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QING 情 AND EMOTION IN EARLY CHINESE THOUGHT

The term *qing* 情, which in Modern Standard Chinese often carries connotations of “emotions”, as in *ganqing* 感情 or *qingxu* 情緒, occurs four times in the *Mencius*, none of which seem to obviously mean “emotions”, and instead appear to mean something like “situation”. Yet less than a century later in *Xunzi*, *qing* is seemingly defined specifically as the emotions--好惡喜怒哀樂 *hao wu xi nu ai le*, preferences, happiness, anger, grief, and enjoyment.⁷ This paper shall explore how it is that the character *qing* could harbour two such different senses.

How *qing* could come to mean something so different so quickly is not immediately evident on reading the *Mencius*. For this reason, I will begin by exploring the usage of *qing* in other early Chinese texts, with the prospect in mind of discovering an emotional content in the *qing* of the *Mencius* that can dissolve the mystery of such a rapid semantic transformation. I will outline an emotional content in the term *qing* by showing 1) that *qing* harbours a polysemy that ranges from emotions on one end of the spectrum to facts, or situation, on the other end; 2) that emotions (*xinuaile*) in early Chinese thought are not merely psychological but also have a cosmological element; 3) that the cosmological contexts in which *qing* is used connote more of a sense of the mutual interpenetration associated with emotions than the mere genuineness or essence that A. C. Graham proposed; 4) that when *qing* is used in a cosmological sense, there is often an association with a flowing movement: and 5) that the emotions are picked out as *qing* without controversy, demonstrating that there is a shared understanding among early

⁷ 性之好惡喜怒哀樂謂之情 The preferences, happiness, anger, grief, and joy of *xing* are called *qing* (*Xunzi*, ch 22).

Chinese thinkers that *qing* is somehow connected with emotions on an implicit level.⁸

In the appendix to his article “The Background of the Mencian Theory of Human Nature,” A. C. Graham ventures several English equivalents for *qing*:

As a noun it means ‘the facts’ . . . , as an adjective ‘genuine’ . . . , as an adverb common in *Mozi* ‘genuinely’.⁹

Graham is explicit in stating that in pre-Han literature *qing* “never means ‘passions’,” as it does, he says, in Neo-Confucianism, when it is contrasted with *xing* 性 nature¹⁰.¹¹ Only in the “ritualistic school of Confucianism,” he says, does *qing* take on the meaning of emotions in even a roundabout way:

In *Xunzi* and the *Li Ji* . . . *qing* is the genuine and unassumed In these texts, but nowhere else in pre-Han literature, the word refers only to the genuine in man which it is polite to disguise, and therefore to his feelings.¹²

It is from this usage, Graham says, that *qing* as emotions developed.¹³ Graham offers the proposition of Xunzi having redefined *qing* to connote emotions, or having extended the meaning to include emotions--based on the

⁸ It is important to note in regard to this last point that I am not suggesting that “*qing*” was synonymous with “*xinuaile*”. There is no evidence that they were interchangeable in early texts. Still, if “*qing*” did have implicit emotional overtones in early usage, it would make perfect sense that they eventually be explicated, as in *Xunzi* and other approximately contemporaneous texts.

⁹ Graham 1990, p. 59.

¹⁰ Graham chooses to render *xing* “nature”, stating in the first passage of his article that it is one of the few Chinese philosophical terms that has a near equivalent in English. He goes on later in the article, however, to demonstrate that it means less what one is born with and more the direction in which one grows, referring to it in terms of “tendencies” and “inclinations” (e.g. p. 38).

¹¹ *ibid.*, p. 59.

¹² *ibid.*, p. 64.

¹³ *ibid.*, p. 59.

presumption that Xunzi viewed the emotions as what is genuine within a person. He leaves it up to us, however, to justify this presumption. It is far from clear that if any early Chinese philosopher were to propose that the emotions were the most genuine part of a person that it would go unchallenged. Why not 仁 *ren*, 義 *yi*, 孝 *xiao*, 恕 *shu*, or 德 *de* as the most genuine part of a person? Given the history of early Chinese thought, these would seem like more likely candidates. But why bring up genuineness at all? If we can find a direct connection between *qing* and emotions, Occam's Razor would have us link these two and drop Graham's genuineness. Xunzi's statement is an elaboration of implicit cosmological assumptions not a potentially controversial redefinition of a philosophical term.

On my reading of Xunzi, when he says, “性之好惡喜怒哀樂謂之情 The preferences, happiness, anger, grief, and joy of *xing* are called *qing*, he is not suggesting a new definition for *qing* such that the other 115 times he uses the term he means it specifically in this new technical sense. In fact, the statement occurs in the last third of the book as we have it today.

Looking at the other two occurrences of *xinuaile* in *Xunzi* can provide a more interesting angle on understanding *qing*. In Chapter 17, we find the following passage:

天職既立，天功既成，形具而神生，好惡喜怒哀樂臧焉，夫是之謂天情。

Nature's work having been set and it's achievements completed, forms having been solidified and spirits brought forth, preferences, happiness, anger, grief, and enjoyment are stored within. This is what we call the natural *qing*.

Here is another treatment of *qing*, and when we take a close look at the context surrounding this passage, we see that it is more than a bare proposition. The passage is embedded in a chapter that John Knoblock translates “Discourse on Nature”¹⁴ which describes the coursing of the natural processes, from constellations to the sun and moon, to the four seasons, to the *yin* and *yang*, to the wind and rain. All aspects of the world must function in harmony, and the emotions are part of this functioning. *Qing*, we see, is not a static entity, or a mere psychological state, but a collection of processes that

¹⁴ Knoblock, *Xunzi*, vol. 3, p. 4ff.

harmonize with the outer world. *Qing*, visceral, cosmically harmonizing, and little to do with genuineness.

