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Difference to One: A Nuanced Early Chinese Account of *Tong*

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ABSTRACT

The graph *tong* 同 and its associated concepts, such as *da-tong* (Great *tong* 大同) and *xuan-tong* (mystic or dark *tong* 玄同), have played important roles in the development of Chinese philosophy. Yet *tong* has received scant attention from either western or eastern scholarships. This paper is a first attempt to remedy such regret. Unlike usual understandings of *tong* as sameness or unity, this paper presents a nuanced account from early China, that is, ‘difference to one,’ a definition from the *Mozi* 墨子. This definition can be supported from etymological, textual, and lexical evidence. ‘Difference to one’ should not be solely attributed to a Mohist understanding; it in fact represents a common understanding of *tong* across philosophical streams in early China. This nuanced account provides new insights into the concept of *tong* in early philosophical texts, and furthermore breaks solid grounds for further studies of *tong* and its associated concepts.

KEYWORDS

Tong; harmony; sameness; unity; difference; one

1. Introduction

The graph *tong* 同¹ is used frequently in classic texts and has played an important role in the development of Chinese philosophy. Yet unlike many other terms, *tong* has received little attention from either Western or Eastern scholarships. This paper is a first attempt to remedy such regret.

Regarding the term *tong*, there are several puzzles surrounding it. First, it has been evaluated both positively and negatively. For instance, in the *Lunyu* (*The Analects* 論語), Kongzi 孔子 says, ‘Noble people are in harmony but not in *tong*; petty people are in *tong* but not in harmony’ (君子和而不同, 小人同而不和) (Cheng, 1990, p. 935), taking *tong* to be a negative feature associated with petty people. The *Guoyu* (*Sayings of States* 國語) and *Zuozhuan* (*Zuo commentaries on the Spring and Autumn* 左傳) even suggest that in contrast with harmony, which often leads to success and prosperity, *tong* results in failure and should be avoided.² *Tong* is also used positively as a desired state in concepts such as *da-tong* and *xuan-tong*. The ‘Li Yun’ (Prevailing of Rituals 禮運) of *Liji* (*Book of Rituals* 禮記) portrays *da-tong* as an ideal state that a society would eventually attain (Sun, 1989, pp. 581–603); *xuan-tong* in Daoist tradition represents an ideal spiritual state that is the result of self-cultivation.³

Second, various meanings or translations of *tong* furthermore complicate understandings of this term. For example, *tong* can refer to sameness as in *xiang-tong* (相同), while

it is sometimes used to refer to unity (that is, *tong-yi* 同一).⁴ Then, how do we understand the meaning of *tong*? Why was *tong* viewed both negatively and positively?

The *Canon* 經 and *Explanation* 說 of the *Mozi* provide a definition of *tong* as ‘being different but in this (aspect) being one’ (for short, ‘difference to one’, hereafter DTO)⁵ and elaborate on how *tong* can be understood differently. The *Canon*’s definition gained lexical support from the *Shuowen jiezi* (*Paraphrasing Texts and Graphs* 說文解字)—a Han dynasty lexicon dated approximately 100 C.E.—which defines *tong* as *he hui* (合會) (Duan, 1981, p. 353). Both the graphs *he* and *hui* denote a sense of different things being one, that is, DTO. Another lexicon, the *Guangya* (*Expanding Graphs* 廣雅), dated appropriately 227 C.E., supported the *Canon*’s definition by following the *Shuowen jiezi*’s definition to explain *he* as *tong* (合, 同也) (Wang, 2002, p. 116). The lexical evidence indicates that the *Canon*’s definition of *tong* had already been well accepted and prevalent as of the latter Han dynasty.

Therefore, unlike simply explaining *tong* as sameness or unity, this paper understands *tong* as DTO, and employs the *Canon*’s definition as a starting point to account for usages of this graph in early texts. The first part of this paper focuses on the *Canon* and *Explanation*, analyzing how different types of *tong* involve DTO. In this part, I propose that DTO can be more accurately described as ‘when different X, where X can be properties, characteristics, entities, etc., share at least a Y, where Y can be property, characteristic, entity, etc., the different X become one with respect to Y.’ The second part of this paper adopts etymological, lexical, and textual evidence to demonstrate that every instance for early Chinese usage of *tong* necessarily connotes DTO. The third part investigates *tong*’s negative and positive connotations, concentrating on some discourses on this concept in early philosophical texts.

