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MICHAEL PUETT

THEODICIES OF DISCONTINUITY: DOMESTICATING ENERGIES AND DISPOSITIONS IN EARLY CHINA

The enormous number of materials being excavated from early China provides us with the opportunity to reconstruct concerns and issues that have either been excluded from or at least marginalized by the received tradition. New paleographic sources are allowing us to reconstruct legal, political, and social realms that were before almost impossible to explore, and the same is very much the case with philosophical and religious materials. The goal of this article will be to discuss one body of thought that is particularly prominent in some of the texts excavated from the Guodian 郭店, tomb—a body of thought that was to continue in works like the later *Liji*《禮記》, but that has been somewhat obscured by later intellectual developments. By taking these materials seriously, I will argue that they shed light on a number of philosophical and religious issues that deserve more attention.

For the materials that I will be discussing here, the basic vision was that, in our experience, the world we confront is one of fundamental discontinuity: the world consists of discrete things that often interact with each other poorly. This is true among humans: we have conflicting sets of dispositions that lead us to behave poorly toward each other. But it is also true among other aspects of the world as well. Accordingly, the goal of humans is to transform both ourselves and the world around us so that things come to resonate well with each other.

I am referring to these materials as "theodicies of discontinuity" to emphasize some of the larger significance that they may hold. In much of early modern Western thought, the problem of theodicy has revolved around the problem of how to account for the existence of evil and suffering in a cosmos created by a moral deity. One of the most significant and influential responses to this was to argue that

MICHAEL PUETT, Professor, Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University. Specialties: Chinese philosophy, religions, and history. E-mail: puett@fas.harvard.edu

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evil and suffering were necessary in the world so that humans could exercise free will.[1] The lack of overt concern with evil in a strong sense or with free will could certainly be used to argue that theodicy as a problem had no place in early China. But another approach would be to ask what larger set of concerns underlies the issue of theodicy, and whether such larger concerns can be found elsewhere. In the case at hand, I would argue that the larger concerns—namely, the fact that humans find themselves in a world filled with suffering and injustice and that such problems require some kind of response—are certainly evident in early China. But the fact that the responses do not revolve around issues of free will is telling of a different conception of the issue. As I have argued elsewhere, a commonly perceived problem in early China was that phenomena were controlled by highly capricious ghosts and spirits.[2] The problem for humans was thus to transform themselves, the spirits, and phenomena so that a more harmonious world could be created. Instead of, for example, asserting free will, the problem was rather to connect, to transform, to domesticate.

This is why I would like to refer to the issues of concern here as theodicies of discontinuity. The equivalents of evil and suffering are seen in terms of a lack of proper interaction among discrete substances—ghosts, spirits, and humans not interacting well, humans not interacting well with each other or with the rest of the cosmos, the different energies and dispositions within humans not interacting well with each other. The solution is thus to assert more continuity—to link things, harmonize things, and transform things such that they can come to interact better.

Thus, my concern throughout this article will be to focus on problematics: what were the tensions that the authors were working through, and what were the problems that the texts in question were trying to solve? Theories aimed at asserting free will, for example, are based upon a concern with continuity: the problem is seen to be one of creating discontinuity, of breaking from an overly continuous and thus restrictive order and asserting autonomy. The texts in question here, on the contrary, were concerned that the world was overly discontinuous, and they saw the problem as one of finding ways to connect, link, transform, and domesticate the world so as to create—if only for brief periods of time—more harmonious interactions. One solution to this problem, as we will see, is to argue that there are, contrary to experience, underlying continuities that can be built upon in our projects of domesticating connecting the world.[3] But the perceived problem was not one of continuity but rather discontinuity, and the solution was one of finding ways to build a world of proper connections and proper interactions.

Before turning further to the philosophical implications of this material, perhaps a bit should be explained about the nature of these excavated texts and the reasons we possess them. The vast majority of these materials come from tombs. A brief word about these tombs may accordingly be helpful. I will then turn to a discussion of some of the relevant texts.