In Chapter 22, not many lines beyond the example of *xinuaile* quoted first above, we find the following:

形體色理以目異，聲音清濁調竽奇聲以耳異，甘苦鹹淡辛酸奇味以口異，香臭芬鬱腥臊酒酸奇臭以鼻異，疾養滄熱滑鉞輕重以形體異，說故喜怒哀樂愛惡欲以心異。

Forms, bodies, colours, and patterns are differentiated by the eye. Sounds, voices, clarity, muffledness, pitches, harmonies, and odd sounds are differentiated by the ear. Sweet, bitter, salty, bland, spicy, sour, and odd flavours are differentiated by the mouth. Fragrant, malodorous, sweet, pungent, ripe, putrid, and odd smells are differentiated by the nose. Pain, itching, cold, heat, smooth, rough, light, and heavy are differentiated by the body. Happiness¹⁵, anger, grief, enjoyment, love, hate, and desire are differentiated by the heartmind.

Here the larger context is an argument about naming and the differentiation that takes place prior to naming. The naturally endowed sense organs facilitate differentiation, each according to its own function. The heartmind plays a special role, as both a sense organ and an organ of intention. In order to be effective, the sense organs must come into contact with the outside world. Notice that their placement in the parallel structure shows the emotions to be sense impressions, impressed from the external world through one's experience of the external world. They are shareable and objectifiable in the same sense that two people experience the same pepper to taste spicy or the same peony to be smell sweet. In this sense, emotions are neither private nor subjective. They are responses of experience in the world. We will see below how this response notion bridges the gap between *qing* as emotion and *qing* as situation.

In *Xunzi*, then, there is more to *qing* than just what is genuine and that there is more to the idea of "emotions" than a simple psychological state. We can find similar notions in pre-Mencian texts as well.

¹⁵ 說故 appear to be excrement and are therefore left untranslated.

Qing in Pre-Mencian Texts

When Sunzi says, 主不可以怒而興師，將不可以慍而致戰 A ruler must never deploy his commanders due to anger, and a general must never enter war due to irritation” (Chapter 12), he is referring to the specific emotions of anger and irritation. He never refers to emotions in a general abstract sense using “*xinuaile*”. He does use the word *qing*, however, and in each of the seven¹⁶ times he uses it, it appears at first glance to be a perfect example of Graham’s understanding of the term as “the facts”. Of the seven occurrences, four different formulations appear:

索其情
兵之情
人情之理
敵之情

In the first, second, and fourth occurrences, a run-of-the-mill translation might render *qing* as “facts” or “situation”:

seek the facts
the situation of the troops
the situation of the enemy

The third formulation defies this trend. Throughout pre-Han political theory, it was essential that a ruler comprehend the 人情 *ren qing* “*qing* of people” or 民情 *min qing* “*qing* of the people”. Yet there is no consensus on what exactly *qing* means in these terms. Does it refer to the general situation of people in terms of their welfare? Or perhaps the true situation of people, as opposed to what one is told about them? Or, in a more democratic vein, it may mean the sentiments of the people. Likely it is all three. An overarching theme of the *Sunzi Bingfa* is the manipulation of people and events according to the constantly shifting conditions surrounding warfare and the possibility of warfare. In order to adjust in accord with events, one needs to have a grasp of the facts. These facts, of course, are not merely academic. The facts are very much what determine how one reacts. Relationships between events are inescapable and, more importantly for Sunzi, manipulable. A general must understand his personnel, the terrain, supply lines, the enemy, the populace,

¹⁶ Twice in Chapter 1, three times in Chapter 11, and twice in Chapter 13.

the ruler, etc. To understand is to be able to react appropriately, to tip the balance one way or another, to capitalize on, as Francois Jullien would say, “the propensity of things.”¹⁷ Every situation is itself a process, changing as events come and go. *Ren qing*, as “situation of people,” means more than a static state of affairs. People react according to their circumstances. Going back to the notion of the heartmind as a sense organ, we remember that people have the tendency to react similarly under similar stimuli--not in a necessarily behavioural sense, but in a general sense of observed tendencies--in general people will savour a ripe persimmon and spit out a putrid kumquat. So if a commander understands the “patterns of people’s situations”, he will understand the patterns of their reactions.¹⁸ In other words he must understand what lies right between situations and people’s reactions, he must understand their sentiments, or emotions.

Sunzi Bingfa stands as a relatively early pre-Han text.¹⁹ Assuming certainty in dating, the earliest use of *qing* appears in the Zhou Shu section of the Kang Gao chapter of the *Shang Shu*. Here, we find the following:

天畏棗忱, 民情大可見

Nature is to be feared in that it assists the sincere; the
qing of the people is/are entirely visible.

Already around the turn of the first millennium BCE, Chinese rulers were concerned about the *qing* of the people. The king is advising his son on the ways of the wise ruler, which involves more than simply issuing edicts. Nature reacts to a ruler’s sentiments, and likewise, a ruler must understand the people. He must “make himself as broad as the sky, filling himself with *de*”.²⁰ In its early use, of course, *de* was a kind of charismatic power, an influence flowing out from a noble ruler to all his subjects, positively affecting all things. To act nobly, a ruler must understand his subjects, their

¹⁷ Jullien 1985.

¹⁸ In Chad Hansen’s article, “Qing (Emotions) 情 in Pre-Buddhist Chinese Thought” (in Marks 1995), he ventures a linguistic analysis of *qing*, concluding that an appropriate translation of the term would be “reality-reactions”.