2. Difference to one: *Mozi*’s understanding of *tong*

Let us start from the *Canon*’s definition of *tong* as ‘being different but in this (aspect) being one.’ This definition indicates that *tong* involves difference 異, which the *Canon* suggests can be divided into four types, that is, two (二), not being a part ([不]體), not being together (不合), and not being of a class (不類).⁶ The *Explanations* 說 of the *Canon* accounts for the four types as follows: two (names) certainly being different is two⁷; not being joined is not being a part; not being in the same place is not being together; not having what is the same is not being of a class” (Johnston, 2009, p. 453).

The *Canon* suggests that there are four types of *tong* corresponding to the four types of difference, that is, duplication (重), being a body (體), being together (合), and being of a class (類) (Sun, 2001, p. 316). The *Explanations* of the *Canon* interprets the four types of *tong* as follows:

Tong: Two names for one entity is *tong* of duplication. Not being outside the whole is *tong* of being a body. Both being situated in the room is *tong* of being together. Being the same in some respect is *tong* of being a class. (Johnston, 2009, p. 453)

Accordingly, we can provide examples for the four types of *tong*. For the first type, two names, such as Confucius and Kongzi, can refer to one person. For the second, feet and hands are both parts of a body. For the third, A and B are each in a room. For the fourth, horse and dog both belong to the class of ‘animal.’

Then, how can the relations between the four types of difference and *tong* be accounted for by the definition of *tong* as ‘being different but in this (aspect) being one?’ For the first type of difference and *tong*, it can be understood as different names (such as Confucius and Kongzi) with respect to the referent being one. For the second type, there are different parts (e.g., feet and hands) but with respect to the body to which they belong being one. The relation in the third type is that of different entities (such as people) but with respect to the room in which they are situated ‘being one,’ that is, being in one place. In the fourth type, the relation is that of different entities (e.g. horse and dog) but with respect to the class (for example, the class of animal) ‘being one,’ that is, being in one class.

It should be noted that ‘being one’ (一) in the *Canon’s* definition appears ambiguous, and requires clarification. According to the four types of *tong*, ‘being one’ can mean ‘one entity’ to which different names refer, or ‘the whole’ to which parts belong, or ‘a single place’ in which entities are, or ‘a class’ to which entities belong. Usually, ‘being one’ is used in the third sense, referring to a state of different entities becoming the whole. Nevertheless, it must be noted that the *Canon* understands ‘being one’ more broadly than we commonly do. In the discussion of ‘being one,’ I adopt the *Canon’s* understanding.

We have discussed how the *Canon’s* definition of ‘being different but in this (aspect) being one’ (we call it definition A) is used to account for the four types of *tong*. Furthermore, such a definition can be paraphrased as this (we call this definition B): when different X, where X can be properties, characteristics, entities, etc., share at least a Y, where Y can be property, characteristic, entity, etc., the different X become one with respect to Y.

Then, the above four types of *tong* can be accounted by the definition B as follows. For the first type, X are names, and Y is the referent. For example, X represents Confucius and Kongzi, and Y represents the person that the names, Confucius and Kongzi, refer to; hence Confucius and Kongzi become one with respect to the person that the two names refer to. For the second, X are parts of body, and Y is the body. For example, X represents feet and hands, and Y is the body; hence feet and hands become one with respect to the body. Third, X are entities, and Y is a room. For example, X represents chairs and desks, and Y is the room that the chairs and desks share; hence chairs and desks become one with respect to the room. Fourth, X are entities, and Y is a class. For example, X represents dogs and horses, and Y refers to animal; hence dogs and horses become one with respect to animal.