I. Ancestors and Tombs

Death in early China was associated strongly with concerns related to those just mentioned.[4] Humans consist of a plethora of energies, souls, and spirits. If our goal while alive is to domesticate these energies and train these dispositions, such a process of domestication—of transforming and taming these energies—would need to continue after death.

The implications of not doing so were clear. Parts of the deceased would turn into ghosts and haunt the living. The sense seemed to be that the souls—associated with the personality of the person while alive—would stay connected to the spirit, which was extraordinarily powerful. Since the process of domestication of the person while alive would be over, the ghost would be in danger of manifesting the worst energies of humanity—anger, resentment, jealousy, and so on—and these energies would often be aimed at those family members who the deceased was close to while alive and who now, precisely because they are still alive, become the objects of that anger and resentment.

To prevent this from happening, the attempt was made to separate the various parts of the deceased (particularly the souls and the spirit) and to domesticate each, albeit in different ways. To begin with, the souls would be moved into a tomb, wherein would also be kept the corpse. The concern was to keep them in the tomb and thus keep them away from the world of the living. This would be done in part through ritual requests for the deceased not to return above ground. But it would also be done by placing within the tomb things that surrounded the person when alive. This could include food and clothing, but it could also include texts. The goal was presumably twofold. Placing things that the souls enjoyed while alive would hopefully keep the souls happy in the tomb, and render them less likely to leave and haunt the living. But part of the goal probably involved an ongoing attempt to continue, or at least maintain, the process of domestication that had been occurring when the deceased was alive. Thus, those aspects of the culture that had helped to domesticate the figure while alive would be placed in the tomb such that, hopefully, the souls would remain domesticated until they either decomposed or moved into another realm of the afterlife.

Meanwhile, the spirit, which tended to float upward, was domesticated in a very different way: the spirit would be transformed into an ancestor. It would be given a ritual position based upon its lineage rank, and it would be brought down on ritual occasions to receive offerings. On such occasions, the spirit would be called upon to continue acting like an ancestor, and the living would call upon themselves to behave as proper descendants to the ancestors. In other words, ongoing rituals would continue the process of domestication, transforming the spirits and the living humans into ancestors and descendants in a proper lineage relationship.

These practices of dealing with the dead are relevant to our discussion, since the vast majority of our paleographic texts come from these rituals. To begin with the ancestors. Our first paleographic works, in fact, are Shang oracle bone inscriptions, which are divinatory records directed to the ancestors of the Shang royal family.[5] The subsequent inscribed bronze vessels of the Western Zhou were also directed to the ancestors.[6] The bronze vessels themselves were used to provide sacrifices to the ancestors: the ancestors would be called to come down to the ancestral temples to join the rituals with the living.[7]

And the rituals involving tombs are even more significant for the materials that will be of concern for this article. The aforementioned bronze vessels were buried in tombs, as were bamboo strips and silk writings during the Warring States and Han periods. In short, we possess these paleographic materials because of their involvement in the rituals concerning the entombment of the corpse and the souls.

II. Texts and Tombs

Given that we possess paleographic materials because they were utilized in rituals involving entombment, it is accordingly relevant to ask why these materials were put into tombs. This has been an object of a great deal of speculation. For example, Hiyashi Minao has speculated that the reason bronze vessels were buried in tombs was to allow the souls in the tombs to continue sacrificing to the earlier ancestors.[8] Similarly, with the later bamboo strips and silk manuscripts, there have been some attempts to argue that the contents of the texts in the tombs may be relevant to the needs of the soul of the deceased—either the ongoing cultivation of the soul in the tomb or to its later journeys to an afterlife.

Although these speculations may well be plausible in particular cases, it may rather be the case, as mentioned above, that the reason these materials—from earlier bronze vessels to the later bamboo and silk manuscripts—are in tombs is for the same reason that things like

food and clothes are in the tombs: they serve the dual purpose of keeping the souls acculturated in the domesticated world created by humans, and of doing so in a way that will impel the souls to stay in the tomb rather than return to haunt the living. In other words, the texts do serve a purpose in tombs, but this is a purpose that follows directly from one of the basic purposes they serve the living—they (like food, clothing, and all other cultural artifacts) serve to domesticate human dispositions—in a living human and thereafter as well.