¹⁹ All dating in this paper is from Loewe 1993.

²⁰ *Shang Shu*, Zhou Shu section, Kang Gao chapter.

Qing 情 and Emotion in Early Chinese Thought

qing, which is entirely visible. There can be no isolation of ruler from people. The people are there and must be reckoned with. They will react according to their situations--their sentiments are visible and must be taken into account.

The single instance of *qing* in the *Shi Jing* is perhaps the only occurrence in a pre-Han text in which it seems to carry only emotional connotations. It is a rather obscure passage, from poem #136:

子之湯兮，宛丘之上兮；洵有情兮而無望兮。

Legge translates:

How gay and dissipated you are,
There on top of Wan Mound.
You are full of kindly affection indeed
But you have nothing to make you looked up to.²¹

From the rest of the poem, we see that there is a kind of raucous celebration occurring on Wan Mound, where, according to commentators, raucous celebrations too commonly occur. The gentleman being addressed seems to have succeeded in displaying the high spirits of revelry but still lacks the weightiness of a good reputation. He has *qing*, affection, but it is not all that he needs, and it may conversely have a negative impact on his reputation. There is not a lot to make of this passage except to say that it appears to directly contradict Graham's thesis that *qing* never meant "emotions" in pre-Xunzi texts. This being an early occurrence of *qing*, the implications are profound. Unfortunately, Graham does not address this occurrence, but it provides us with growing confidence that *qing* carried a range of meaning, from mere facts on one end of a spectrum, to pure emotion on the other.

Qing occurs twice in the *Analects*, in 13:4 and 19:19. The first is, according to my survey of other early texts, a unique usage:

上好禮則民莫敢不敬
上好義則民莫敢不服

²¹ Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, vol. 4, p. 205.

上好信則民莫敢不用情

If the superiors favour ritual propriety, none among the people will dare be disrespectful.

If the superiors favour rightness, none among the people will dare not submit.

If the superiors favour trustworthiness, none among the people will dare to not utilize *qing*.

This passage again demonstrates the flow of arousal and response among rulers and people. In this case, the ruler's moral turpitude yields direct responses in the people, but not in a coercive way, for the end result, Confucius goes on to say, is that more and more people will move to such a state. What does it mean to utilize *qing*? If 信 *xin*, trustworthiness, in the same sentence means "standing by one's word", perhaps *qing* means "standing by one's sentiments", reacting (not just *acting*) sincerely to circumstances, without duplicity. A fascinating adjunct to this notion can be found in Xu Shen's entry of 青 *qing* in the *Shuowen Jiezi*. Under 情 *qing*, he identifies 青 *qing* as its phonetic element, but as in other *xingsheng* characters, it may be that the phonetic also bears some semantic sense. In this case, Xu identifies *qing* (青) as the colour of the east, related to the color 丹 *dan* cinnabar, which is generated when wood generates fire.²² Xu then says, "丹青之信言必然 the phrase 'the reliability (*xin* 信) of *dan* and *qing*' connotes inevitability". The linkage of *qing* (青) and *xin* and the participation of *qing* (青) in the cosmological processes of nature are suggestive of a more robust notion of *qing* (情), one that is processional and cosmological yet also tied intimately to practical affairs.

In *Analects* 19:19, we find:

如得其情則哀矜而勿喜

In having uncovered the facts in cases, he should show compassion and not be glib.

The full context is that a newly appointed magistrate has asked Zengzi for advice. Zengzi replies that the people have been through great hardship, so in

²² We know that the mineral cinnabar is produced reliably from metacinnabar with the addition of heat.

uncovering the truth of cases, the magistrate should show compassion and not be glib. Again, we notice that the “facts” are not detached data awaiting statistical analysis. Rather, they entail a reaction, an emotional reaction, and it is up to the magistrate to react appropriately. On the other end of the events continuum, Zengzi wants to make it clear that the facts are themselves pursuant to hardships suffered by the people. In other words, the facts, the people’s reactions, are just what one would expect of people under straightened circumstances.

Another text that may, or parts of which may, predate the *Mencius* is the *Zuo Zhuan*. We find no mentions of *qing* in the *Chun Qiu*, but 14 in the *Zuo Zhuan*. For the most part, they all mean “the facts”, or the “truth of a situation”. The one notable exception appears in a passage under the 8th year of Duke Ai, which says, “魯有名而無情 Lu has a reputation but no *qing*.” This passage could not mean that Lu does not have facts. Under Graham’s interpretation, it could only mean that Lu, though having a good reputation, lacks the genuineness that a state of good reputation should possess. But what could “genuineness” mean? It could only mean that Lu should act (react) according to circumstances as a noble state normally would. By not doing so, they are not being honest with themselves, they are not acting (reacting) genuinely. *Qing* appears to have a certain perspectival content, meaning “situation” from one perspective and “reactions to a situation” from another, only this second perspective seems to have not been fully delineated in terms of emotions until full cosmological theories were themselves delineated. But it does not follow that the meaning was not there implicitly all along.

