC, even though some Ruist scholars promote a form of Ruist spirituality. One aspect of this expression of spirituality is Ruist theism, a sub-tradition within Ruist philosophical works that is discussed in the three chapters found in part II and the last chapter of this volume.

11. An institution that has now become the University of Law and Government in that same city, illustrating another side to the secularization processes that have reshaped post-traditional PRC life.

12. For those interested in his life and works, consult Lauren F. Pfister, Guest Editor of an issue of *Contemporary Chinese Thought* 43(3) (Spring 2012), *Expanding Horizons of Religion and European Culture for China: Selected Essays by Zhao Fusan*. My essay on Zhào’s intellectual journey within this volume is entitled, “Walking Forward Reflectively: Zhao Fusan’s Intellectual Journey Since the 1980s” in *Ibid.*, 3–12.

13. I have woven his story into my article, “In the Eye of a Tornado: Lessons Learned from Critiques of Christian Missionaries,” *Ching Feng* 8(1–2) (2007), 91–116.

14. The current regime has moved backwards in terms of religious rights, especially with regard to governance and oppression of “unauthorized” or “illegal” Chinese Christian communities, setting up new Regulations of Religious Affairs that have been used in draconian fashion to destroy crosses, break down some large “illegal” buildings, and in the most recent period, oppressing other unauthorized religious groups among all five of the authorized religions in the PRC. For some account of these past and current situations, see my forthcoming article, “Crossing Over the Line: Obtrusive Neon-Light Crosses, New Religious Laws, and Questions over Civil Society in Contemporary PRC,” to appear in a volume edited by Seguire Shun-Hing Chan and others, dealing with themes of Civil Society in Greater China. It is scheduled to be published by Brill in 2019.

15. One example of how Ames has justified his humanistic secularist way of handling ancient Chinese traditions has been addressed in chapter 5 of this volume. The conception of a “post-metaphysical religion” is presented and elaborated in Eduardo Mendieta, “Spiritual Politics and Post-Secular Authenticity: Foucault and Habermas on Post-Metaphysical Religion” in Gorski et al., eds., *The Post-Secular in Question*, 307–34.

16. In Shu-hsien Liu’s account, there are three kinds of Ruism or “Confucianism”: the spiritual, the politicized, and the popular. See Liu, “Democratic Ideal and Practice,” 259.

17. This problem I have tried to address in “Ubication: A Phenomenological Study about Making Spaces Sacred,” *International Communication of Chinese Culture* [Běijīng and Heidelberg] 4(3) (August 2017), 393–411.

18. Initial description of my understanding of Wolfgang Kubin’s multiform productivity, and especially in relationship to Richard Wilhelm’s precedents, presented in my article “Brothers in the Spirit,” in Marc Hermann, Christian Schwermann, and Jari Grosse-Ruyken, eds., *Zurück zur Freude. Studien zur chinesischen Literatur und*

Lebenswelt und ihrer Rezeption in Ost und West. Festschrift für Wolfgang Kubin (Nettetal: Steyler Verlag, 2007), 55–82.

19. Writing about this previously, I was only aware of four of his five current translations. Now there are ten volume of translations! His approach to these texts is not in the form of a traditional canon-in-translation, dealing with the whole text in its standard presentation, but taking instead a radical alternative that is worked out of his own authorial intentions, dividing texts into notable themes, reordering them, and then providing simplified Chinese texts alongside of his contemporary (and often interestingly creative, while scholarly and informed) German renderings. That initial attempt to characterize, assess, and interpret the first set of translation texts is found in my article, “Reflections on some Bold Aspects of Wolfgang Kubin’s Recent Translations of Pre-Qin Classical Texts in German,” in Li Xuětāo李雪涛, et al., eds., *Open Horizon: Essays in Honour of Wolfgang Kubin / Hèbì Xī Zhōng: Qìngzhù Gù Bīn Jiàoshòu Qīshí Shǒuchén Wénjí* 《合璧西中—庆祝顾彬教授七十寿辰文集》 (北京 Běijīng: 外语教育与研究出版社 Foreign Language Education and Research Press with the Düsseldorf University Press, 2015), 152–67.