Thus, it is not necessarily the case that the souls would be performing sacrifices using the bronze vessels, any more than they would necessarily be reading texts. The reason these materials are placed in tombs is simply that they were associated with the personality of the person while alive. Someone involved with the law, for example, might be buried with legal materials. (Of course, this would not necessarily imply that the person had actually read the materials while alive either: the person could also be buried with significant texts because the person liked to be thought of as educated.) In other words, the concern seemed to be to place things in the tomb that represented aspects of the personality of the tomb occupant—as opposed to the spirit that would ascend to the skies and be transformed into an ancestor. As such, the souls would remain in the tomb, hopefully still domesticated and at the least not returning to attack the living.

This would imply that these materials are not being selected for any purposes related to the content of the texts (except insofar as they might be associated with some aspect of the deceased). This is fortunate for us, as it means we can expect to find a wide array of materials in tombs—legal cases, legal codes, recipes, along with philosophical texts. And such a fact is of particular interest to this article, as it means we are likely to find texts that are not being picked because they fit some larger ideological paradigm.

III. The Guodian Texts

The Guodian tomb was sealed in roughly 300 BCE, and was discovered in 1993.[9] The texts found therein have been the object of an extraordinary outpouring of scholarship. My goal here will be to build upon this scholarship by emphasizing the theme of discontinuity as one of the central themes of a few of the texts, and then to point to some of the later instances of related types of arguments.

IV. The Training of the Dispositions

The *Wuxing*《五行》discusses these issues in terms of the training of the dispositions.[10] The text opens by defining the five actions:

> As for the five actions, when humaneness is formed within, it is called virtuous action, when it is not formed within it is called action. When propriety is formed within, it is called virtuous action, when it is not formed within it is called action. When ritual is formed within is formed within, it is called virtuous action, when it is not formed within it is called action. When understanding is formed within, it is called virtuous action, when it is not formed within it is called action. When sagacity is formed within, it is called virtuous action, when it is not formed within it is called action. When the five virtuous actions are harmonized, it is called virtue. When the four kinds are harmonized it is called good. Goodness is the way of humans. Virtue is the way of Heaven.[11]

Each of these actions must be formed within, and each must also be harmonized with the others. If humaneness, propriety, ritual, and understanding can be formed within and harmonized, one will have achieved goodness. If sageliness is also formed within and harmonized with the other four, then one will achieve virtue. The former is simply the way of humans, but the latter harmonizes with Heaven as well.

This theme of harmonizing potentially discrete things recurs throughout the work. As the text argues at one point:

> The ears, eyes, nose, mouth, hands, and feet, these six are followers of the mind.[12]

The mind is thus called upon to harmonize them:

> When they harmonize, they are in accord. When they are in accord, there is goodness.[13]

The problem of the text is thus presented clearly. The remainder of the text then works out how the five actions are formed within and harmonized with the others. Intriguingly, however, the text does so not by defining precisely what each of these values is and explaining how to harmonize them together. On the contrary, the main method of the text is to provide lengthy series of emotional dispositions, each of which is to be balanced by another disposition, thus leading to a development toward yet another disposition. Thus, for example, interaction with others is described as follows:

> If you use your outer mind to interact with others, you will be distant. If you are distant yet strong, you will be respectful. If you are respectful yet not lax, you will be stern. If you are stern yet reverent, you will be venerated. If you are venerated yet not proud, you will be deferential. If you are deferential yet extensively interact with others, you will have ritual.[14]

But the dispositions in each of these chains are not simply being balanced by other dispositions in the same chain, for the chains are constantly being folded into other chains. The result is an ever-

growing series of interlocking chains. Moreover, there is no consistent definition given to any of the terms, as each is constantly being defined in relation to other terms, all of which are constantly being defined in relation to yet other terms in other interlocking chains:

> Hearing the way of the gentleman is keenly hearing. Hearing and understanding it is sageliness. The sage understands the way of heaven.[15] To understand and put it into practice is propriety. To put it into practice at the proper time is virtue. Seeing the worthy is clearly seeing. Seeing and understanding it is understanding. Understanding and being stable, is humaneness. Being stable and being respectful is ritual. Sageliness and understanding is that from which ritual and music are generated and that from which the five actions are harmonized. When they are harmonized, there is joy. When there is joy, there is virtue. When there is virtue, the states and families are together.[16]

The text thus consists of a seemingly endless proliferation of series of interlocking chains, with each term being defined in terms of the others. The sense would appear to be that no one virtue is sufficient in itself. Thus one is constantly, in every situation, needing to develop one's dispositions by playing them off against other dispositions, and modulating each type of action by bringing it into play with the other types of actions. This is why the text does not provide stable definitions of any of its terms: each one can only be defined in terms of the others, and each is relevant only insofar as it is modulated by and harmonized with each of the others. The ultimate goal is the combining of all of the types of action, thus achieving the sagely linking of the human with Heaven.

As is clear from the argument, the achieving of continuity is at best a brief occurrence. The text instead posits a world of endless work, of constantly striving to train the dispositions, modulate them with other dispositions, and internalize and harmonize the resulting forms of action. An ethics, in short, of connecting, linking, harmonizing.

V. The Formation of a Ritual Canon

Similar concerns underlie the *Xing Zi Ming Chu*《性自命出》.[17] The basic view of the *Xing Zi Ming Chu* is that the world consists of discrete things that are constantly, in every situation, reacting to each other. The way things respond to each other is based upon their dispositional responsiveness. For humans, these dispositions are based on the energies of our emotions. When we encounter various things (which can include other people as well), they pull out our energies of anger, joy, and so on:

> The energies of joy, anger, sorrow, and sadness are given by nature. When it comes to their being manifested on the outside, it is because things have called them forth.[18]

Accordingly, humans tend to simply respond immediately to those things that they encounter:

> In general, although humans possess nature, their mind is without a fixed purpose. They await things and only then do they become active; they await pleasure and only then do they move; they await practice and only then do they become fixed.[19]

The goal of the text, therefore is to teach us how to move from such a state of immediate responsiveness, in which our emotions are simply being pulled out by whatever things and situations we happen to encounter, to one in which we have a fixed purpose. Only through the latter, the text claims, can we achieve an ethical world.

The full argument of the text, therefore, is that the Way is simply the endless motion in the world caused by things—with their inherent dispositions—affecting each other. But, through training, one can move from this immediate responsiveness to a responsiveness based upon propriety—responding to situations properly:

> The Way begins in dispositional responsiveness and dispositional responsiveness is born from nature. At the beginning one is close to dispositions, and at the end one is close to propriety.[20]

But this ability to take an active role in shaping responsiveness is a uniquely human capability:

> As for the Way's four techniques, only the human way can be Way-ed [i.e., only the human way involves a fixed will]. As for the other three techniques, one is moved and that is all.[21]

Everything else in the world simply consists of things reacting to other things. Humans alone are capable of fixing a proper form of interaction. And, therefore, only humans can move from a Way of things randomly impacting other things to one in which there is a proper form of responsiveness.

So how do humans do this? By developing a ritual canon to train human responsiveness. The argument is that, as humans respond to situations, some of these responses would come to be seen later as having been exemplary. They would thus be raised up and made into rituals—actions that the next generations would repeat in order to help train themselves and help refine their own dispositional responsiveness. Out of this process eventually accumulates a repertoire of exemplary actions—poems, speeches, rituals, and musical performances—that would become part of a canon for training the later generations:

> As for the poems, documents, rites, and music, their first expression was generated among humans. With the poems, there were activities and they put them into practice. With the documents there were activities and they spoke of them. With the rites and music, there were activities and they raised them.[22]

The sages worked with these traditions and canonized them, creating the rituals that would then be used to educate and train the dispositions of the latter born:

> The sages compared their categories and arranged them, analyzed their order and appended admonishments to them, embodied their propriety and put them in order, patterned their dispositions and both expressed and internalized them. As such, they were brought back for use in education. Education is the means by which one generates virtue within. The rites arise from the dispositions.[23]

The rituals thus come from the dispositions—they are responses that are deemed to be exemplary and are deemed to be capable of helping to train the next generations to pattern their dispositions as well.