In addition, as the *Canon’s* definition of *tong* involves the concept of oneness, an analysis of this concept can strengthen our understanding of *tong*. P. J. Ivanhoe’s work on oneness in this sense is quite helpful. Observing the concept of oneness in the course of Chinese history, Ivanhoe identifies five different senses and provides respective examples:

Even a concept as apparently simple as “oneness” can be complex: it turns out there is more than one way to be one. The strongest sense in which two or more things can be one is by the relation of numerical identity: Clark Kent and Superman are one in this way. Some who defend environmental concern based on interpretations of the Gaia hypothesis rely on an only slightly less robust sense of oneness—something we might refer to as the “nature is a blended whole” hypothesis—when they insist that each and every part of the world is

inextricably intertwined and passes in and out of one another. Two or more things can also be one by being parts of a single organic body, as my arm is one with the rest of me. This idea often is confused with the idea of being part of a single ecosystem. In the latter case, though, the relationship between part and whole is not as direct or crucial as in the former. Removing important members of an ecosystem may alter the system, but rarely will it lead to its collapse or directly and immediately affect all the other parts; cutting off a person's arm or head will have more immediate and dire results. A fifth way to be one with others is as a member of some tradition, institution, team, club, or group. (Ivanhoe, 2018, p. 19)⁸

The five senses of oneness are from the strongest to the broadest sense in terms of the relations between different entities becoming one. First, the strongest sense in which two or more things can be one is by the relation of numerical identity. The second is a slightly less robust sense, in which we might refer to 'nature as a blended whole'. Third, two or more things can be one by being parts of a single organic body. Fourth, two or more things can be one by being part of a single ecosystem. The fifth sense is that two or more things can be one by being members of some tradition, institution, team, club, or group, among others.

It should be noted that Ivanhoe constrains his account of oneness with regard to notions of anthropocentrism (Ivanhoe, 2015, p. 245). Nevertheless, the senses of oneness—except the second sense, which is based on the Gaia hypothesis proposed by contemporary scholars—can be accounted for by the *Canon's* four types of *tong*. The strongest sense is by the relation of numerical identity. Ivanhoe gives an example as 'Clark Kent and Superman are one,' which corresponds to the *tong* of duplication, as the *Explanation* says 'two names for one entity.' The third sense is by being parts of a single organic body, which coincides with the *tong* of being one body. The fourth sense is by being part of a single ecosystem. Ivanhoe suggests that for this sense, the relationship between part and whole is less direct or crucial than in the former because cutting off a person's arm or head will have immediate and dire results, while removing important members of an ecosystem will rarely lead to the system's collapse or directly affect all the other parts. Obviously, such a sense can be accounted for by the *Canon's tong* of being together: when entities are in one (place or ecosystem), a single entity is related in varying degrees to other entities or the whole. Ivanhoe's fifth sense of oneness can also be accounted for by the *tong* of being a class. Being one with others, such as a member of some tradition, institution, team, and so on, occurs when different entities share some aspect (such as a tradition, an institution, or a team), and they are one in such an aspect.

In addition, although Ivanhoe's second sense cannot be explained by the *Canon's* four types of *tong*, such a sense can be easily accounted for by the definition: different entities or elements share the whole nature, they become one with respect to the whole nature.

The *Canon's* definition of 'being different but in this (aspect) being one' fully conveys the meaning of *tong*. The following part uses etymological, lexical, and textual evidence to support such a definition.

3. Etymological, lexical, and textual evidence

Let us turn to the etymological evidence. The graph '同' (*tong*) in oracle bones, the earliest material available, is often inscribed as  (Li, 1999, p. 79, 1965, p. 2527). The

graph  consists of two parts: the upper part  and the lower part . There are two different readings for the combination of these two parts. In the first reading, the upper part  is considered to represent a tool which is used for four people to carry things, and the lower part  represents a mouth (口). The combination of  and  signifies a state in which four people are coordinated in completing a task by following an oral command (Li, 2012, p. 680). This reading connotes that different people, with respect to an oral command, are the ones completing a task.

The second reading also interprets the lower part as a mouth (口), but reads the upper  as the graph '凡',⁹ the meaning of which is 'in all or together' (*zuikuo* 最括).¹⁰ Made up of '口' and '凡,' the graph '同' can be understood as 'different sounds being together.'¹¹ On this reading, *tong* means that different sounds, with respect to tones or melody, for example, are one.

Whatever reading it may be, the graph *tong* connotes that different entities (i.e. people or sounds), by sharing some respect (e.g. a command, tone, or melody), become one.