Another curious occurrence in the *Zuo Zhuan* appears in the commentary to year 28 of Duke Xi. According to the passage, the Marquis of Jin was too strong to defeat because, “民之情偽盡知矣 The people’s *qing* and *wei* are fully known.” At first glance, “*qing*” would appear to mean the same as it does in most other occurrences in this work, “the facts”, “the true situation”. But as we noted above, *min qing* also entails the reactions of the people via their sentiments. Further evidence of this lies in the inclusion here of the term *wei*, meaning the opposite of *qing*. Under Graham’s interpretation, it would mean “disingenuous”. I bring this up because I would like to point out that although being disingenuous appears in our own language to entail a sense of intention, that someone is disingenuous on purpose, and the Daoists would

have us believe that this purposiveness is the root of our problem, *wei*, as opposite of *qing*, is not limited to the human realm. In the *Yi Jing*'s *Xi Ci*, we find the following passage (A12): 設卦以盡情偽 “the hexagrams were established as a way of fully [comprehending] *qing* and *wei*.” Going back to the process nature of the Chinese cosmology, which in the *Xi Ci* is now being more fully delineated, *qing* can be interpreted as (natural) tendencies and *wei* as “countertendencies to spuriousness”.²³ Wang Bi in his interpretation takes the creative dynamism of nature to be constituted by the dialectic of *qing* and *wei*. So in this sense, *wei* is an unintentional “getting on the wrong track” if you will, nature going slightly awry. If *wei* means “getting on the wrong track”, then *qing* is being on the right track, following natural or appropriate tendencies, tendencies that are in tune with one's surroundings as mediated by the senses, one of which is the mind, which senses emotional flow.

We see from the above discussion that the emotions in early Chinese thought, are closely associated with the *gan-ying* (感應 “arousal and response”) processes that underpin Chinese cosmology for as far back as we can trace it. And *qing*, far from being a vague genuineness, bears this full processional content but connotes it often partially, and then depending on one's perspective.

Qing in the Mencius

We now turn to the *Mencius*, in which *qing* occurs four times, none of which appear to have at first glance any emotional content at all. The first usage of *qing* we find in the *Mencius* is in 3A:4. Here, Mencius is objecting to the doctrines of Xu Shen, who, in opposition to oppressive injustice resulting from the stratification of society and expensive goods, advocates that everyone, including government officials, grow their own grain, and that there be uniform prices for like goods. Mencius points out that it is the *qing* of things for them to not be uniform. Shoes of different sizes should be priced differently, otherwise no one would make and sell them. He accuses Xu Shen and his followers of being 偽 *wei* “disingenuous”. Why “disingenuous”? There are two notions in this passage relevant to our above

²³ Lynn's wording, following Wang Bi, in Lynn 1994.

discussion of the aspects of *qing*. There is an important sense of mutuality and a sense of the natural ideal. The mutuality can be seen in the unevenness of the world. Prices are uneven because things in and of themselves are uneven. The implicit mutuality is what appears in Daoism as the tall depending on the short, etc., the mutuality of dependent polarities, one of which cannot exist without the other. On the cosmological scale there is a necessary multiplicity of things, and the interactions of diverse things give rise to the continuous transformations of nature and the human realm (to speak in modern terms, a market economy depends on a multiplicity of prices of diverse range of good). This is not to say that Mencius was a Daoist but that there was a shared sense of cosmic interconnectedness, which can be seen here in the usage of *qing* and the notions of the natural unevenness of things. Mencius may be pointing out to Xu Shen that things naturally tend to be uneven and that anyone who denies or overlooks this is tending to spuriousness. The mutuality implicit in this sense of *qing* is the same mutuality implicit in the mutual interpenetration of the natural processes, such as the fluidity of arousal and response of emotions.

This sense of flow also plays a part in the second appearance of *qing* in the *Mencius* (4B:18), although you wouldn't know it by focusing on the famous phrase in which it occurs: “聲聞過情君子恥之 A gentleman is ashamed if his reputation exceeds his circumstances.” Is it a coincidence that a metaphor of flowing water occurs in the same passage? It would be easier to explain it away as mere coincidence if the metaphor were employed to explain the phrase about reputation, but it is the phrase about reputation that is used to elaborate on the metaphor. It is the sense of flow that is integral to the passage, and *qing* is proposed as the fluid analog in humans. A disciple asks what Confucius meant by his comments in praise of water. Mencius responds that what is praiseworthy about water is its constant flowing, which is due to its originating in a spring. Water that flows due to heavy rains dries up sooner or later. Hence, a person's reputation may flow, but if it is not fed by a spring of genuineness in a person, it is undeserved and therefore shameworthy. Considering the other connections we have seen between a flowing metaphor and *qing* above, that *qing* should be hit on by Mencius as the spring in a person from which a certain goodness flows forth cannot be mere coincidence. It is the perfect choice because although *qing* is internal, there is always a sense of its manifestness. It's manifestness is the flowing,

like water, interacting with all things. This same notion evidences itself when Mencius speaks of his “flood-like *qi*” (2A:2). It is internal to him, dynamic, and can “stuff the whole space between the earth and sky.” If the heartmind is dissatisfied (by one’s conduct), the *qi* starves.

The heartmind in early Chinese thought was seen as the seat of emotions, and not only of *xinuaile*. In 6A:6, Mencius mentions four (or eight, depending on how you count) other emotions: 惻隱 *ce yin*, 羞惡 *xiu wu*, 恭敬 *gong jing*, 是非 *shi fei* commiseration, shame, reverence, and approval. Gaozi has made the assertion that 性 *xing* is 惡 *e* bad, or ugly. By way of explaining that *xing* is 善 *shan* good, or excellent, Mencius says that *qing* can be made excellent: “乃若其情則可以爲善.” And by way of explaining this, he goes on to delineate the four emotions just mentioned. Each of these emotions, Mencius says, is “of the 心 *xin* heartmind”, or as Legge felicitously translates, “feelings”. One who has the heartmind of commiseration is one who feels commiseration. This is most in evidence in 2A:6, where Mencius explicates the feeling of unbearableness in terms of the feeling of commiseration by use of the child in the well example. If a child were about to fall into a well, a person would spontaneously feel commiseration. The person would have 惻隱之心 “the heartmind of commiseration”. The deliberative rationality that we associate with the mind is not in evidence here. Rather, it is the spontaneity of emotions, the automatic interaction of internal and external mediated by the sense organs, one of which is the heartmind. Another example of heartmind as the seat of spontaneous emotions occurs in *Mencius* 3A:4, in which Mencius recounts the origin of the practice of burial of the dead. He says that originally when people left their dead out in the open, they would walk by later and see scavengers feeding on the bodies. At this time: 中心達於面目 “the inner heartmind showed in their faces and eyes.” This close association of *qing* and the heartmind-as-feelings is further evidence of the emotional aspect of *qing* in the *Mencius*.