The fundamental problem for the text, therefore, is again that of discontinuity: the world consists of discrete things interacting with each other, and usually interacting poorly. Humans, however, are called upon to train their dispositions such that they learn to respond well to the situations in which they find themselves. As such, humans are capable, and uniquely capable, of moving from a world of immediate responsiveness to one of proper responsiveness—one in which things are linked well. The key for doing this is through ritual—ritual not in the sense of guidelines telling humans how to act but rather rituals that train human dispositions such that one gains a fixity of purpose and an ability to respond well to the world.

VI. A Modulated Cosmos

Such an emphasis on training the dispositions might at first glance seem radically at odds with other materials from the Guodian tomb. The *Taiyi Sheng Shui*《太一生水》, for example, provides a cosmogony in part aimed at demonstrating the claim that natural processes are ultimately interlinked.[24] Such a position would at first glance not seem to fit into the position we are describing. But here too a general vision of discontinuity underlies the text: the thrust of the argument is to claim that things seen as discrete are, counterintuitively and contrary to our experience, related. As I have argued elsewhere,

> . . . what is going on in Chinese correlative thought is precisely an attempt to pull together elements that are perceived to be

> distinct—an attempt to claim a form of continuity prevailing against disparate entities. Continuity is not assumed; it is created.[25]

What we thus see is the work involved in formulating cosmological arguments predicated upon the claim that, contrary to our experience of a discontinuous world, the cosmos is in fact a continuous order.

What is intriguing about the cosmogonic series provided in the *Taiyi sheng shui* is that the argument often replicates the sorts of chains we saw with the *Wuxing*, although here the series is worked out in cosmogonic terms rather than in terms of the dispositions, and the ultimate direction of the process is reversed. The text begins with *taiyi*, the Great One.[26]

> The Great One gives birth to water. Water goes back and supplements [i.e., joins with] the Great One. They thereby complete Heaven. Heaven goes back and supplements the Great One. They thereby complete Earth. Heaven and Earth [return and supplement each other].[27]

The starting point is the Great One. But note that the Great One does not generate two forces (such as Heaven and Earth or *yang* and *yin*) that then give birth to the rest of the cosmos—the type of cosmogony that would become increasingly common in third and second century BCE texts from early China. On the contrary, the Great One generates water, which then returns and supplements the Great One. The Great One and water together then complete Heaven. Heaven then supplements the Great One to complete Earth. In other words, each figure in the series needs to join with the Great One to continue the process. The Great One thus underlies the entire process, in the sense that no element can operate successfully without it.

Once Heaven and Earth are formed, they then supplement each other and start the second stage of the cosmogonic process:

> They thereby complete the spirits and the illuminated (*shen ming* 神明). The spirits and the illuminated return and supplement each other. They thereby complete the yin and yang. *Yin* and *yang* return and supplement each other. They thereby complete the four seasons. The four seasons return and supplement each other. They thereby complete the cold and hot. Cold and hot return and supplement each other. They thereby complete the wet and dry. The wet and dry return and supplement each other. They thereby complete the year and then stop.[28]

In this second stage, the cosmos is already formed. The spirits and illuminated supplement each other to complete the yin and yang, which in turn supplement each other to complete the four seasons. These in turn supplement each other to complete hot and cold, and the same process leads to wet and dry. The entire cosmos is

accordingly created through each element returning and supplementing that which came before or that with which it is paired:

> Therefore, the year was generated by wet and dry. Wet and dry were generated by cold and hot. Cold and hot were generated by the four seasons. The four seasons were generated by yin and yang. *Yin* and *yang* were generated by the spirits and numinous. The spirits and the illuminated were generated by Heaven and Earth. Heaven and Earth were generated by the Great One.[29]

The Great One accordingly underlies everything—not in the sense of actually guiding the cosmos but rather in the sense of being that which began the process and that with which everything is ultimately (even if indirectly) supplemented:

> Therefore the Great One is stored in water and moved in the seasons. Circulating and again [four graphs missing, probably: starting, it takes itself as] the mother of the myriad things. At times diminishing, at times flourishing, it takes itself as the alignment of the myriad things.[30]

As such, the Great One is not something that any one element of the cosmos can control or regulate:

> This is what Heaven is unable to kill, what Earth is unable to regulate, and what yin and yang are unable to complete. The gentleman who understands this is called . . . [characters missing][31]

Although we are missing a key set of graphs here, the point is clear: the gentleman is being called upon to recognize the workings of the cosmic processes:

> Heaven and Earth, the style-name and name, were established together. Therefore, if one transgresses the other's boundaries, each fits[32] with each other without thinking. [When Heaven was insufficient in][33] the northwest, that which was below raised itself through strength. When the Earth was insufficient in the southeast, that which was above [seven graphs missing; the last four are probably: If there is insufficiency above], there is excess below; if there is insufficiency below, there is excess above.[34]

Given the way the cosmos operates, any insufficiency in one area of the cosmos inherently brings about the play of its pair to compensate.

There is, therefore, no one element that runs the cosmos. The alignment is provided by the Great One, meaning that each element must supplement prior and/or partnered elements in order to be generative. The resulting argument is a series very much along the lines of that seen in the *Wuxing*, only here the argument is worked out in reverse. Instead of beginning with humans and calling on them to train their dispositions to respond effectively to situations to build a more harmonized world, the concern is rather to argue that, counter-

intuitively, the cosmos itself operates by processes of modulation and interaction, and humans should accordingly do the same. But note that the text is not claiming that the cosmos provides guidelines to follow. It rather shows the means by which proper action should occur. Like the *Xing zi ming chu*, it is calling on humans to constantly interact with other things properly. And like the *Wuxing*, it builds its arguments through chains of elements that are to be endlessly modulated against other elements. Here again, the attempt is to assert continuity, rather than assert discontinuity, to try to link things, rather than to assert automony.

VII. Conclusion

In all three of these texts, the problematic is one of discontinuity. Our goal as humans is therefore seen to be one of creating continuity—of transforming ourselves and operating with the world such that, ideally, everything can be made to interact well and resonate well with everything else. And, as this is a human project of domestication and transformation, it is also a never-ending one: most humans will never be fully transformed, and, of course, the next generation of humans will then have to go through the same process of transformation and domestication anyway.

Such a problematic results in a number of significant consequences.

To begin with, there is relatively little concern in this body of materials with issues like the assertion of free will and autonomy. Such concerns arise when the fundamental problem is seen to be one of continuity, and the fundamental goal is seen to be the assertion of discontinuity—the assertion of free will and autonomy as against a world seen to be too continuous and thus too limited.

But there is, on the contrary, a tremendous concern with issues like ritual, education, and cultivation. The first of these requires further clarification. From the perspective of a tradition (as is certainly the case for a great deal of nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first century Western thought) that emphasizes assertions of discontinuity, ritual is often seen as one of the things from which we need to break. Following ritual, from such a perspective, means following a heteronomous set of guidelines, when one should on the contrary be asserting one's autonomy and free will. But, from the concerns of the traditions under consideration here, ritual is often seen as crucial, and not because it provides guidelines for our behavior. Because it is rarely the case that a given ritual will flawlessly fit every situation, ritual rarely provides a perfect guide to us. Ritual is crucial instead because it helps us train our dispositions such that we become better and better able to live in

a discontinuous world where things often interact poorly and more capable of playing a role in creating better forms of interaction.