20. As described in detail in chapter 2 within this volume.

21. Notably, Kubin chose to publish in the first two volumes selections of the two texts that Wilhelm also published as his first two German canon-in-translation, starting 100 years earlier. See Wolfgang Kubin, trans., comm., ed., *Gespräche* [Conversations [The Analects]] (Freiburg in Breisgau: Herder Verlag, 2011); and *Der Urtext – Lao Zi* [The Original Text—Lǎozǐ] (Freiburg in Breisgau: Herder Verlag, 2011), constituting a German rendering of the Guōdiàn bamboo texts as a precursor to the *Dàodéjīng*. Both of these volumes were already in their second printing (the former in 2015, and the latter in 2018), manifesting the great interest these works have provoked among Deutsch-aphone readers. Documented in the order of their publication, and all published by Herder Verlag, those volumes are Wolfgang Kubin, trans., comm., ed., *Reden und Gleichnisse – Meng Zi* [Discussions and Parables—Mèngzǐ] (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder Verlag, 2012); *Von Nichtwissen – Zhuang Zi* [From Not-Knowing—Zhuāngzǐ] (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder Verlag, 2013); *Das grosse Lernen – Maß und Mitte – Der Klassiker der Pietät* [The Great Learning—The Measure and the Center [the Zhōngyōng]—The Classic of [Filial] Piety] (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder Verlag, 2014); *Die Bildung des Menschen – Xun Zi* [The Educational Formation of Humans – Xúnzǐ] (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder Verlag, 2016); *Schul- und Hausgespräche – Konfuzius* [Conversations at Home and about Schools – Master Kōng] (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder Verlag, 2016); *Von der Kunst, auf dem Wind zu ruhen – Lie Zi* [On the Art of Resting on the Wind – Lièzǐ] (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder Verlag, 2017); *Philosophische Fabeln – Han Fei Zi* [Philosophical Fables – Hánfēizǐ] (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder Verlag, 2018); and *Von Sorge und Fürsorge – Mo Zi* [On Being Concerned and Caring – Mòzǐ] (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder Verlag, 2019).

22. Only two volumes have gone over 200 pages: the first volume presenting themes from the Confucian Analects (216 pp. in its first editions, and 220 pp. in its second edition), and the eighth volume presenting themes from the semi-canonical Daoist text, the *Lièzǐ* 《列子》 (208 pp.).

23. Having stated all this, there are a few who should be noted. The Croatian Orientalist and Sinologist, Maja Milčinski, has produced another impressive list of translations in Croatian, but involving those from languages not only in Chinese, but also in Indian languages. There are also more popular Daoist works and studies, not so much in classical traditions but in modern Daoist practices, produced in contemporary Russian by one Russian academic I met who teaches in Taipei, illustrating the diversity of perspectives and affiliations that can occur. I also would not want to miss stating that there has been an extensive number of new French translations of a wide range of Chinese works, including among them some of the ancient Chinese texts mentioned above, edited by Anne Cheng and others in France.

24. As far as I have been able to discover, not even one volume of Ellul's immense corpus has been rendered into Chinese, or is available in Greater China. This may be an indication of the kind of intellectual selectivity and self-censorship that chooses not to criticize the assumed epistemological superiority of the natural and theoretical sciences with their accompanying technologies in the PRC.

25. The term "informationism" was developed and elaborated meaningfully some years ago in the rigorous and revealing study by Quentin J. Schultze, *Habits of the High-Tech Heart: Living Virtuously in the Information Age* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2002).

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Having served as a full-time faculty member of the Department of Religion and Philosophy in Hong Kong Baptist University for three decades, **Lauren Pfister** retired from that position in the fall of 2017. During the latter part of his career in Hong Kong, he was made a founding fellow of the Hong Kong Academy of the Humanities, serving on its executive board for five years, taking up a position as the director of the Centre for Sino-Christian Studies for that five year period after serving for one academic year as the head of his Department. Having worked in different capacities in the *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* during his tenure at HKBU, he retired from his position as associate editor in the fall of 2017. Since that period, in 2019 he has been made a member of the executive committee of the International Society for Chinese Philosophy and granted the title of professor emeritus by the Arts Faculty of HKBU. After taking up residence in the Colorado Rockies within the United States, he has remained active as a researcher, writer, mentor, and invited lecturer in the United States, China, and Europe, engaged in a wide range of areas that include studies in Chinese and comparative philosophy, histories of Chinese philosophical traditions, philosophical and textual hermeneutics, comparative religious and Chinese Christian studies, China's missionary-scholars and the history of sinology, as well as studies of Ruist ("Confucian") and Daoist canons-in-translation and their related translation hermeneutics.

His major published monographs include a two-volume study of the life and works of James Legge (*Striving for "The Whole Duty of Man": James Legge (1815–1897) and the Scottish Protestant Encounter with China* (Peter Lang; 2004)), a republication of the five volume set of *The Chinese Classics* (originally published by James Legge, first edition, 1861–1872, second revised edition 1893–1895), accompanied with new interpretive essays in Chinese for the whole set as well as for each volume (华东师范大学出版社

East China Normal University Press, 2010), and a volume of thirteen essays on translation hermeneutics rendered into Chinese by a team of scholars under the leadership of Prof. Yue Feng 岳峰 (厦门大学出版社 Xiàmén University Press, 2016).

Upon retirement, he and his wife have returned to the United States and have been able to relocate in the Colorado Rockies, living at about 9000 feet above sea-level, in a homestead looking onto part of the North American continental divide in that region. They are now completing the construction of a library that will house their many books, which is planned to be the focus of a nonprofit research and conference center called Hephzibah Mountain Aster Academy.

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