In addition to etymological readings, various usages of *tong* in early texts also support that definition. In the *Shijing* (*Book of Poetry* 詩經), *tong* in phrases such as *she fu ji tong* ('archers already *tong*' 射夫既同) and *si fang ji tong* ('[people in] four directions [are] *tong* [and subject to the king]' 四方攸同) (Cheng and Jiang, 1999, p. 696, 796), signifies that different people, by sharing a command or an authority, become one. Additionally, in the *Shangshu* 尚書, *tong* in phrases such as *niao shu tong xue* ('birds and mice are *tong* in a cave' 鳥鼠同穴) or *si hai hui tong* ('four seas converging and *tong*' 四海會同) (Huang, 2007, p. 237, 238) describes the way that different entities (say, birds and mice, or rivers), by sharing a place (such as a cave), become one.

Furthermore, the lexical account provides support for the definition of *tong*. The lexicon *Shuowen jiezi* explains *tong* as *he hui* (合會). It is worth noting that the graph '合' (*he*) is inscribed as , and '會' (*hui*) as  in the oracle bones (Li, 1999, p. 380, 400). Both *he* and *hui* describe a state in which the upper part '夂,' symbolizing a bronze cover, is matched with the lower part , which represents a bronze vessel.¹² A difference between *he* and *hui* is that the graph —which represents some things that are stored in the bronze vessel (Li, 1999, p. 405)—is only in the middle part of '會.' It is evident that both signify a match between the upper bronze cover and the lower bronze vessel. Therefore, both graphs *he* and *hui* mean that different entities (in this case, the upper cover and the lower bronze vessel), by sharing some aspect (say, the size of the contact part between the upper cover and the lower bronze vessel), become one.¹³ In addition, either *he* or *hui* in such phrases as *qi zi hao he* ('wife and children [getting along with each other] well and *he*' 妻子好合),¹⁴ *jiu he zhu hou* ('*he* the feudal princes for nine times' 九合諸侯) (Cheng, 1990, p. 982), *yu xi rong hui yi fa zhou* ('*hui* western barbarians to attack Zhou' 與西戎會以伐周) (Zuo, 1978, p. 519), *hui yu wen* ('[rivers] *hui* into Wen river' 會于汶) (Sun, 1986, p. 198), can be understood as different entities (such as people or rivers), by sharing some aspect (such as wills or motives, a political goal, or a place), becoming one.

In addition to the graphs of *tong*, *he*, and *hui*, the expressions—such as *hui-tong* and *he-tong*—in which *tong* is used together with *he* or *hui* can also be accounted for by the *Canon's* definition. For example, consider *si hai hui tong* ('four seas *hui* and *tong*' 四海會同) (Huang, 2007, p. 238), *ba fang hui tong* ('[people] from eight directions *hui* and *tong*' 八方會同) (Huang, 1996, p. 448), *he tong si sheng zhi xing* ('*he* and *tong* the views on life

and death' 合同死生之形) (Liu, 1989, p. 701), and *tian xia he tong wei yi* ('all under heaven *he* and *tong* as one' 天下合同為一) (Huang, 1990, p. 217).¹⁵ Both *hui-tong* and *he-tong* in these phrases refer to different entities (such as four seas, different people, different views on life and death), which by sharing some aspect (say, a place, an understanding, or an authority), become one.

Therefore, etymological, lexical, and textual evidence suggests that the *Canon's* definition not only represents the understanding of *tong* among authors of the *Mozi*, but more generally reflects how early Chinese viewed DTO in using such a graph. In the next part, employing the *Canon's* definition, I focus on some particular texts in analyzing *tong's* negative and positive connotations.

