

# The Writing of the Xici Zhuan and the Making of the Yijing

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The discovery and publication of the Mawangdui 马王堆 manuscript of the *Yijing* 易经, including a text of its most famous canonical commentary, the *Xici zhuan* 系辞 or *Tradition of the Appended Statements*,<sup>1</sup> has reopened in China an old debate over the authorship and philosophical orientation of the *Xici*: whether it is Confucian (whether written by Confucius himself or not), or whether – and to what extent – it preserves elements more properly called Daoist. Already in the Song dynasty, Ouyang Xiu 欧阳修 (1007–1072) had argued that the *Xici* could not have been written by Confucius himself (and, indeed, that it could not have been written by any single individual),<sup>2</sup> while Su Shi 苏轼 (1037–1101) criticized some of his contemporaries for using Daoist ideas to explain the text (even while making full use of them himself).<sup>3</sup> The notion that the *Xici* reflects a Daoist orientation became especially prevalent early in the twentieth century, taken up by such outstanding scholars of Chinese intellectual history as Feng Youlan 冯友兰 (1895–1990), Gu Jiegang 顾颉刚 (1893–1980), Qian Mu 钱穆 (1895–), and Hou Wailu 侯外庐 (1896–), as well as by Joseph Needham (1900–199 ) in the West.<sup>4</sup> With the discovery of the Mawangdui manuscript of the *Xici*, a manuscript which contains certain significant variations from the received *Xici*, this view has recently been vigorously restated, first by Chen Guying 陈国莹,<sup>5</sup> and then by various of his students, including most importantly Wang Baoxuan 王葆玄.<sup>6</sup> It has been countered, also very vigorously, by Liao Mingchun 廖明春.<sup>7</sup>

I do not propose here to give a *compte rendu* of this debate.<sup>8</sup> For the purposes of the analysis that I will present below, it will suffice to note that the Mawangdui manuscript of the *Xici* lacks several chapters found in the received text: A8 (the so-called "Da yan" or "Great Development" chapter), much of B4, and all of B5 through B8.<sup>9</sup> According to Wang Baoxuan, these are precisely the chapters of the extant text that present most clearly a "Confucian"

bias. In the Mawangdui manuscript, these chapters are instead found in two other texts: "Yi zhi yi" 易知義 (The Properties of the *Changes*) and "Yao" 要 (The Essentials), both of which, according to Wang, are thoroughly Confucian in nature.<sup>10</sup> That these chapters were eventually incorporated into the final text of the *Xici* would require, according to this view, that the text of the *Xici* underwent a final redaction sometime after the date of the Mawangdui manuscript (approximately 190 B.C.), and that it was this final redaction that gave the text its "Confucian" overlay.

While I do not find Wang's arguments regarding putative "Daoist" and "Confucian" editors persuasive, I do think he is right to see in the differences between the Mawangdui manuscript and the received text of the *Xici* evidence of different layers of composition or redaction. That this insight was prompted by the appearance of the Mawangdui manuscript shows yet again the importance of paleographic discoveries in rethinking the development of the early Chinese literary tradition, including even a text as central to it as the *Xici zhuan*. Nevertheless, I think that the received text of the *Xici* provides evidence in itself of different layers of redaction or composition, a view that Willard Peterson had anticipated several years before the Mawangdui manuscript was published.

My view is that the "Commentary on the Attached Verbalizations" is not the product of a single act of creation, whether by an author or compiler, but was accumulated over a certain period, beginning approximately a generation before the Ch'in dynasty was proclaimed and hardening by the first century B.C. into the form that was taught by Fei Chih and later engraved on the stone tablets.<sup>11</sup>

Unfortunately, Peterson did not attempt to substantiate his view, merely citing a general statement by Gu Jiegang regarding the date of all of the canonical *Yijing* commentaries, a statement that owed, moreover, more to Gu's iconoclastic bias than it did to any real scholarship.<sup>12</sup> I also find it difficult to follow the further conclusion Peterson drew from this multi-layered redaction.

While recognizing that the "Commentary" is a patchwork which was subject to a continuing process of reworking even after it began to be transmitted in written form, I would also emphasize that it does present a coherent intellectual position. As I shall try to show, it is not a random miscellany of scraps about an old divination text, but is a subtly presented selection of statements intended to convey a particular world view.<sup>13</sup>

In his very fine study of the *Xici*, Peterson did indeed go on to show a coherent reading of the text, but one wonders whether the coherence owes more to the reading than to the text.

