

***Li: Transcendent or Immanent?***  
**Its Significance and History in Chinese Philosophy**

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One of the more philosophically significant concepts in the history of Chinese thought is *li* (理). It has most often been translated into English as “principle” and occasionally also “order,” “pattern,” “coherence,” “law,” “organization,” “reason,” and “form.” Recent scholars have noted however that there truly is no equivalent to *li* in English. What is the meaning of *li*? The concept is often associated with a school of Confucianism that emerged during the Song Dynasty, called *lixue* (“School/Learning of *li*”; 理学), wherein its sense is associated with the cosmological notions of the *taiji* (“great ultimate”; 太極), *tian* (“Heaven”; 天), and *dao* (“way”; 道) though not without ethical connotations. Its function has often been viewed in the past by comparativists, somewhat misleadingly, as akin to the role played by “form” or “idea” (*eidos, idea*) in Platonist metaphysics. How might we understand this concept in a way that would make sense to philosophers of today? In order to better comprehend the meaning of *li*, we ought to look into its developmental history both before and after it occupied the center stage of *lixue*. A look into the history of the concept should cast the notion in a clearer light.

Despite the manifold significances that *li* has taken-on in different contexts throughout the intellectual history of China, it is safe to say that from its earliest appearances, the word denotes some sort of an ordering or patterning process. Even prior to the Han Dynasty period (206BCE-220CE), however, the sense of *li* evolves from a

basic verbal meaning of “to order” to encompass its nominal sense of “order” or “pattern,” both in its explanatory and normative senses, both cosmologically and ethically. For example, early references of the term are to the topographical division or boundary lines marking off areas in fields<sup>1</sup> or the striation patterns of uncut pieces of jade.<sup>2</sup> From this basic meaning, its significance develops to encompass a normative function: to order something is to differentiate it from others, and hence to distinguish something, giving it order, setting it aside from disorder. *Li* which referred to the striation patterns of jade then also comes to connote the polishing of jade, its preparation into jade implements.<sup>3</sup> We can also see this original significance of *li* depicted in its ideograph. The left radical is the character *yu* (玉), representing three pieces of jade. And the right radical is the character *li* (里), consisting of two graphs, denoting “field” (田) on the top and “ground” (土) on the bottom, together designating a Chinese “measure” or “mile.”<sup>4</sup> In its more descriptive usage, *li* has come to take on the explanatory sense of a “cause” or “reason” for something’s being, its “rationale” explaining “why” something is the way it is or describing “how” it came into being. Metaphysically, this “why” has to do with the order(ing) of things. In the pairing of its descriptive sense with its normative usage (prescriptive sense), *li* comes to mean both *why* things are the way they are and *how* things *ought* to be. Metaphorically bringing to mind the criss-crossing lines of a paddy field or the lines of jade, *li* is the connecting thread that patterns how things *are* and *ought to be*. But if *li* is thus the metaphysical “cause” or “principle” for the way things are, as both their *reason* and *norm*, does that mean that it transcends things of the world, as somehow separate from, above and beyond, the concrete things thus ordered?

It is only at a certain point in the history of Chinese thought that *li* appears to occupy such a transcendent position. This is so, especially in its juxtaposition to the notion of *qi* (氣), in other words as something that orders the flow of the psycho-physical or material energy (*qi*) constituting concrete things and provides them with their normative standard.<sup>5</sup> This apparent transcendentalization of *li* in its concomitant relationship with *qi* is found only at a particular moment in Chinese intellectual history, i.e., in its appropriation by *lixue*. And yet this transcendentalization is only *apparent* and one might question whether that was indeed the true intent behind the systematization of the cosmological and ethical system of *li* undertaken by the most significant thinker of that school of Song Neo-Confucianism, Zhu Xi (朱熹). Among some notable modern scholars of Chinese thought, however — exemplified by Fung Youlan<sup>6</sup> — this has given rise to the comparison of *li*, in its relation to *qi*, with the Platonist concept of the *idea* in its relation to matter.<sup>7</sup> To understand *li* in terms of a “principle” that orders the phenomenal from an ontologically independent noumenal realm akin to the Platonic realm of *ideas* however seems highly dubious. When we take into view the concept’s history, encompassing both the pre-Song classical and the post-Song modern periods, *li* appears less of a transcendent principle separated from the concrete. One might then regard the criticism of Zhu’s apparent transcendentalism and dualism subsequent to Song, e.g., in Luo Qinshun (羅欽順) and the Qing Confucianists who followed Luo, as really a *clarification* of *li*’s proper function and position in Chinese cosmology. The purpose of this paper is thus to evaluate the alleged cosmological status of *li* as a transcendent principle *vis-à-vis* *qi*, in light of what comes before and after Zhu. In addition to Zhu Xi, we shall also focus upon the figures of Hanfeizi (韓非子) in the Classical period and Luo

Qinshun in the Ming period. I shall do this while also looking into the history of the evolution of the concept from the classical period leading up to the alleged dualism of the Song “School of *li*” and the subsequent deconstruction of that dualism and the concomitant (but apparent) de-transcendentalization of *li*. The aim of the paper is to set-forth a “non-dualistic” reading of *li*.

## I. The Classical Period

While the primacy of *li* for the Song Neo-Confucianists is undeniable, it was not as much of a central concept for their ancient forebears, appearing only sporadically in the ancient texts. Where it does occur, its sense is that of “ordering” and “distinguishing” as briefly discussed above.<sup>8</sup> Its most metaphysical usage amongst ancient texts appears in the *Book of Changes* (*Yijing*; 易經), in its “Ten Wings” or “Appendices” attributed to Confucius, where it is expressed as universally discernible in the process and sequence of change, and is associated with “nature” (*xing*; 性), world, destiny, and the “way” (*dao*).<sup>9</sup> This provides the germ for the later Neo-Confucian systematization of the cosmological significance of *li*. *Li* appears in non-Confucian classical texts as well — most notably in the *Zhuangzi* (莊子) — with similar or related significances, i.e., of “ordering,” or “patterning,” and “differentiating” in both descriptive and prescriptive senses.<sup>10</sup> And among Confucianists circa the Han Dynasty, we also find related senses of *li* in the texts of both *Xunzi* (荀子) (fl.313/298-238BCE) and *Mencius* (*Mengzi*; 孟子) (371-289BCE). In the *Mencius* most notable is its association, as “ordered pattern” or “blended harmony” (*diaoli*; 條理), with the cooperation of instruments in an orchestra that produces a harmony of sounds.<sup>11</sup> But among classical Confucian texts, *li* appears most extensively in the *Xunzi* wherein it appears with the usual connotations of ordering in both

cosmological and normative senses.<sup>12</sup> One can discern in the *Xunzi* a sense of *li* as some sort of a patterning “thread” that runs through things and affairs, both in general and specifically, and even through history. But the metaphysics behind this cosmological significance of *li* does not become fully worked-out until later when the issue is taken up by the Neo-Confucians.