4. The negative and positive connotations of *tong*

Let us turn to *tong's* connotations. Notably, its negative connotation concerns many early thinkers. For example, the *Guoyu*, *Zuozhuan*, and *Lǚshi chunqiu* (*The Spring and Autumn by Lü Family* 呂氏春秋), all take it in a negative sense, particularly in comparison with harmony. Both the *Guoyu* and the *Zuozhuan* carry detailed discourses on *tong*. Although the scenarios in the two texts are assumed to occur in different times and between different people, the motifs and rhetoric between the two texts are very similar.¹⁶ Both discourses originate from political concerns. To argue that *tong* in politics is unsustainable, they use similar metaphors such as cooking and music; they hold the same recognition that *tong* in cooking or music only results in a tasteless dish or a monotonous piece (Zuo, 1978, pp. 515–516; Li, 2000, pp. 1613–1620). The reason that the culinary and musical metaphors are used in political discourse is that political activities, cooking, and music, all involve the same process of DTO. The *Zuozhuan* says:

Harmony is like making soup, using water and fire, vinegar, pickle, salt, and plums to cook fish. It is made to boil by the firewood, and then the cook harmonizes the ingredients, equalizing the several flavors, in order to supply whatever is deficient and carry off whatever is in excess. Then the gentleman eats it so as to compose his heart-mind. So it is in the relations of ruler and minister. When there is in what the ruler approves of anything that is not proper, the minister calls attention to that impropriety, in order to make the approval entirely correct. When there is in what the ruler disapproves of anything that is proper, the minister brings forward that propriety, in order to remove occasion for the disapproval. In this way the government is made equal, with no infringement of what is right, and there is no quarrelling with it in heart-mind of the people. (Legge, 1861, p. 684)¹⁷

Making soup involves a process of using different ingredients, such as water, vinegar, pickle, salt, plums and fish, to finally make a pot of fish-soup. It means that different ingredients become one with respect to a pot of fish-soup.¹⁸ Then, the text turns to music and claims:

Sounds are like flavors. Different elements complete each other. One breath, two styles, three types, four instruments, five sounds, six measures, seven notes, eight winds, and nine songs. Different sounds complement each other: the clear and the thick, the large and the small, the short and the long, the fast and the slow, the sorrowful and the joyful, the strong and the tender, the lingering and the rapid, the high and the low, the in and the out, and the close and the diffuse. The good person listens to this kind of music in order to harmonize his heart-mind. (Legge, 1861, p. 684)

A piece of music involves a process of making various sounds being one piece of music.¹⁹ In politics, a process of DTO occurs when reconciling different opinions—from a ruler and ministers—to form a single decision. Moreover, the operation of nature also involves DTO. The *Guoyu* says, ‘former kings used soil to mix together metals, woods, water, and fire to produce various types of things’ (先王以土與金木水火雜, 以成百物)(Zuo, 1978, p. 515). In this case, the process of DTO is of mixing different elements together—say, soil, metal, wood, water, and fire—to form each and everything. Therefore, cooking, musical performance, political negotiation, and the operation of nature, can be accounted for by the *Canon’s* definition of *tong*: different X (such as ingredients, sounds, opinions, and elements), by sharing Y (such as a principle), becoming one. Although those examples are not named as *tong*, they actually belong to *tong’s* broad sense.

Then, how X become one depends upon what Y they share. Both the *Guoyu* and the *Zuozhuan* discuss two distinct Y. For the first, Y represents ‘harmony’ (和), which refers to balancing and mutual transformation between X (Li, 2014, p. 27).²⁰ Harmony can be considered as a ‘principle’ applicable to every activity in natural and social operations.²¹ In cooking, different ingredients, by sharing the principle of harmony, ‘supplying whatever is deficient (in flavors) and carrying off whatever is in excess,’ become a delicious one. In musical performance, different sounds, by sharing the principle of harmony, ‘completing and complementing each other,’ become a pleasant one (i.e. a piece of music). In the operation of nature, different elements (that is, soil, metals, woods, water, and fire), by sharing the principle of harmony, viz., balancing and transforming each other,²² become one (a new thing). In addition, in political negotiation, different opinions (from ministers and the ruler), by sharing the principle of harmony, viz., complementing and balancing each other, become a wise one (an opinion on a specific policy).²³ By sharing the principle of harmony, different X complement, balance, and complete each another, thereby realizing each ‘full potential in a harmonious whole’ (Li, 2014, p. 27), that is, being a harmonious one.