The final appearance of *qing* in the *Mencius* is in 6A:8. Here it is associated with 好惡 *hao wu* “preferences”. We saw earlier that “preferences” occurs in the *Xunzi* in conjunction with “*xinuaile*” as the six emotions. The notion here is that all people have the same goodness in the beginning, just as denuded Ox Mountain was lush with vegetation in the beginning. People who fetter their *qi* are like Ox Mountain being denuded

by lumberjacks. What exactly is being fettered? *Ren, yi*, the good heartmind (良心 *liangxin*), and preferences, according to Mencius. The end of the passage then asks rhetorically of the person so fettered and now resembling a beast, if that is *qing*, the obvious answer being that it is not, that *qing* is *ren, yi*, the good heartmind, and preferences. Of these four, preferences and the heartmind have been established above as intimately associated with emotions (also note that this is the only passage of the *Mencius* in which “*hao wu*” occurs), we can ask ourselves if *ren* and *yi* are also associated with emotions. The answer turns out to be an emphatic yes when we notice that *ce yin* and *xiu wu*, which we noted as emotions above, are defined in terms of *ren* and *yi* respectively in the passage we have already had recourse to, 2A:6. The passages in *Mencius* containing *qing* no longer stand across a semantic divide from Xunzi. Indeed, the defining of “*qing*” in terms of emotions can now be seen explicitly as early as Mencius, and its implicit content can be seen as far back as the *Shujing*.²⁴

In much of this paper I take issue with statements made by Graham in his 1967 paper “The Background of the Mencian Theory of Human Nature”, using them as a foil to further my suggestion that *qing* has a side to it that draws on the shared, implicit early cosmology of spontaneous interrelations among things (humans included) in a way that imbues it with a sense that we can call “emotional”, thus explaining how a term which originally meant something like our “quintessence” came to mean emotions. I would like to think that the paper is convincing on its own merits but also cannot help thinking that in his later work Graham was heading in the same direction. In his article “What Was New in the Ch’eng-Chu Theory of Human Nature?”, Graham says:

It is still assumed [in Zhu Xi] . . . as in earlier philosophy, that the knower is already in spontaneous interaction with other things. The familiar passage we quoted from the *Zhong Yong* about the harmonious emission of the passions remains the classic account of the springs of human behaviour and its adjustment to

²⁴ We may find corroboration of this early appearance in some excavated texts, depending on the exact dating of the Guodian *Xingzimingchu*, which Peng Hao dates to the end of the 4th century, contemporaneous with Mencius. Assuming this date to be correct, this work indisputably bears out the above argument that *qing* had emotional content prior to Xunzi.

Brian Bruya

norms, and man's reactions to his circumstances are seen as belonging with physical interactions within the universal process of *gan ying* "stimulation [arousal] and response".

If he had turned his attention to *qing* in early Chinese thought with the same sensitivity that he shows in his examination of Neo-Confucian cosmological processes, Graham may have come to a similar conclusion.

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Appendix I - Chart of “*Qing*” Occurrences
in Early Chinese Texts

	<u>Qing</u>	<u>Xinu</u>	<u>Aile</u>	<u>Xinuaile</u>
Shang Shu	1	0	0	0
Zhou Yi (Guaci, Yaoci)	0	0	0	0
Shi Jing	1	0	0	0
Chun Qiu	0	0	0	0
Sunzi Bingfa	7	0	0	0
Lun Yu	2	0	0	0
Zuo Zhuan	14	3	6	1
Mozi	26	0	0	0
Guo Yu	11	3	2	2*
Shang Jun Shu	12	0	0	0
Mengzi	4	0	0	0
Zhuangzi (inner chapters)	19	3	4	1
Bamboo Annals	0	0	0	0
Laozi Dao De Jing	0	0	0	0
Gong Yang Zhuan	3	0	0	0
Xunzi	116	6	3	3
Lü Shi Chun Qiu	88	0	0	0
Gu Liang Zhuan	3	0	0	0
Zhong Yong	0	1	1	1
Da Xue	1	0	0	0
Yi Jing Commentaries (Ten Wings)	14	0	0	0
Guanzi	77	0	0	0
Zhan Guo Ce	19	0	0	0
Er Ya	0			

* appears as "ailexinu"

texts arranged roughly chronologically, according to dating provided in Loewe, Early Chinese Texts

Appendix II - *Qing* in Post-Mencian Texts²⁵

The commentaries to the *Yi Jing* are quite late, and although not pre-Mencian may still shed some light on the meaning of “*qing*” in the *Mencius*. In the commentaries to the *Yi Jing*, *qing* occurs twice in the *Wen Yan* 文言, four times in the *Tuan* 象, and eight times in the *Xi Ci* 繫辭. All of these uses being consistent with the explicit notions of the flowing cosmological processes. In the *Wen Yan* commentary to the first hexagram, *qian* 乾 “creativity”, the activation of creativity is described in terms of mutually influencing forces using the term *tong qing* 通情, “interpenetrating *qing*”. The forces extend to all *qing*, they are mysterious and powerful like the flowing dragon, and they are invisible but manipulable by a *junzi* 君子.