It may however come as a surprise that the cosmological significance of *li* during this period was most explicitly elucidated by the Legalist thinker Hanfeizi (ca.280-233BCE), who interestingly began his intellectual career as a student of Xunzi. The chapter, “Commentaries on the *Laozi*,” from the *Hanfeizi* provides the earliest known extended exposition of *li*, tying together its metaphysical and ethical senses. The text defines *li* as “the markings that complete things” (*zhengwu zhiwen*), the “pattern” (*wen*; 文) that is fixed in each thing, ordering its size, shape, texture, weight, color, etc.<sup>13</sup> It also explains the connection between *li* and *dao*: “*Dao* is that whereby all things are what they are and by which the *li* of all things are commensurable.”<sup>14</sup> The *dao* patterns (*li*) all things, providing each its own *li*, so that they are all in accord. Through this patterning (*li*) — apportioning square from round, short from long, small from large, light from heavy, dense from fine, hard from fragile, white from black —, everything becomes mutually differentiated, each exhausting the *dao* in its own unique way.<sup>15</sup> The *dao* commensurate with all of their *li* is thus constant but without any definite *li* of its own to distinguish it from anything else; in its ubiquity it is thus indistinct. One might say that the *dao* in its undifferentiatedness is the very differentiating patterning (*li*) running through all things of the cosmos. For it is through its undifferentiated self-differentiation

into “defined/definite *li*” (*dingli*; 定理) that things — both natural and human — come into being.

Although *li* then answers the question of “what makes a thing what it is?,” the thing’s constitution here is not founded on the basis of an eternally transcendent archetype as in the case of Plato. The constitution finds its basis in a patterning flux that differentiates and inter-relates. The *dao* in its undifferentiatedness is the very differentiating pattern (*li*) that runs through all things. The constitution occurs through difference in relation, not identity or essence in isolation. By contrast the *ideas* in Plato are universal models which their particular examples or instances are said to “imitate” or “participate in.” Since every individual thing has its own distinct patterning, *li* cannot be said to be a universal in any comparable sense. Neither is *li* eternally constant and separate from the world of change. *Li* rather constitutes a fluctuating web that inter-weaves things together in their mutual distinctions. It cannot be considered apart from that worldly flux. The *dao* that generates as well as destroys things through its recurrent patterns of self-differentiation is neither more nor less than this *li* of all things harmoniously running together in the cosmos.

This cosmic immanence of *li* is also relevant to Han’s view of human practice. Through “defined *li*” (*dingli*), there is an orderly separation between “being and non-being, life and death, flourish and decline.”<sup>16</sup> The function of *li* is the allotting of such opposites. Thoughtful appropriations of these patterns (*li*) would make the unfolding of one’s destiny more favorable. The *Hanfeizi* provided an elucidation of much of what remained unclear in previous discussions, especially in regard to the connection of *li* to both the cosmology of the *dao* on the one hand and to human affairs on the other hand.<sup>17</sup>

And there was no issue yet of overcoming any dualistic gap between universal and particular or abstract and concrete as *li* is seen to be the patterning of things in their correlations within a whole that constitutes the cosmic *dao*. Such issues, as well as that of the duplicity between *li* as cosmological order and *li* in human affairs, arises only if we view *li* in terms of a transcendent principle separate from the realm of phenomena along the lines of Platonist metaphysics. To understand *li* in terms of an immanent inter-connective “patterning” in mutual distinctions and inter-relations makes better sense.

## **II. Zhu Xi and the Neo-Confucian Appropriation of *Li***

By around 1000CE after about a thousand years of being left out of the discourse surrounding *li* — after the Neo-Daoists and then the Buddhists have been developing their understandings of *li* — Confucian thinkers were no longer able to ignore its significance. This also marks the resurgence of Confucianism — commonly called “Neo-Confucianism” by western scholars — during the China of the Song (960-1279CE) and the Ming (1368-1644CE) dynasties. The concept of *li* came to play an indispensable role in Neo-Confucian metaphysics, such that the first school of thought to emerge within the Confucian revival, *lixue* (“School of *li*”), was named after the concept.

The concept of *li* first came into the Neo-Confucian limelight under the so-called Five Masters of the Northern Song (960-1127CE): Zhou Dunyi, Shao Yong, Zhang Zai, Cheng Hao, and Cheng Yi. What comes to distinguish the Neo-Confucian understanding of *li* is its juxta-positioning with, or counter-positioning, to *qi*. *Qi* is the psycho-physical force, or material energy, that constitutes concrete things and that is given shape by the patterning-differentiating activity of *li*. The Neo-Confucians made use of this concept of in order to explain the human inclination towards evil or imperfection. *Li* on the other

hand is the normative guide that allows one to overcome such influences of *qi*. Of the Five Masters, Cheng Yi (程頤) (1033-1107CE) was the first to explicate the cosmological-moral relationship of *li*-*qi* in such hierarchical terms, thus initiating the school of *lixue* (also called the Cheng Zhu school, named after himself and his successor Zhu Xi). Such hierarchical dichotomization of *li*-*qi* however could lead to the misconception of *li* as ontologically transcendent to the *qi*-constituted world, e.g., Fung's comparison of *li* to the Platonic *idea*. That apparent dualism reaches its culmination in the thought of Zhu Xi (1130-1200CE),<sup>18</sup> who lived during the Southern Song period (1127-1279CE).

Hearkening-back to its original sense Zhu explains *li* in terms of the “ordered pattern” (*wenli*; 文理) that are like “grains in wood,” “the myriad minute and detailed streaks and veins” coursing within the vast and all-encompassing roadway that is the *dao*.<sup>19</sup> Zhu takes *li* accordingly to belong to all things *both* individually to constitute their “nature” (*xing*),<sup>20</sup> *and* as a whole to constitute the very cosmos, or “Heaven-and-Earth,” that they make up. For *li* determines *what* a thing is by determining *how* it functions, which in turn has to do with its interrelations with other things, the lines tying everything together in their mutual de-limitations. Everything both individually and together as a whole thus finds its constitution in *li*. It “destines” the course of each thing, delimiting its intrinsic nature and identity.<sup>21</sup> But in its cosmic capacity that connects everything together, *li* is identified with the *dao*.<sup>22</sup> It belongs *specifically* to each thing as its “nature”<sup>23</sup> *and* simultaneously ties them all together. Hence there is one *li* for the entire cosmos but with multiple manifestations, whereby all are of one *li*.<sup>24</sup> None of this so far contradicts our reading of Han's notion of *li* as the patterning that constitutes the identity

of things through mutual distinctions and relations. Such a reading would explain how *li* can simultaneously be one and many as the organizing factor of the universe as well as of each of the myriad things.<sup>25</sup> But this also entails that *li* not be something separate from this world of thing-events.