In contrast to the principle of harmony, the *Guoyu* and the *Zuozhuan* suggest the second Y, a principle of ‘*tong*’ (being identical), which refers to excluding difference and diversity between X. For the use of such a principle in cooking, musical performance, political negotiation, and the operation of nature, it can be described as different X (i.e. ingredients, sounds, opinions, and elements), by sharing the principle of excluding difference and diversity between them, become one, in which different X are identical. Both the *Guoyu* and the *Zuozhuan* believe that a ‘one,’ in which different X are identical, is not pleasant or enjoyable (i.e. in cooking and musical performance), not wise and may even incur failure (in political negotiation), or lead to an impoverished condition (in nature).²⁴ Therefore, such a principle of ‘*tong*’ should be avoided.

Therefore, according to the *Canon’s* definition, both the *Guoyu* and the *Zuozhuan* actually show two visions of *tong*. For the first, the principle of harmony is involved. By balancing, complementing, and completing each other, different X become a harmonious one. In the second, the principle of ‘*tong*’ is used through excluding difference and diversity, and thereby different X become one (in which X are identical), which often connotes an unpleasant or impoverished condition. In contrast, the first vision embraces and pursues difference and diversity, and as a result, brings continuance and prosperity.²⁵ Hence, the *Guoyu* maintains that ‘*he-tong* should be pursued’ (務和同也) (Zuo, 1978,

p. 516). In other words, a state of *tong* that follows the principle of harmony—which is positive—deserves pursuit, whereas a vision of *tong* that is associated with the principle of ‘*tong*’—which is often evaluated as negative—should be avoided.²⁶

Furthermore, the positive *tong* can be identified from the expression *he-tong* (harmonious *tong* 和同). In addition to occurring in the *Guoyu*, such expression appears in several other early texts, which use it generally on two levels. On the social level, it is used in phrases such as *shang xia he-tong* (‘the higher and lower in *he-tong*’ 上下和同) and *yu qi ren zhi he-tong yi ting ling* (‘expecting people in *he-tong* to listen to commands’ 欲其人之和同以聽令) (Sun, 1989, p. 1277; Li, 2009, p. 275), referring to a state in which different people, sharing the principle of harmony, become one. On the cosmic level, *he-tong* signifies a state in which different entities (such as *qi*, the ten thousand things), by sharing harmony, become one.²⁷ In addition, another expression, *he-yi* (harmonious oneness 和一), which refers to a state in which different people are one because of harmonization,²⁸ expresses the same sense as the social level’s *he-tong*. Both *he-tong* and *he-yi* indicate an ideal state of oneness on a social or cosmic level, which results from harmonization between different entities.

5. Concluding remarks

This paper began by analyzing the *Mozi*’s account of *tong* and then employed etymological, lexical, and textual evidence to demonstrate that DTO reflects not only the authors of the *Mozi*’s understanding of *tong* but more fundamentally how early Chinese used such a concept to denote relations between difference and one.

Taking *tong* as DTO means that this concept in isolation does not have any positive or negative connotations. Its every concrete connotation depends upon a particular context. Some earlier texts, such as the *Guoyu* and *Zuozhuan*, present a vision of *tong*, which relates to the principle of ‘*tong*’ (being identical). In this vision, by excluding diversity and differences, different X (such as entities, opinions, etc.) become one, in which they are identical. Such a vision is not desirable and should be avoided. For another vision of *tong*, in which the principle of harmony is involved, different X, through complementing, balancing, and completing each other, become a harmonious one. Obviously, such a harmonious one is not achieved by sacrificing differences and diversity; differences and diversity, on the contrary, are essential in achieving the ideal state. The state of *tong* achieved through harmonization is always worthy of pursuit.

In addition, this paper avoids employing words such as sameness and unity to explain *tong*, which does not mean that these words cannot account for *tong*. In this paper, though, I do suggest that in comparison with those words, the definition, that is, DTO, can be more thoroughly conveying the meaning of *tong*: different X, by sharing at least a Y, become one. Associating *tong* with DTO, early Chinese thinkers developed new understandings, such as *da-tong* and *xuan-tong*, of how different X on individual, social, and cosmic level, become one. Investigations on those aspects have been conducted in my other studies.