Fully seven of the occurrences are put in terms of the *qing* of natural processes, the *qing* of *tian di* 天地 “the sky and earth”, *wan wu* 萬物 “the myriad things”, or *gui shen* 鬼神 “spiritual forces”. Hexagram 31 is *xian* 咸, which the commentaries inform us is a variant of *gan* 感 “arousal/feeling”. Here, in the *Tuan* commentary, we find in the form of an echo from the *Shang Shu* an explication of *qing* being visible.

天地感而萬物化生。聖人感人心而天下和平。觀其所感而天地萬物之情可見矣。

Nature arouses, and the myriad things come forth through transformation. The sage arouses the heartminds of people, and the world achieves harmony and stability. Watch those things that are aroused, and the *qing* of nature and the myriad things will be visible.

The *qing* of things is visible in the the mutual influence of the natural processes, “natural” in this case being inclusive of the human realm. In the *Tuan* commentary to the following hexagram, *heng* 恆 “constancy”, we find further elaboration:

²⁵ This and the following appendix are intended as non-essential corroboration of the arguments in the main body of the paper, demonstrating that my thesis is not based on just a limited number of texts construed in an artificial or forced manner. As I show, the arguments can be extended to post-Mencian texts and even to the fountainhead of Graham’s speculation, *Zhuangzi*.

日月得天而能久照。四時變化而能久成。聖人久於其道而天下化成。觀其所恆而天地萬物之情可見矣。

The sun and the moon are able to continually shine by virtue of nature. The four seasons change and transform and are thus able to continually bring things to completion. When sages continue on the path, all in the word comes to completion through transformation. Watch that which is continuous, and the *qing* of nature and the myriad things will be visible.

At this point in the intellectual history of China, it is fully apparent that the *qing* is closely associated with mutual arousal and response, the processes of transformation through interpenetration, not a merely static state of affairs or simple facts. The *Xi Ci* concurs, in a fascinatingly ambiguous passage (B:1):

爻象動乎內。吉凶見乎外。功業見乎變。聖人之情見乎辭。

Shaughnessy translates:

Emulation and images move within, and auspiciousness and inauspiciousness are apparent without, achievement and enterprise are apparent in the alternations, and the real characteristics of the sage are apparent in the statements.²⁶

Lynn translates:

As the lines and images move within the hexagrams, so do good fortune and misfortune appear outside them. Meritorious undertakings are revealed in change, and the innate tendencies of the sages are revealed in the attached phrases.²⁷

Wilhelm/Baynes translate:

The lines and images move within, and good fortune and misfortune reveal themselves without. The work and the field of action reveal

²⁶ Shaughnessy 1996, p. 203.

²⁷ Lynn 1994, p. 77.

themselves in the changes. The feelings of the holy sages reveal themselves in the judgments.²⁸

The three translations reveal the three aspects of *qing*, “real characteristics” in Shaughnessy, “innate tendencies” in Lynn, and “feelings” in Wilhelm/Baynes. Are any of these renderings better or worse than the others, more or less correct? All appear to be correct but incomplete. Lynn perfectly captures the perspectival nature of *jian/xian* 見 in rendering it “appear”, meaning both to manifest and be visible. Unfortunately, we do not have an English word that can encompass the full sense of *qing*.

In the course of explaining the early uses of *xing* in his article on the Mencian theory of human nature, Graham appeals to the *Zuo Zhuan* and its use of *xing* in terms of the six *qi* 氣 “vital energies”. He says that “down to the 4th century BC *xing* is not a philosophical term; it belongs to the ordinary language of everyone who worries about his health and hopes to live out his natural life span.”²⁹ In other words, there is an implicit, though properly vague, shared cosmological psychology that precedes the philosophical disputations of the Warring States period. I submit that the emotional side of *qing*, prior to explicit elaboration by Xunzi and others, is part of this shared cosmological psychology.

In the *Zuo Zhuan*’s commentary to year 25 of Duke Shao, we find an involved cosmological psychology explaining in part that the six emotions are generated from the six vital energies. Zichan, in an effort to explain ritual propriety, encompasses the entire cosmos, from the sky and earth, to enjoyment that prompts singing. Not only are the emotions produced from the six energies, so is the *xing* of the earth, the functioning of which process produces the five phases. Then come the five tastes, the five colours, and the five sounds, overindulgence in which causes disorder externally, and internally causes the people to lose their *xing*. The constant interplay of external and internal is such an integral part of the background assumptions of early Chinese thought that cosmology and psychology are themselves interpenetrating categories, external and internal overlapping. The goal is to

²⁸ Wilhelm 1990, p. 327.

²⁹ Graham 1990, p. 13.

achieve a properly balanced process of mutual influence, as opposed to suppressing natural reactions. The emotions are generated by the six vital energies. “With grief there are tears, with enjoyment there is singing and dancing, with happiness there is generosity, with anger there is contention.” It is important not to lose them: “By bringing them into harmony with the *xing* of nature, one can live a long life.” The emotions must be well managed, for the sake of oneself and for the sake of social order. Graham quotes a passage from the *Li Ji*:

何謂人情，喜怒哀懼愛惡欲，七者弗學而能。

He translates:

What is meant by “the genuine in man”? Pleasure, anger, sadness, fear, love, hate, desire, these seven we are capable of without having learned them.

Graham is making the point that *qing* are essential to humans, unlearned. As such, they are, according to him, what is genuine in a person, and so at this point, *qing* may still not mean “emotions”, per se. If we move on to a subsequent passage in the *Li Ji* which Graham does not mention, something else becomes clear.