Zhu emphasizes the immanence of *li* by underscoring its inseparability from *qi*. *Qi*, which otherwise would be an amorphous material fluid receives its order in *li*. The various movements of *qi*, its coagulations and dissolutions, consolidations and differentiations, are ordered into alternating patterns of activity and rest, generating *yang* (陽) and *yin* (陰), that in turn make up the “five processes/goings” (*wuxing*; 五行) of water, fire, wood, metal, and earth.<sup>26</sup> This working-together of *li* and *qi* then constitutes individual things, forming their “physical nature.”<sup>27</sup> On this basis Zhu repeatedly emphasizes inseparability of *li* and *qi*. *Li* needs *qi* to adhere to as its place of inherence, and *qi* needs *li* as its “law,” the patterning of its changes.<sup>28</sup>

Yet in spite of their interdependence, Zhu like his predecessors regards the *li*-*qi* relationship somewhat hierarchically. For he ascribes to *li*, as the determining factor, a certain priority — a priority neither temporal nor explicitly ontological but “logical.” Appropriating previous Neo-Confucian readings of another distinction made in the commentator tradition of the *Yijing*, Zhu clarifies the *li*-*qi* relation in terms of the distinction and correlation between “what is above forms/shapes” (*xing er shang*; 形而上) and “what is within forms/shapes” (*xing er xia*; 形而下); and between the “way” (*dao*) and its “instrument” or “vehicle” (*qi*; 器). *Li* is the *dao* organizing the forms of things from above and *qi* is the raw material serving as the “instrument” (also pronounced, *qi*) for bearing that organization from below. Everything with shape is a “vehicle” of the *dao*,

concretizing it, manifesting it, while the *dao* is *li*, the pattern of its inter-connections with everything else.<sup>29</sup> As itself indefinite, undifferentiated, even while defining (differentiating) particular things, *li qua dao* is thus “above shapes/forms.” Things on the other hand, in their materiality constituted by *qi*, are always “within shapes.”<sup>30</sup> Zhu integrates this whole scheme into his reading of Zhou Dunyi’s cosmology, whereby he identifies Zhou’s “supreme ultimate” (*taiji*) that alternates between movement (*yang*) and rest (*yin*) with *li*.<sup>31</sup> Zhu was allegedly the first to make this connection between *taiji* and *li* explicit.<sup>32</sup> It would seem difficult to deny that the *taiji* is also *qi* in its dispersion into the five processes. Such was the general Daoist understanding of the *taiji* as primal *qi*. Zhu however associates it more with *li*, taking it as the *li* constitutive of *all* things, the totality of *all li*, “the *li* of Heaven, Earth, and the myriad things...”<sup>33</sup> The *taiji* in its connection to *li* “...is simply... the *daoli* [道理].”<sup>34</sup> *Taiji* as such containing all *li* is the “one *li*” manifest in the many items of the world.

On the basis of the proceeding, Zhu proclaims *li* to be prior to the myriad things and even to Heaven-and-Earth that constitute their totality, thus as prior to any of its material embodiments in *qi*.<sup>35</sup> The priority is not temporal but logical: while involved in *qi*, *li* as the organizing pattern determines the shape of *qi*. We have to bear in mind however that this priority is not ontological. The actualization of *li* still needs *qi* as its place of inherence, its “vehicle.” Only in such a sense — taking *li* as the *patterning possible* for everything without itself being confined to the limits of any particular — can Zhu’s claim make sense that before *yang-qi* and *yin-qi*, before the separation of Heaven-and-Earth, and before the emergence of the myriad things, there was nothing but *li*.<sup>36</sup> Yet, even if this is meant to be purely logical and not ontological, when we take *li* in its

cosmic comprehensiveness as *tianli* (“heavenly pattern” or the “pattern of the entire cosmos”; 天理), equated with the *dao* prior to the separation of Heaven and Earth, or with Zhou’s notion of *taiji* that patterns in alternation *yin* and *yang*, does not *li* still bear some sense of a metaphysical priority? For Zhu also speaks of it as “the root from which all things are produced.”<sup>37</sup> Zhu reads Zhou’s correlation of *taiji* and *wuji* (“no-ultimate” or “ultimatelessness”) (*wuji er taiji*; 無極而太極) as indicating its un-differentiatedness that prevents it from being one thing among, but distinct, from others.<sup>38</sup> Rather than being some supreme *thing* over and above, ruling, everything else as an ontological first, *taiji* *qua* *wuji* permeates everything as their inter-constitutive patterning (*li*) of change. Its “ultimate-lessness” refers to its cosmic un-differentiatedness or end-lessness in the alternations of opposites. Hence Zhu can proclaim the *taiji* itself to be immanent in things, including ourselves, constituting our “nature.”<sup>39</sup> This puts the stress on its immanence in the world despite its transcendence as “above forms.” Its alleged “priority” still cannot do away with materiality.

Despite *li*’s priority as “above shapes” Zhu undoubtedly was not thinking of some sort of ontological transcendence in a realm utterly separate from the phenomenal-material akin to Plato’s Form of the Good or Aristotle’s God. Fung as alluded to above views Zhu through a Platonist lens when he interprets what is meant by *li* or *taiji* in its “pre-existence” as some sort of perfect and complete *concept*, an archetypal form, subsisting in an ideal world “above shapes,” or when he speaks of *li* and *qi* in terms of two separate realms of the metaphysical and the concrete.<sup>40</sup> One might ask, in regard to the dichotomy, in what sense the concrete world of *qi* is not *also* based on *li*. For even as the cosmic patterning of the *dao* that interconnects and underlies all things, indefinite in

its universality, *li* cannot be construed as separate from the very thing-events of which it is the patterning, the particulars it defines. Nor can it be ontologically separated from the spatial-and-temporal integration-and-disintegration of *qi*<sup>41</sup> of which it is the ordering. We can take *taiji qua li* as the constitutive regularity on a cosmic level in the alternations and interactions of opposites, *yin* and *yang*, resulting in the mutual distinctions or differentiations of the myriad things, their rhythmic integrations-and-disintegrations constituting their spatial formations and temporal durations. The dualism of “above” and “below” shapes/forms, rather than referring to two separate ontological realms, seems to reflect instead the relationship between the *dao* in its undifferentiatedness and the myriad differentiated things: the *dao*’s patterning (*li*) of the cosmos whereby things emerge in their interrelations and mutual differentiations. Taken in its cosmic comprehensiveness as *dao*, *li* transcends the shape of each individual thing. But at the same time *li* is immanent in each and all to constitute their identities in their interrelations. There is no reason to read into this *li*-*qi* scheme as worked out by Zhu the sort of metaphysical dichotomy informed by Plato.