Notes

1. *Tong* 同 is usually translated as sameness or unity. Yet neither sameness nor unity can accurately correspond to the account, namely, ‘difference to one,’ that this paper presents.

To avoid confusions, in the following discussions, I do not use 'sameness' or 'unity' to refer to *tong*, but keep *tong* untranslated.

2. The two discourses can be found in Zuo (1978, pp. 515–516) and Li (2000, pp. 1613–1620). I elaborate on the two discourses in this paper. Besides the *Guoyu* and *Zuozhuan*, the *Houhanshu* (*History of the Latter Han* 後漢書) records a scholar of the Han dynasty, Liu Liang 劉梁, who in his 'Discourse on differentiating harmony and *tong*' (辯和同), argues that harmony leads to gains, whereas *tong* results in losses (Fan, 1965, p. 2636), which indicates that early thinkers recognized the negative connotation of *tong*.
3. For instance, the *Laozi* says, '和其光, 同其塵, 是謂玄同' (harmonize the light, *tong* the dust, that is which is called *xuan-tong*). See Lou (2008, p. 148). '萬物玄同' (the ten thousand things in *xuan-tong*) can be found in the *Wenzi* 文子. See Li (2004, p. 17).
4. Li Chenyang points out that there are two related meanings of *tong*: sameness and unity or togetherness (Li, 2014, p. 11). Brook Ziporyn translates *tong* of the *Mozi* as sameness or conforming (Ziporyn, 2012, p. 68). Alan Chan takes *tong* in the *Lunyu* as sameness (Chan, 2011, pp. 46–47). In addition to the *Lunyu* in which *tong* refers to sameness, the *Shangshu* (*Book of Hisotry* 尚書) refers to *tong* as unity in phrases such as *si hai hui tong* (four seas converging together 四海會同), *Yong Ju hui tong* (river Yong and Ju converging together 滄沮會同). See Sun (1986, p. 201, 147).
5. That is, difference but all being in oneness (異而俱於之一也). Sun suggests that this phrase should be understood as difference being in oneness with respect to this point (異而俱於是也). See Sun (2001, p. 316).
6. The translation is mainly from *The Mozi: A Complete Translation* (Johnston, 2009, pp. 452–453). I use italics in places where I made revisions.
7. There is some uncertainty on the interpretation of '二' (two). I accept the opinion accepted by most of the *Mozi* editors that '二' refers to two names. For the discussion, see Johnston (2009, p. 452).
8. For discussions of the five senses of oneness, see Ivanhoe (2015, p. 233, 2018, p. 19; Ivanhoe, 1998, pp. 59–76). Ziporyn discusses oneness under the 'one-many' problem in a different way, which is understood in his framework of coherence (Ziporyn, 2012, pp. 49–88). Li Chenyang clarifies different types of oneness in the *Zhuangzi* 莊子 (Li, 2013, pp. 54–55). Guat-Peng Ngoi discusses oneness in Song-Ming Confucians (Ngoi, 2016, pp. 673–694).
9. Detailed discussions can be found in Li (1999, pp. 81–84).
10. This explanation can be found in Duan (1981, p. 681). Xu also describes the evolution of this graph (Xu, 1989, p. 1450).
11. Yang Shuda 楊樹達 suggests that 'that which sounds from different mouths are meeting together is called *tong*' (凡口為同) (Yang, 2007, p. 92). Gaotian Zhongzhou 高田忠周 also suggests that *tong* refers to 'many mouths are in harmony' (眾口同和) and 'different mouth are in a tone' (異口同音) (Li, 1999, p. 82).
12. Detailed discussions on '合' and '會' are provided in Li (1999, pp. 381–384, 402–406).
13. It should be noted that the meanings of *hui* and *he* in the *Shuowen jiezi* appear to be synonymous; Xu Shen 許慎 explains 會 as 合 (會, 合也) (Duan, 1981, p. 223).
14. '好合' here means 'wills and motives are in *he*' (志意合也). See Ma (1988, p. 506).
15. It should be noted that the meanings between *tong*, *he*, and *hui* in *hui-tong* and *he-tong* may have slight differences. In the *he-tong* and *hui-tong*, *he* and *hui* emphasize a process of meeting, gathering, or matching, while *tong* focuses more on the state of oneness that is the result from those processes. However, *he-tong* and *hui-tong* express a process of different entities becoming one.
16. The *Lǐshì chūnqiū* 呂氏春秋 has the same scenario as the *Zuozhuan*. See Xu (2009, p. 65–67). Given that the *Zuozhuan* is believed to have been compiled earlier than the *Lǐshì chūnqiū*, it is possible that the *Lǐshì chūnqiū* borrowed from the *Zuozhuan*, which also provides a more detailed account. Therefore, there is no need to discuss the *Lǐshì chūnqiū* and I only focus on the *Guoyu* and *Zuozhuan*.
17. The translation is based on James Legge's translation, *The Chun-Ts'ew with the Tso Chua*.