故聖人之所以治人七情。

Thus, this is how a sage manages the seven *qing* of people.

Is the sage managing the genuine in people, or is he managing the emotions/sentiments in people, or is it both? The sage manages all by understanding and manipulating circumstances large and small, and in doing so, he is able to manage the way people act because their actions are actually reactions based on sentiments which mediate the circumstance the sage is manipulating. The mutual influencing never ends, and society’s welfare as well as an individual’s health depend on properly reacting to all circumstances. Taking this into account, the occurrence of “*qing*” in the passage preceding may also carry emotional overtones.

Although the *Huang Di Nei Jing* dates very late, in the first century BC, the notion of mutual influence can be seen in a very precise mapping, where

one can see the mutual influence of processes across scales and with no regard to boundaries of internal and external. In this schematic, we see that atmospheric phenomena can generate the terrestrial phases, which can generate the tastes, which can generate the visceral circles³⁰, which can generate the body parts, which can generate the secondary visceral circles. Atmospheric phenomena can subdue atmospheric phenomena; tastes can subdue tastes, and psychic³¹ processes (including emotions) can subdue psychic processes. Also, Visceral Circles can control sense organs. Atmospheric phenomena can harm body parts; tastes can harm body parts, and the sense organs can harm visceral circles. I would like to emphasize that although this is a late text, the general notions, as we've just seen, go back at least as far as the *Zuo Zhuan*, and are likely to go all the way back to the *Zhou Yi* and into the mists of Chinese pre-history. As Graham points out, concerns with health and welfare prompt a Chinese to turn to the influences of the wider world.

My point is not that the Chinese developed a correlative cosmology based on mutual influence. This is basic to any lower level instruction of Chinese thought. The point I'm trying to make is that we cannot confine this notion to discussions of "Chinese metaphysics". We like to think that because there are no early expositions of Chinese metaphysics, we needn't begin discussing it until, at the earliest, the Yin Yang theorists, then confine further discussion to the Han cosmologists and finally the great metaphysical apotheosis in Song Neo-Confucianism. The Song Neo-Confucians, however, felt that they were drawing their theories directly from the very earliest Chinese texts. Do we conclude that they were wrong in this simply because they misdated the commentaries to the *Zhou Yi*? The suggestion I'm making is that when considering a term such as *qing*, it may help to broaden our perspective into the wider implicit Chinese cosmology.

Manfred Porkert, a philosophically-minded expositor of Chinese medical theory, offers the following background for those just stepping into the field of Chinese medicine:

³⁰ Following the terminology of Manfred Porkert 1982.

³¹ Again following Porkert 1982.

From the Chinese viewpoint--and this is a concept that is very deeply rooted in the Chinese consciousness--the location itself, the object, is given shape, substance, and structure in various ways by a *constructive* force, as differentiated from an active force. Thus every event is to be regarded as the interaction of an active and a constructive force, each of which has its own peculiar characteristics that determine the nature of the event. And in contrast to the sort of causal thinking that predominates in Western thought--which would contend that every event is the outcome of a cause that has already occurred at some time in the past--the Chinese would explain the same event as the instantaneous interaction of an active and a constructive force, the dynamic consummation of these two forces occurring at that very moment. The active component of every event is designated *yang* and the constructive component *yin*. And this is essentially why it is that the Chinese regard the fundamental ordering of the universe as being based on the interplay of these two groups of opposite but complementary aspects of the principle of energy. Phenomena that would be described in Western terms as "things," or objects, would instead be regarded as the consummation of a whole series of *actions*, or effects, in the past--actions that have accumulated, so to speak, in the past and are only to be sought for in the past. All material things, including the bodies of human beings, are the outcomes and the visible expressions of *quite specific* actions that have accumulated in the past, so that a landscape or a building has acquired certain *specific qualities* as the result of forces interacting over a long period *in the past*.

The specific qualities to which Porkert refers, and felicitously italicizes, are exactly what an early Chinese might refer to as "*qing*"--not static facts but accumulated outcomes from innumerable processes of mutual influence. And what makes Chinese medicine potent is that the specific qualities occur in general patterns. This is why the Chinese doctor takes diagnostics (understanding a patient's *bing qing* 病情 "conditions of an illness") so seriously.

Appendix III - *Qing* in the *Zhuangzi*

We see in the above passages that both *qing* and emotions can be positive in the sense that they can be manipulated to good effect. This notion is especially highlighted in a passage from the *Guo Yu* (8:8):

夫長國者唯知哀樂喜怒之節是以導民。

The only way leaders of a country can guide the people is by understanding the management/timely expression of emotions.

In political and cosmological passages in pre-Han works, *qing* carries positive connotations, insofar as factual understanding and emotions are positive. Likewise, the emotions, in terms of “*xinuaile*”, are positive as long as they are properly regulated and expressed. In the *Zhuangzi* we see that both of these terms, *qing* and *xinuaile*, take an interesting turn to negativity, which may indicate a closer relationship between them than prior analysis has revealed.

If we are to demonstrate definitively that *qing* bore emotional overtones, we must face the challenge that Graham puts forth in his article on the Mencian theory of *xing*. He says:

There is a very striking example of *qing* at the end of the *Te Ch'ung Fu* 德充符 chapter of *Chuang-tzu*, where it is traditionally but surely mistakenly taken to mean the passions. (p. 61)

Graham then quotes the passage in full and offers four objections to interpreting *qing* as emotions. Again, it is not my intention to demonstrate that Graham is wrong in choosing the term “essence” or “genuineness” over “emotions” but to show that “emotions” should not be counted out as a sense of the term *qing* that is compatible with Graham’s “essence”. To do this, I will have to confront Graham’s objections one at a time, either finding them faulty outright, or at least showing how a sense of emotions may still be consistent with his reasoning.