Zhu found the interrelating patterning of *li* to be manifest especially in the moral sphere in human interpersonal relations. But even this association of *li* with moral virtues does not require that we take *li* as an ideal archetype akin to Plato’s *Idea* of the Good. I think instead that Zhu’s relating of *li* to the virtue of impartiality or “humanity” (*ren*; 仁), for example, really has to do with it being the interconnective thread of all. *Ren*, in this respect, by taking into view the interrelationality of the whole, provides the guiding light for ideal inter-personal relations. In the sphere of human behavior, *li* then takes on a significance that is not only descriptive as the way things are or explanatory of *what* they

are, but also prescriptive as the standard or norm of how they *ought to be*.<sup>42</sup> In both senses however *li* has to do with the functioning of the thing in its interrelations with other things. Even in its sense as a normative pattern, rather than being an archetypal essence pre-existing in some ontologically separate realm, we can understand *li* as the very interconnectivity amongst persons that *ought* to be acknowledged and realized. This allows us to view *li* as the source of the four virtues — humanity, rightness, propriety, and wisdom — that in turn *via* human conduct would manifest the harmony and impartiality of *li* in the sphere of interpersonal relations. Accordingly Zhu can state that the five relations of ruler-minister, father-son, old-young, husband-wife, friend-friend, are all *tianli* and the “*li* of the *dao*.”<sup>43</sup> Personal identity, on this basis, is established not through some transcendent and independent essence but rather *through relationships* that differentiate and interconnect. In the actualizations of these inter-human relationships, we see *li* constituting the identity of each person, defining the *who* of each *vis-à-vis* others in mutual distinction and correlation. It is in this sense that the Neo-Confucian might claim the perfect person to have a mind (*xin*; 心) like clear water that reflects the *li* of the cosmic *taiji* without obstruction. That is, in his practical dealings with others, the sage affirms and manifests the cosmic patterns (*li*).

Despite *li*’s priority as the determinant of material energy, Zhu attributes a certain independence to *qi* in its own tendency towards fusion and coagulation.<sup>44</sup> Zhu seems to have in mind a certain reifying tendency within *qi*, a certain “turbidity,” that isolates individuals at the expense of harmonious relations with others, e.g., in the sphere of human interrelations. If *li* is the very patterning of the *yin-yang* interactions of *qi*, then what exactly is the nature of *qi* that allows it to resist *li*? There is something in or of *qi*

that makes it either turbid or clear, allowing it to resist or yield to the normative patterning of *li*. The clearer the thing's *qi*, the more evident its *li*, and the more turbid its *qi*, the more obscured its *li*.<sup>45</sup> Implied here is a strife between the patterning of *li* and the turbidity of *qi* — a conflict played out most manifestly in the arena of the human mind (*hsin*) as a conflict between, on the one hand, impartial virtue or morality expressing the *tianli* that connects everything together, and, on the other hand, human ego-desires. *Qi*'s turbidity that resists the interconnectedness of *li* becomes manifest in the selfishness of personal desire.<sup>46</sup> Zhu tells us that when one's *qi* is "pure," *li* is like a pearl lying in clear water. That is, in clear *qi*, the interconnective lines that differentiate but inter-relate one's self, other persons, other things, and the cosmos as a whole are transparently visible. However when the *qi* is "obtuse and degenerate," *li* is like a pearl hidden in turbid water.<sup>47</sup> But again what exactly is it that makes *qi* turbid to resist or obfuscate *li* when *li* is its very patterning or ordering inseparable from it? What is it of *qi* that makes it turbid or clear independently of *li*? Zhu however leaves this in the dark.

The human mind (*xin*), Zhu explains, is composed of a combination of *li* and *qi*. Human nature (*xing*), found in the mind, "reflects" the *li* of everything else, or in other words, it is already relationally attuned to the cosmos in which it partakes, hence allowing the mind to investigate and cognize them.<sup>48</sup> One's "original nature" (*benxing*; 本性) or "original mind" (*benxin*; 本心) *qua li* connects or attunes one's self to the rest of the cosmos. But this inter-connective thread can become corrupted by the reifying turbidity in *qi* we discussed above. The result is both ignorance and selfishness for both knowledge and morality are ultimately inter-relational in the sense that it is based on one's inter-connection with others. Zhu's prescription of the "investigation of things"

(*gewu*, 格物) — both how things *are* and how they *should* be, the *reason why* things *are and the norm* by which they *should* be so that one can eventually link them all together to obtain a complete picture of the patterning (*li*) of *ought* and *is* —, is meant to restore that “original mind” in its boundlessness, its original attunement to the *li* of the cosmos (*tianli*), the *dao*.<sup>49</sup> When Zhu says that the investigation of *li* develops one’s own *xing* (nature) and restores *li* in oneself, what he really has in mind must then be that it uncovers one’s *benxing* as the very *li* in tune with the rest of the cosmos, thus as *tianli*.<sup>50</sup> Education in this sense leads to the self-cultivation of virtue (*ren*), so that one approaches the “sage” who manifests or mirrors the *taiji*. With the cleansing of one’s *xing* from the turbidity of *qi*, bias is eradicated and impartiality is thus restored so that one’s actions will be in accord with *tianli*.<sup>51</sup> But the exact nature of the turbidity of *qi* that resists *li*’s inherent patterning of its movements remains unclear.

One may try to understand the ambiguous *li*-*qi* relationship in light of *li*’s sense as the interrelating-differential patterning of the cosmos — both potential and actual, descriptive and prescriptive — constituting identities through mutual differences and relations. Ontologically speaking, *li* and *qi* belong and function together in the same realm. And yet there is the enigma of the aspect of *qi* that resists *li*, which would seem to point to their duality as two independent forces in conflict. Emphasizing the inseparability between *li* and *qi* in Zhu, Chan in his commentaries regards the dualism to be superficial. Nevertheless *qi*’s power to resist *li* seems to attest to an independent element requiring explanation. How can *qi* become turbid to cloud over *li* when it is precisely *li* that is the pattern ordering its alternation between movement and rest? How does *qi* manifest or obscure *li* independently of its very ordering by *li*? If error in

knowledge and evil in behavior are due to *qi*'s turbidity while *li* must always inhere in it, by what means can we attain certain knowledge of *li* — that its pearl is not being clouded over? How do we even distinguish pure *li* from the quagmire of *qi*? The tendency to regard *li* as separate from, and above or prior to, *qi*, i.e., its “transcendentalization,” is in implicit tension with its immanent inherence in *qi*. The apparent dualism of *li*-*qi* seems to conflict with their ontological inseparability. Yet to Platonize Zhu by attributing to him the notion of a transcendent realm of pure *li* in the attempt to get out of this quandary is just as untenable since it would contradict the necessity of *li*'s inherence in the *qi*-constituted world. Rather than transcendentalizing *li* or bifurcating it from *qi*, we ought to remember that it is a one *qua* many: It is the patterning of alternations between phases of *qi* (*yin-yang*) that constitute the manifold of individuals. That cosmic patterning is not ontologically distinct from the patterning of each individual. Despite his sophisticated synthesis of many doctrines to ground Confucian ethics upon a metaphysics, Zhu has left this issue of *li*-*qi* unresolved.