18. The culinary metaphor is described as 'harmonizing the five flavors to provide fitness for the mouth' (和五味以調口) in the *Guoyu*. It also involves a process of making different entities, for example, five flavors, to be one. See Zuo (1978, p. 515).
19. For music, the *Guoyu* suggests, 'harmonizing the six tones to sharpen the ear's hearing' (和六律以聰耳), which involves a process of difference (six tones) to be one (a piece of music), see Zuo (1978, p. 515).
20. It should be pointed out that the meanings of harmony between culinary and musical metaphors may be different (Chan, 2011, pp. 37–50). The two, though, share basic features that I discuss here (Li, 2013, pp. 24–27).
21. Li Chenyang understands Confucian harmony as 'a dynamic and generative process' (Li, 2014, p.1) which Ziporyn insightfully suggests should be better translated as 'harmonization': a constant process of finding ways to harmonize (Ziporyn, 2012, p. 65). My understanding of harmony as a principle here is compatible with Li and Ziporyn's, for a process of harmonization, in fact, is a process in which the principle of harmony is consciously applied, for example, in political activities, or unconsciously operated, such as, in the operation of nature.
22. The *Guoyu* says, 'Harmony is what brings fruition and life to things, while sameness leads to un-continuance. To balance the different with the different is called harmony; this is why it can flourish and grow, and why things all return and converge' (夫和實生物, 同則不繼。以他平他謂之和, 故能豐長而歸之). This suggests that because of the process of balancing different elements in nature, things start to have life, flourish and grow. See (Zuo, 1978, p. 515).
23. The *Zuozhuan* also suggests that good governing results from balances between harsh and slack policies (寬以濟猛, 猛以濟寬, 政是以和). See Li (2000, p.1622).
24. In *Zuozhuan*'s words, they are '以水濟水' (use water to add water), '琴瑟之專壹'(lute and lyre played in one note), and '君所謂可, 據亦曰可, 君所謂否, 據亦曰否' (the ruler says yes, Ju says yes; the ruler says no, Ju says no) (Li, 2000, pp. 1619–1620), or in *Guoyu*'s words, '聲一無聽' (sounds in one note cannot be enjoyable) and '味一無果' (food in one ingredient cannot be delicious) (Zuo, 1978, p. 516).
25. For example, *Guoyu* says, '和實生物, 同則不繼'(harmony brings lives to things, whereas *tong* cannot bring continuity to things) (Zuo, 1978, p. 515).
26. Qian Gengsen 錢耕森 also notes that the *Guoyu* focuses on the negative type of *tong*, but it also notices its positive aspect (Qian, 2016, pp. 53–54).
27. This sense of *he-tong* (harmony and *tong* 和同) is used in phrases such as '天氣下降, 地氣上騰, 天地和同'(The heavenly *qi* descends, the earthy *qi* arises, heaven and earth are in harmony and *tong*) (Sun, 1989, p.417), '萬物和同' (The ten thousand things in harmony and *tong*) in Liu (1989, p. 59).
28. *He-yi* (harmonious oneness 和一) appears two times in the *Xunzi*, that is, '群居和一之道'(The way of harmonious oneness when living with others), '人所以群居和一之理'(the principle that people follow to live with others). *He* 和 and *yi* 一 are not used together in an expression such as '和則一, 一則多力'(harmony leads to oneness, oneness leads to great strength), but actually describe the same sense as *he-yi*. See Wang (1988, p.71, 373, 164).

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