既受食於天，又惡用人。有人之形，無人之情，故群於人。無人之情，故是非不得於身。。。。
惠子謂莊子曰，人故無情乎。

莊子曰，然。

惠子曰，人而無情何以謂人。

莊子曰，道與之貌，天與之形，惡得不謂之人。

惠子曰，既謂之人，惡得無情。

莊子曰，是非吾所謂情也。吾所謂無情者，言人之不以好惡內傷其身，常因自然而不益生也。

Graham translates:

“Having received your food from heaven what do you need from Man? Have the shape of a man, be without the essence of man. Have the shape of man, and so flock with men; be without the essence of man, and so right and wrong will not be found in your person.”

Huizi says: “May a man really be without his essence?”

“Yes.”

“In that case, how can one call him a man?”

“The Way gives him the guise, Heaven gives him the shape, how can one not call him a man?”

“Granted that we do call him a man, how can he be without his essence?”

“Judging between right and wrong is what I mean by his essence. What I mean by being without his essence is that a man does not inwardly wound his person by likes and dislikes, constantly follows the spontaneous and does not add to what grows in him.”

Graham’s first (of four) objection to translating *qing* as “passions” is as follows:

(1) Nowhere else in *Zhuangzi* is *qing* used in this sense. It is assumed throughout that the passions are undesirable disturbances but *qing* (unless qualified as the *qing* of something bad, as in this case that incurable rationalist and moralist, Man) is self-evidently good, the state of perfect genuineness which the sage recovers. Compare such phrases as 遁天倍情 “flee Heaven and turn one’s back on *qing*”; 遁其天，離其性，滅其情，亡其神 “flee what they have from heaven, part from their nature, extinguish their *qing*, destroy their spirit.”; 變其情，易其性 “alter their *qing*, replace their nature.” (*Zhuangzi* ch. 3, 25, 29).

Graham’s objection here is unusual, as if he were objecting to Zhuangzi, himself, rather than to a misguided translator. If Graham is arguing in a general sense that “*qing*” never means “emotions” in the *Zhuangzi*, then the

uniqueness of its usage in this passage would argue in just the opposite direction. In fact, an intransigent translator may suggest that because this passage is unique in marking the *qing* of humans as undesirable, and because emotions are undesirable in *Zhuangzi*, all the more reason to render *qing* uncommonly as “emotions”.

Graham’s second objection:

(2) Distinguishing right from wrong is hardly passion; but it is, in the *Ch’i Wu* 齊物 chapter, what primarily differentiates man from things which follow Heaven.

Here Graham seems to be rather disingenuously playing on the word “passion”, leaning toward the passionate, as opposed to emotions of all kinds. *Zhuangzi* explicitly links *shi fei* with *hao wu*, which, as we have seen, are referred to in the *Xunzi* specifically as among the other emotions. If preferences give rise to distinguishing right from wrong, then *Zhuangzi* has every reason to include them as what differentiates humans from things which follow nature. In addition, Mencius says in 2A:6 and 6A:6 that, along with other feelings such as shame and respect, all people have *shi fei zhi xin* 是非之心 “feelings of right and wrong.” Rather than being a counterexample to the theory of translating *qing* as “emotions”, this passage would actually seem to support it.

Graham’s third objection:

(3) The man without *qing* has only the “shape” and “guise” of a man (*xing*, *mao*, terms commonly contrasted with *qing* “the genuine”).

To be more explicit, we could rephrase Graham’s objection as follows: one should conclude that because elsewhere [not in the Inner Chapters of the *Zhuangzi*] when “*qing*” is opposed to the terms “*xing*” and “*mao*” it means “the genuine”, here, where it is also opposed to those two terms, it should mean “essence” and not “emotions”. This objection loses its force for two reasons. One, Graham has noted that this is a unique passage, so appeal to consistency with other passages seems moot. Two, the sense of “emotions” is not ruled out because if we consider that the essence of a human may be the

faculties of the heartmind, then that would include emotions, which are shown elsewhere to be undesirable for Zhuangzi.³²

Graham's final objection:

(4) It is no business of the sophist Hui Shih to express opinions such as that a man without passions would not be a man, which any of us could contribute to the discussion. His role is to point out the stunning self-contradiction in Zhuangzi's thought, and so involuntarily demonstrate the futility of all logic; and the way in which he worries at the point, three times pointing out the contradiction which always reappears in Zhuangzi's answers, shows that this is what he is doing.

This is an odd argument also, and it owes its oddness to Graham's confusion of the meanings of "genuineness" and "essence". This Aristotelian bent toward essentialism is, in my understanding, completely foreign not only to Zhuangzi but to all of Chinese thought, and it is uncharacteristic of Graham to allow the insinuation of such philosophical confusion.

I would like to reiterate that Graham is certainly correct that *qing* can and often does mean "genuine" or "facts" and that I am not suggesting that the term instead be translated "emotions". I am suggesting that the term is polysemic and includes a sense of "emotions". This particular passage that Graham points out seems, contrary to what Graham says, to be just that type of early passage that should steer us in the direction of emphasizing its polysemy rather than reducing it to a phantom Russellian true denotation.

³² "*Ximu*" occurs three times in two passages of the Inner Chapters, in Chapters 2 and 6. "*Aile*" occurs four times, in Chapters 2, 3, 4, and 6. All of these passages portray the emotions as undesirable perturbations that the sage is above.