### **III. Luo Qinshun:**

A couple of centuries later a school of thought emerged, in reaction to Zhu's apparent dichotomization, that instead emphasizes a “monism” of the *qi*-constituted world. Rather than taking *li* to be “above shapes,” this school put the stress on its immanence in *qi*, with the latter providing its ontological foundation. One significant thinker of this trend was Luo Qinshun (1465-1547CE), who dismisses any priority or superiority attributed to *li* over *qi*. Even while identifying himself as a follower of the tradition of Zhu and the Cheng brothers, Luo reiterates in many passages that neither the Chungs nor Zhu had “finally achieved unity” (*dingyuyi*; 定于一) or “recovered ultimate unity” (*guiyuzhiyi*;

歸於至一). What Luo is referring to is the inconsistency between monistic and dualistic tendencies, especially, the ontological dualism of *li*-*qi* that has become the prevailing standpoint of the Song scholastics after Zhu, but which Luo himself believes is without classical foundation or philosophical cogency.<sup>52</sup> Noticing the ambiguity, we discussed above, in the Zhu's stance and accusing him of sundering of *li* from *qi*,<sup>53</sup> Luo points to the identity between the *dao* (associated with *li*) and its *yin-yang* alternations (i.e., the forces of *qi*) to underscore their ontological oneness. Thereby he seeks to “attain unity” in the understanding of *li*, which he claims had not been “completed” by Zhu.

For Luo, *li* is nothing but a mere “designation” or “name” (*ming*, 名) for the very way things are, the pattern in which we find them.<sup>54</sup> Taking the Neo-Confucian slogan, “oneness of *li*; diversity of its particularizations” (*liyi fenshu*; 理一分殊), Luo explicates oneness to refer to the coherence and regularity, discernible everywhere, that establish things — human or natural — in mutual distinctions and relations.<sup>55</sup> Luo thus shifts the focus away from *li* and towards *qi* as the sole ontological plenum or field, of which he takes *li* to be an *aspect*.<sup>56</sup> *Qi* is the energy continuous in all things, penetrating heaven and earth. Luo reminds us how the *qi* that we breathe and that is within us is the same *qi* of the rest of the universe. It is only that this *qi* becomes discretely formed through its coagulations into physically distinct things. As its patterning, *li* is not to be ontologically distinguished from this *qi* (*qi ji li*; 氣即理).<sup>57</sup> *Qi* follows endless cycles of movement-tranquility, action-reaction, growth-decline, life-death, beginning-end, manifestation-obscuration, presencing-absencing, integrating into manifold physical forms and then disintegrating into an amorphous nothingness. *Li*, rather than being some separate *thing* (*wu*; 物), is but the regularity of these alternations — the cycle of *yin* and *yang* —

discernible everywhere.<sup>58</sup> On this basis Luo takes the equation of *li* with Zhou's *taiji* to simply be in reference to the collective dynamism of the regularity and patterning of the cosmic process. It is in this sense that the oneness of *li* is "...always within diverse particularizations."<sup>59</sup> This explanation that underscores their inseparability avoids the problematic issuing from their apparent ontological duality, e.g., the contradiction between the oneness and the manyness of *li* or between its transcendence and immanence. It is in virtue of the universality of its operation that *li* is diversified and particularized in the coagulations of *qi* — *li in qi* as hence both one and many.<sup>60</sup>

It makes no sense, from Luo's standpoint, then, to speak of the obstruction of *li* by *qi* or to posit any polarity between the impartial *tianli* and selfish human desires (*renyu*; 人欲). While *li* in a living thing is its *xing*,<sup>61</sup> this is nothing more than its inherent normativity or appropriate *place* that accords to the cosmic pattern of change between *yin* and *yang qi*. Understood in such a way it has nothing to do with an original nature purified of *qi*. In line with this *li*-*qi* non-duality, Luo rejects Zhu's moral distinction between man's original nature (*benxing*), associated with *tianli*, as the source of goodness; and man's *qi*-constituted physical nature filled with tainting human desires (*renyu*) that obstructs the former.<sup>62</sup> But by this Luo does not mean to ignore the moral relevance of *li*. In the case of man, *xing qua li* points to the normative pattern for human behavior. This however does not entail a denial or repression of desires. We can instead affirm human desires as *expressions of* human nature when simultaneously moderated in due measure with the awareness that links oneself to, and likens one with, others. What needs to be regulated is "selfishness" as the manifest lack of awareness of one's place *vis-à-vis* others upon the universal plenum of *qi* in its *li*-patternings. What removes one

from the *dao* is an over-emphasis upon the self at the expense of one's relatedness to others.<sup>63</sup> Such selfishness leads our behavior away from its rightful patterning (*li*). Borrowing the metaphor of clear vs. turbid water, Luo points out, however, that *li* becomes visible *only* through the movement it patterns. Without any flowing of *qi* bringing some friction into play, *li* remains invisible. Some turbidity of *qi* then is inevitable. However with cultivation this turbidity can be harmonized or ordered to let *li* — i.e., the thread of interconnectivity — manifest itself amidst the flow of *qi*.<sup>64</sup>

The point then is not to extinguish desires *per se* or to overcome *qi*, but to overcome *selfish* desires. But such cultivation requires knowledge. The more one investigates things (*gewu*), the more one perceives *li* and the more one comes to follow *li* by moderating one's desires.<sup>65</sup> Bloom explains this as the knowledge of what we *share* with all in its consistency and reliability. But we might add that, more specifically, the object of knowledge as one's *xing* is precisely one's *place and role* within the *interrelational* processional whole of the cosmos. To know *li*, to know one's *xing*, is to know where and how one *fits into* the whole.<sup>66</sup> One can say that *li* is precisely that *fit* that simultaneously connects and separates everything. The myriad things in their particularized patterns (*li*) all *fit* together to converge into the cosmic oneness of *li*. This is ethically significant for Luo in that it is with the *attainment* of insight into this fact, a comprehensive view to *li* connecting one to everything else, that one overcomes selfish tendencies that discriminate between self and other. With this insight into one's place *vis-à-vis* others within the universal plenum of *qi*, one is compelled to act with the ethical impartiality appropriate to that place. For Luo, it is in this sense that *li* in its integrated

wholeness is *ren*, whereby people can be humane (*ren*).<sup>67</sup> The ideal is to dispell ego-attachment in the realization of oneness with *li* — a task most difficult.<sup>68</sup>

Luo makes unmistakeable the inseparability of *li* from the cosmic plenum of *qi*. By turning our attention to this inseparability, Luo sought to counter an understanding that would abstract *li* from the world; instead he sought to bring *li* back down to “this world.” *Qi* then is ontologically the cosmic plenum of which *li* is the patterning that both connects and distinguishes its particular manifestations and formations. While ontologically they are inseparable, in terms of ethics one can choose to comport in accordance with that inter-connective thread of *li* or on the other hand to act with a view to one’s own ego abstracted from that cosmic whole. Luo’s *qi*-centered stance eventually became the dominant trend during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1912CE). With the introduction of western philosophy in the late 1800s and early 1900s, however, *li*, which became used to translate “reason,” came to attract a renewed focus of attention.