Such a position of cultivation as a means of working within and transforming a discontinuous world—articulated in powerful terms in three texts that were not handed down in the received tradition—allows us to see the philosophical significance of works that have tended to be dismissed in the history of philosophical reflection in early Chinese texts. Several chapters of the *Liji*, for example, build upon these ideas.[35] One of the chapters—the "*Li Yun* 〈禮運〉"—discusses the ritual domestication of humanity as being comparable to the domestication of the natural world through agriculture. In both cases, one is taking a world in which things interact poorly—humans often dying from inadequate amounts of food, wild animals eating humans, humans being horrible to each other, and so on. Humans then transform the world—domesticating crops and animals as well as domesticating themselves through ritual. The result is a world in which everything is transformed such that it at least potentially works as a perfect unity, with the seasonal shifts of Heaven and the produce of the earth being connected through the domesticating acts of humanity. Humans thus form a triad with Heaven and Earth.[36] Arguments such as these that begin with a fundamental premise of discontinuity as being the problem that needs to be solved should be treated with the philosophical significance they deserve.

But the problematic outlined here not only helps us to refocus our attention on works that have perhaps not received the full attention they deserve. It may also help us to rethink some of these texts that have become more strongly associated with early Chinese thought in general. For example, all too frequently the texts of correlative cosmology that became increasingly significant over the course of the late Warring States and Han periods are read as representing an assumption that the world is inherently connected and harmonious. But, as we have seen from the *Taiyi sheng shui*, it may be more accurate to see these materials as working out of a problematic of discontinuity, arguing a position that would have been seen as clearly counterintuitive at the time, in order to make an argument for how humans must organize the world through constantly modulating, supplementing, and connecting elements. In short, by having materials like this, we may be in a position to rethink some of our standard ways of reading the early tradition.

And, finally, as alluded to above, these materials may help us to rethink early Chinese notions of death as well. If here too the problem was one of discontinuity, with the deceased falling back into being undomesticated and thus highly capricious and dangerous ghosts,

then much of early Chinese tomb construction and ancestral sacrifice makes a great deal more sense—both were ongoing efforts to domesticate the ghosts, just as efforts were being equally made to domesticate the living.

In short, modern scholars may have themselves unintentionally domesticated much of early Chinese thought by reading it according to later paradigms. The excavated materials can help us to see some of the philosophical strength and terrifying power of some of these early traditions.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Endnotes