#### **IV. Conclusion:**

When we look at the entire history of the evolution of the philosophical concept of *li*, the inadequacy of its translation into “principle” becomes apparent. In speaking of it one ought to keep in mind its original sense as “order” or “pattern,” together with its etymological significances. Its meaning, whether in Han’s cosmologization of *li* or Luo’s *qi*-centered ontology or even in Zhu’s metaphysics of *li*-*qi*, should preclude any reading that would make it analogous to a Platonic *idea*.

If we look at the general point behind the doctrine of the “investigation of things,” developed in Neo-Confucianism and taken in different directions during and after the Song period, we still recognize this sense of *li* in consonance with its classical and

etymological senses. As the cosmic pattern that constitutes things in their mutual distinctions and relations, *li* does not have any Platonist connotation of an eternal and universal essence subsisting in an ideal or transcendent realm. The issue of its universality vs. its particularity, or of its transcendence vs. its immanence need not arise since the *li* of the cosmos is the same *li* that interrelates things to constitute their identities *via* mutual difference and co-relativity. *Li* constitutes the identity of each thing not through its isolation in some quasi-essence (universal and eternal) but rather through its interrelations and mutual distinctions defining its place *vis-à-vis* others. The particular *li* of a thing, its “nature,” then would not have to be taken as ontologically distinct from the cosmic or universal *li* (the *dao*) that ties everything together. Rather it fits harmoniously into the cosmic pattern. Through the inter-connective threading of *li*, akin to the criss-crossing lines of a paddy-field or the veins of a piece of jade, each thing receives its nature and identity *vis-à-vis* everything else. Construing *li* in this way, we have no need to make an ontological separation between universal and particular *li* or between *li* as transcendent and the *qi*-constituted concrete world. The very point of the “investigation of *li*” would then be to acknowledge this thread that fits everything together, a recognition that would allow us to see where we ourselves fit into the greater picture — the place one occupies within the cosmos —, which, needless to say, can be then translated into appropriate ethical conduct in relation to other beings.

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<sup>1</sup> Although this came to mean the division of farm fields, according to Allen Wittenborn, this originally most likely referred to natural lines of the land, not artificial embankments. See his commentary in Zhu Xi, *Further Reflections on Things at Hand* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1991), 46.fn.21.

<sup>2</sup> This sense is found in the *Explanation of Words* from ca.100CE, which in turn cites the *Hanfeizi*. See Wittenborn, 45-46.fn.21.

<sup>3</sup> See Wing-tsit Chan, “The Evolution of the Neo-Confucian Concept of *Li* as Principle,” *Tsing Hua Journal of Chinese Studies*, New Series vol. IV (1964), no. 2 (Feb):128-29; and Brook Ziporyn, “*Li*

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(Principle, Coherence) in Chinese Buddhism," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, vol. 30 (2003), nos. 3/4 (Sept/Dec.): 502.

<sup>4</sup> See L. Wieger, *Chinese Characters: Their Origin, Etymology, History, Classification and Signification: A Thorough Study from Chinese Documents* (NYC: Dover Pub., 1965), 315, 317.

<sup>5</sup> *Qi* has also been rendered into English as "air," "gas," "vapor," "breath," "energy," "ether," and "material force." It is found in many ancient texts, e.g., the *Mencius*, *Zhuangzi*, *Guanzi*, *Xunzi*, *Liezi*, and *Huainanzi*. The prevailing Chinese perspective was that all beings are different configurations of *qi*. See Julia Ching, *The Religious Thought of Chu Hsi* (NYC: Oxford University Press, 2000), 8, 28, 41; and Ho Peng Yoke, *Li, Qi and Shu* (Mineola, NY: Dover Pub., 2000; HK: Hong Kong University Press, 1985), 3.

<sup>6</sup> In the English translations his name is spelled according to the Wade-Giles system as Fung Yu-lan.

<sup>7</sup> Even this understanding of Plato's metaphysics in terms of form and matter (as interpreted by Aristotle) becomes questionable when one looks into the meaning of *chôra* in the *Timaeus*.

<sup>8</sup> E.g., the *Book of Odes* (Ode #210), *Book of History* (ch.22), and *Book of Rites*, notably in its *Doctrine of the Mean* (ch.31.1) and its *Record of Music*. See Chan, "The Evolution of the Neo-Confucian Concept of *Li* as Principle," 123; Ching, 27; James Legge, trans., *Confucian Analects, The Great Learning, and the Doctrine of the Mean* (NYC: Dover Pub., 1971), 428, 431; and Wittenborn, 46.fn.21.

<sup>9</sup> This appendix ("Discussion of the Trigrams," ch.1) to the *Yijing* belongs to the commentatorial tradition, added not before the 200sBCE. See Baynes' translation (of Wilhem's translation) of the *I Ching* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1967, 1950), 262ff. Also see Chan, "The Evolution of the Neo-Confucian Concept of *Li* as Principle," 124; Ching, 27; Fung Yu-lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, Vol. II (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953), 650.

<sup>10</sup> Wing-tsit Chan (I shall retain the Wade-Giles spelling of his name here since that is how he spelled it in English) states it appears in the *Zhuangzi* thirty eight times. Therein it is characterized as the natural and spontaneous "way" (*dao*), as "great," "universal," "infinite," and "unnameable," and also as "heavenly" (*tianli*) (e.g., chs.14, 17, 25, 27, 29, 33). Most of its occurrences in that text however is from the "outer chapters" (chs.8-24) or the "miscellaneous chapters" (chs.25-33), composed in the 200sBCE or later. *Li* does appear once in an "inner chapter" (chs.1-7) with the sense of a universal or general pattern. (ch.3) A later Daoist text in which *li* appears is the *Guanzi*. It also appears in the *Mozi*. See Chan, "The Evolution of the Neo-Confucian Concept of *Li* as Principle," 124-26; Ching, 27; William Theodore DeBary, Wing-tsit Chan, and Burton Watson, ed., *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, vol. I (NYC: Columbia University Press, 1960), 75; P.J. Ivanhoe, "Human Beings and Nature in Traditional Chinese Thought" in *A Companion to World Philosophies*, ed. Eliot Deutsch and Ron Bontekoe (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Pub., 1997), 157-58; Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilisation in China* vol. 2 (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1956), 477; Jan Yün-hua, "Tao, Principle, and Law: The Three Key Concepts in the Yellow Emperor Taoism," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, vol. 7 (1980), 211.

<sup>11</sup> 5b.1.6. See James Legge, trans., *The Chinese Classics Vol. II: The Works of Mencius* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1895), 372. And see Chan, "The Evolution of the Neo-Confucian Concept of *Li* as Principle," 126; Ching, 27; Fung, 650.

<sup>12</sup> On this and the following, see, e.g., chs.5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, and 26. See Chan, "The Evolution of the Neo-Confucian Concept of *Li* as Principle," 126; Ching, 27; A.S. Cua, "Reason and Principle in Chinese Philosophy: An Interpretation of *Li*" in *A Companion to World Philosophies*, 202, 205, and 206; A.C. Graham, *Disputers of the Tao* (Chicago: Open Court, 1989), 242-44; Burton Watson, trans., *Hsün Tzu: Basic Writings* (NYC: Columbia University Press, 1996, 1963), 36, 44-46, 82-87, 95-97, 103-05, 112, 121-22, 129, 135-36, 147, 151, 157ff.

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<sup>13</sup> Ch.20.6:7a-8a, 15a. This and the following quotations are modified from: W.K. Liao, trans., *The Complete Works of Han Fei Tzu* (London: Arthur Probsthain, 1959), 191-92, 194-95, and 200; Wing-tsit Chan, ed., *A Sourcebook in Chinese Philosophy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1963), 260 and 261; and Fung Yu-lan. *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, Vol. I (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1952), 177. See also Chan, “The Evolution of the Neo-Confucian Concept of *Li* as Principle,” 127-28; Graham, 286; Jan, 211-12. *Wen* has been variously translated as “markings,” “lines,” “textures,” “patterns.”

<sup>14</sup> Or: “...run together.” (ch.20.6.7a)

<sup>15</sup> Ch.20.6.15a for this and the following in Liao’s translation, 194f. See also 200 on this “mutual differentiation” or “hacking up,” “cutting up” of things on the basis of *li*.

<sup>16</sup> Ch.20.6.15a. In fact, this is also be related to the *yin-yang* cosmology that becomes explicitly connected to *li* by the Neo-Confucianists later.

<sup>17</sup> On this and the following, see Chan, “The Evolution of the Neo-Confucian Concept of *Li* as Principle,” 128-29.

<sup>18</sup> Zhu’s works are identified as follows: JD for *Zhuzi Daquan* (*Collected Writings of Master Zhu*); JL for *Jinsilu* (*Reflections on Things at Hand*); XJ for *Xu jinsilu* (*Further Reflections on Things at Hand*); ZQ for *Zhuzi quanshu* (*Complete Works of Master Zhu*); ZWW for *Zhu Wengong wenji* (*Collected Writings of Zhu Xi*); ZY for *Zhuzi youlei* (*Classified Conversations of Master Zhu*). References are taken from English translations in Chan, *Sourcebook*; DeBary, Chan, and Wilson; Fung; Chan’s translation of *Reflections on Things at Hand* (NYC: Columbia University Press, 1967); and Wittenborn’s translation of *Further Reflections on Things at Hand*.

<sup>19</sup> XJ ch.1.52. Wittenborn, 67.

<sup>20</sup> The Chinese word *xing* is composed of two characters, “mind” (*xin*; 心) and “life” (*xing*; 生). The idea is that every thing has its cosmically-endowed (“Heaven-given”) nature, making it what it is, and which is inseparable from its physical form constituted of material energy (*qi*).

<sup>21</sup> See ZQ 42.1a-b, 2b. Chan, *Sourcebook*, 612; DeBary, Chan, Watson, 489.

<sup>22</sup> See ZQ 42.6a, 9b; XJ ch.1.57. Chan, *Sourcebook*, 614, 616; DeBary, Chan, Watson, 491; Wittenborn, 68.

<sup>23</sup> See ZU 42.6b; ZY 4.6, 101.26; XJ ch.1.49, 59. Chan, *Sourcebook*, 614, 616; DeBary, Chan, Watson, 491; Fung, 535, 551; Wittenborn, 66-68.

<sup>24</sup> XJ ch.1.3. Wittenborn, 59.

<sup>25</sup> See ZQ 49.1b; XJ ch.1.57, 74. Chan, *Sourcebook*, 635; DeBary, Chan, Watson, 481; Wittenborn, 68, 70. This simultaneous oneness and manyness of *li* is an idea Zhu inherits from Cheng Yi, i.e., that *li* is one and its functions many, that the many things all possess one unitary *li*. The one *li* here is the interior latent reality (*ti*; 體) while the many are the exterior and manifest functioning reality (*yong*; 用) — a distinction traceable to the Neo-Daoist Wang Bi’s commentary on the *Laozi* (ch.4.) where he associates them with the *dao* and its manifestations. On this see Ching, 11. Put in such terms one is reminded of Aristotle’s substance-accident relation. But one must bear in mind that *li* even if understood in terms of “body” is something quite distinct from any metaphysical notion of substance. It seems more fruitful to remember its original and etymological meanings.

<sup>26</sup> This has also been rendered as “five elements” or “five agents,” but *xing* here means movement. Others have translated it as “five forces” and “five phases,” which are closer to the real meaning. See Ching, 8.

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<sup>27</sup> On this and the following: ZQ 42.4b, 26b-29a, 43.3a-b, 49.2b, 5b, 13a. Chan, *Sourcebook*, 613, 620, 622, 624, 635, 637; DeBary, Chan, Watson, 481-83, 485, 489, 493. The apparent distinction between “nature” (*xing* identified with *li*) and “physical nature” will be criticized later by Luo Qinshun for its dichotomizing tendency.

<sup>28</sup> ZQ 42.18b, 49.1a-8a; ZY 1.1-3, 4.10, 94.10. Chan, *Sourcebook*, 618, 634-38; DeBary, Chan, Watson, 481-83; Fung, 543-44, 551.

<sup>29</sup> ZQ 49.1a-b, 3a-b, 5b; ZY 1.2, 95.6; ZWW 36.14. Chan, *Sourcebook*, 634-36; DeBary, Chan, Watson, 481, 482, 483; Fung, 534, 544; also see Bloom in DeBary and Bloom, 77-78. The terms of “above and below forms” and their equations with *dao* and “instrument” appear in Book II, “the Great Treatise” (*Dazhuan*), part 1, chapter 12 (summary) of the *Yijing* in the Baynes-Wilhelm translation, 323. *Qi* as “vehicle” or “instrument” is a different graph than *qi* as “material force” or “energy.” Nevertheless the two are equated as both “within forms.” See Ching, 7.

<sup>30</sup> ZY 95.6; ZWW 58.5. Fung, 534, 542.