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10. My understanding of the *Wuxing* has been helped dramatically and deeply influenced by the excellent discussions by Mark Csikszentmihalyi, *Material Virtue: Ethics and the Body in Early China* (Leiden: Brill, 2004); Holloway, *Guodian*; Scott Cook, "Consummate Artistry and Moral Virtuosity: the 'Wu Xing 五行 Essay and Its Aesthetic Implications," *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, and Reviews* 22 (2000): 113–46; Pang Pu, *Zhu Bo "Wu Xing" Pian Jiao Zhu Ji Yan Jiu* 竹帛五行遍校注及研究 (Taipei: Wanjuanlou Publisher, 2000); Ikeda Tomohisa, *Baôtai Kanbo Hakusho Gogyôhen Kenkyû* 「馬王堆漢墓帛書五行遍研究」 (Tokyo: Kuko Shoin Publisher, 1993); Pang Pu, *Boshu Wuxingpian Yanjiu* 《帛書五行遍研究》(Shandong: Qilu Publisher, 1980).
11. *Wuxing*, strips 1–4, *Guodian Chumu Zhujian* 《郭店楚墓竹簡》(Beijing: Wenwu Publisher, 1998), 149. My translations from the *Wuxing* here and throughout have been helped greatly by those given by Csikszentmihalyi, *Material Virtue*, 277–310; Holloway, *Guodian*, 131–39.
12. *Wuxing*, strip 45, *Guodian Chumu Zhujian*, 150.
13. *Wuxing*, strip 46; *Guodian Chumu Zhujian*, 150.
14. *Wuxing*, strips 36–37; *Guodian Chumu Zhujian*, 150.
15. Following Ikeda in reading *er* 而 as *tian* 天. See his *Baôtai Kanbo Hakusho Gogyôhen Kenkyû*, 364.
16. "*Wuxing*," strips 26–29, *Guodian Chumu Zhujian*, 150.
17. For excellent studies of the *Xing zi ming chu*, see Holloway, *Guodian*; Andreini, "Meaning of *Qing*," 149–65; Erica Brindley, "Music and 'Seeking One's Heart-Mind' in the '*Xing Zi Ming Chu*,'" *Dao: A Journal of Comparative Philosophy* 5, no. 2 (2006): 247–55. I have also discussed the text in Puett, "The Ethics of Responding Properly: The Notion of *Qing* in Early Chinese Thought," in *Love and Emotions in Traditional Chinese Literature*, ed. Halvor Eifring (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 37–68; Puett, "Innovation as Ritualization: The Fractured Cosmology of Early China," *Cardozo Law Review* 28, no. 1 (2006): 28–30; Puett, "The Haunted World of Humanity: Ritual Theory from Early China," in *Rethinking the Human*, ed. J. Michelle Molina and Donald K. Swearer, with Susan Lloyd McGarry (Cambridge: Center for the Study of World Religions, 2010), 95–111.
18. *Xing Zi Ming Chu*, strips 2–3, *Guodian Chumu Zhujian*, 179.
19. *Xing Zi Ming Chu*, strip 1; *Guodian Chumu Zhujian*, 179.
20. *Xing Zi Ming Chu*, strip 3; *Guodian Chumu Zhujian*, 179.
21. *Xing Zi Ming Chu*, strips 14–15; *Guodian Chumu Zhujian*, 179.

22. *Xing Zi Ming Chu*, strips 15–16; *Guodian Chumu Zhujian*, 179.
23. *Xing Zi Ming Chu*, strips 16–18; *Guodian Chumu Zhujian*, 179.
24. For an excellent discussion of the *Taiyi sheng shui*, see Allan, "The Great One, Water, and the Laozi: New Light from Guodian," *T'oung Pao* 89, no. 4–5 (2003): 237–85. I have also discussed the text in Puett, *To Become a God*, 160–64.
25. Puett, *To Become a God*, 164.
26. Taiyi appears as a god in the Baoshan divination texts from the state of Chu in the fourth century BCE, and was thereafter elevated into a high god or high cosmic power more powerful or more primordial than Heaven. For an excellent study of the paleographic materials related to Taiyi, see Li Ling, "An Archaeological Study of *Taiyi* (Grand One) Worship," *Early Medieval China*, 2 (1995–1996): 1–39.
27. *Taiyi Sheng Shui*, strip 1; *Guodian Chumu Zhujian*, 125.
28. *Taiyi Sheng Shui*, strips 2–4; *Guodian Chumu Zhujian*, 125.
29. *Taiyi Sheng Shui*, strips 4–6; *Guodian Chumu Zhujian*, 125.
30. *Taiyi Sheng Shui*, strips 6–7; *Guodian Chumu Zhujian*, 125.
31. *Taiyi Sheng Shui*, strips 7–8; *Guodian Chumu Zhujian*, 125.
32. Following Qiu Xigui, *Guodian chumu zhujian*, 126 n. 17.
33. Ibid.
34. *Taiyi Sheng Shui Sheng Shui*, strips 12–14, *Guodian Chumu Zhujian*, 125.
35. Puett, "Human and Divine Kingship in Early China: Comparative Reflections," in *Religion and Power: Divine Kingship in the Ancient World and Beyond*, ed. Nicole Brisch (Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2008), 199–212.
36. Puett, "Ritualization as Domestication: Ritual Theory from Classical China," in *Ritual Dynamics and the Science of Ritual, Volume I: Grammars and Morphologies of Ritual Practices in Asia*, ed. Axel Michaels, Anand Mishra, Lucia Dolce, Gil Raz, and Katja Triplett (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010), 365–76.