<sup>31</sup> ZQ 49.16a. Chan, *Sourcebook*, 641. In his cosmology, Zhou Dunyi (周敦頤) (1017-1073CE) explicates the concept of the “supreme ultimate” (*taiji*) from the *Yijing* as an originary oneness permeating the cosmic manifold. Its alternations of movement and rest give rise to oppositions, *yin* and *yang*. This in turn gives rise to the “five processes” of water, fire, wood, metal, and earth, which constitute things of the world.

<sup>32</sup> See Zhu’s Commentary on Zhou’s *Diagram of the Supreme Ultimate and its Explanation* cited in Fung, 538. Zhu also discusses the *taiji* in the first two chapters of his *Classified Conversations* (*Zhuzi youlei*; ZY). See the following references below to this and also Ching, 27.

<sup>33</sup> ZD 7.18b-19a; see also ZY 1.1, 94.11a-b, 35b. Ching, 98, 130; Fung, 544. Ching, contrary to Fung, points out that Zhou himself probably did *not* have in mind *li* when speaking of the *taiji* since the *li*-*qi* coordinates came into use after Zhou, especially with Cheng Yi. See Ching, 44.

<sup>34</sup> ZY 94.6a. Ching, 44. Zhu thus associates the second graph of *taiji*, *ji* (極) with the North pole (北極), which is fixed as the “ultimate” that is “supreme” (*tai*; 太) with stars moving around it. The term originally referred to the ridgepole of a roof, and metaphorically came to refer to the cosmic pillar joining earth and heaven, as the most complete or perfect, uniting many significances. (ZY 94.8b, 12a; ZD 36.8b-9a) See Ching, 33, 48; and Ho, 12. One might then take it, *qua li*, to connote a cosmic vortex in a domain of organization patterning the alternations between motion and rest and other opposites around it.

<sup>35</sup> ZQ 49.1b, 3a-b, 5b-6a; 51.18b-19b; ZY 1.1; ZWW 58.11. Chan, *Sourcebook*, 634-37, 645; DeBary, Chan, Watson, 481-83, 488; Fung, 539, 543-44.

<sup>36</sup> ZQ 49.3a-b; ZY 1.1, 94.9, 94.10, 21-22; ZWW 58.11. Chan, *Sourcebook*, 635; DeBary, Chan, Watson, 482; Fung, 535, 539-40, 543-44.

<sup>37</sup> ZQ 49.5b. Chan, *Sourcebook*, 636; DeBary, Chan, Watson, 483.

<sup>38</sup> See JL 1.1. Chan’s translation of Zhu’s *Reflections on Things at Hand*, 5-6. See also Ching, 43, 45. Zhou associated the *taiji* with what the Neo-Daoists called the “ultimateless” (*wuji*; 無極).

<sup>39</sup> See ZY 94.35a-b. Ching, 98.

<sup>40</sup> See Fung, 482, 537-37, 542-43, 545.

<sup>41</sup> E.g., ZQ 49.5b. Chan, *Sourcebook*, 636; DeBary, Chan, Watson, 483.

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<sup>42</sup> On this see Wittenborn, 189.fn.40, quoting Zhu's *Daxue huawen* as quoted in Fan Shougang, *Zhuzi jiqi zhezue* (Taipei: Daiwan gaiming shudian, 1964), 81.

<sup>43</sup> See ZQ 42.6b-7a, 47.19b-20a, 49.1b, 60.31a-32a; XJ 1.9, 20, 1.73, 6.1, 13. Chan, *Sourcebook*, 616, 633-34, 652; DeBary, Chan, Watson, 481, 501-02; Wittenborn, 59-60, 62, 69, 113, 114.

<sup>44</sup> ZQ 42.27b-29a, 49.7a. Chan, *Sourcebook*, 622, 637; DeBary, Chan, Watson, 493.

<sup>45</sup> ZQ 43.18a. Chan, *Sourcebook*, 626.

<sup>46</sup> See ZQ 1.30a-b, 3.3a, 42.14b-15a; XJ 5.2, 4, 5, 6, 11, 14. Chan, *Sourcebook*, 605, 608, 618; DeBary, Chan, Watson, 492-93; Wittenborn, 105-07.

<sup>47</sup> ZY 4.17. Fung, 559.

<sup>48</sup> See ZQ 2.4b, 38b, 42.6a, 22a, 44.2a, 45.2a. Chan, *Sourcebook*, 606-08, 614, 620, 628, 631; DeBary, Chan, Watson, 496.

<sup>49</sup> ZQ 3.34a, 44.28a-29b; XJ 1.56, 61. Chan, *Sourcebook*, 611; DeBary, Chan, Watson, 499; Wittenborn, 68.

<sup>50</sup> See ZQ 42.3a-b. Chan, *Sourcebook*, 613; DeBary, Chan, Watson, 490-91. And on the following, see XJ 3.6. Wittenborn, 88.

<sup>51</sup> ZQ 2.2a, 45.19b. Chan, *Sourcebook*, 606, 632; DeBary, Chan, Watson, 501.

<sup>52</sup> See Irene Bloom, trans., *Knowledge Painfully Acquired: The K'un-chih chi by Lo Ch'in-shun* (NYC: Columbia University Press, 1987), 15, 16. The Pinyin spelling of this Chinese text is *Kunzhi ji*. It will be identified as KJ.

<sup>53</sup> KJ 1.19; 2.19. Bloom, *Knowledge*, 69, 124.

<sup>54</sup> KJ 1.11. Bloom, *Knowledge*, 58.

<sup>55</sup> KJ 1.14-16; 2.59. Bloom, *Knowledge*, 63-67, 157.

<sup>56</sup> KJ 2.35. Bloom, *Knowledge*, 134.

<sup>57</sup> KJ 1.11; 2.61, 62.; and also 2.21. Bloom, *Knowledge*, 58, 125, 161-62.

<sup>58</sup> KJ 1.11; 2.23, 24, 28, 46; 3.38, 40. Bloom, *Knowledge*, 58-60, 127-29, 147-48, 172-74.

<sup>59</sup> KJ 1.14, 3.40; see also 2.46. Bloom, *Knowledge*, 65, 148, 173-74.

<sup>60</sup> See KJ 1.6, 74. Bloom, *Knowledge*, 53, 107.

<sup>61</sup> KJ 1.15, 16; 2.43. Bloom, *Knowledge*, 66-68, 144.

<sup>62</sup> See KJ 1.19; 3.37. Bloom, *Knowledge*, 69, 172.

<sup>63</sup> KJ 1.24. Bloom, *Knowledge*, 74.

<sup>64</sup> See KJ 1.65. Bloom, *Knowledge*, 101.

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<sup>65</sup> KJ 1.24. Bloom, *Knowledge*, 74 and see 22 on the following.

<sup>66</sup> This is one possible reading of *li* in KJ 1.70 (Bloom, *Knowledge*, 105).

<sup>67</sup> KJ 1.24, 3.4; also see 1.7. Bloom, *Knowledge*, 56, 74, 174.

<sup>68</sup> KJ 1.25. Bloom, *Knowledge*, 75.