Like Peterson and Wang Baoxuan, I too perceive different strata within the *Xici*. However, unlike Peterson, I perceive in these strata very different points of view with respect to the text to which they purport to be a commentary, the *Yi* or *Changes*. On the other hand, unlike Wang and other scholars engaged in the recent debate in China, I am not much concerned with whether these points of view can be characterized as Confucian or Daoist. I am suspicious of the subjectivity almost inherently involved in analyzing texts according to presumed philosophical perspectives (however they might be labeled), and have sought instead to find more objectively demonstrable evidence of different authorial hands, and believe that I can isolate at least two and probably three distinct strata on the basis of their grammatical constructions.

I begin my analysis of the text by ruling out the chapters that are not found in the Mawangdui manuscript. These too may have been part of some earlier version of the *Xici*, but since our earliest witness to the text does not include them, it seems prudent here to consider them separately.<sup>14</sup> Of the remaining chapters, I detect three very different styles of writing. The first, which certainly includes chapters A1, A4,<sup>15</sup> and A5, is written almost exclusively in what Rudolf Wagner has termed Interlocking Parallel Style;<sup>16</sup> it is very tightly argued, and uses a recurrent set of vocabulary focusing on how it is through "ease" (*yi* 一) and "simplicity" (*jian* 一), which are the generative qualities of *Qian* 一 and *Kun* 一, that "virtue" (*de* 一) and "achievement" (*ye* 一) are produced. The second style of writing, which certainly includes chapters A2-3, A9, A12, B1, B3, and B9, and probably A10 and A11, is written in large part in equational sentences (i.e., the standard declarative form of classical Chinese: Noun Noun 一); it is overwhelmingly concerned with describing the *Yi* as a divination text, and thus recurrently uses the terms "alternation" (*bian* 一), "penetration" (*tong* 一), "prognostication" (*zhan* 一), and especially "image" (*xiang* 一), and through these introduces a notion of thought and language within which the *Yi* serves as a meta-text that transcends the limitations of ordinary fixed writing (it is ironic that it presents this very subtle argument about language in a somewhat disjointed and relatively pedestrian style).<sup>17</sup> A third distinct stratum, which, however, I will not discuss in this study, includes chapters A6 and A7, B2, and B4; of all of the chapters of the *Xici*, it is the one tied most explicitly to the text of the *Yi*, providing comments on individual line statements or explaining the significance of individual hexagram pictures, the comments put in the words of Confucius (*zi yue* 一).<sup>18</sup> In this it is quite similar to portions of the "Wenyan" 一 (Patterned Speech) commentary to the *Yi jing*, or the Mawangdui commentary "Yi zhi yi," or, in more general terms, to the "Zi yi" 一 (The Black Jacket) and related chapters of the *Li ji* 一 (Record of Rites).

Since the argument I am making regarding different strata in the text depends on a close analysis of the text, demonstration will require quotation of fairly extended passages in both the original and in translation. Since the translation is intended to display formal aspects of the text, I will strive to make it rigorously literal, even at the expense of whatever eloquence I might otherwise be able to bring to it (a loss to be felt especially in the case of chapter A1,

which is quite eloquent in the original). I do hope, however, that such literalness will not come at the expense of clarity, since these translated passages will also provide the evidence for the conceptual differences that I perceive between the two strata that I will discuss. Since these conceptual differences have a secondary place in my argument, and since I am confident that they are reasonably evident in any reading of the text, except in those few cases where my translation diverges radically from the traditional interpretation I will forego detailed textual or commentarial notes.

### The First Stratum: Argument and Context

The first stratum includes the famous chapter A1 which begins "Heaven being venerable and earth base, *Qian* and *Kun* are settled" (*tian zun di bei, qian kun ding yi* 天—L—a—A—[—w—o—C). As noted above, it is written overwhelmingly in Interlocking Parallel Style, presenting a tightly developed argument with three main theses: that the world, both natural and human, is made up of differences, which in crude terms break down to opposites; that the world achieves its unique efficacy by constantly changing, each change being produced by the union of the two opposites and in turn producing a result, thus serving to create the world anew, allowing it to be fruitful and permanent; and that the *Yi* is the intellectual key that allows man to realize his place in the world.<sup>19</sup> The paradigmatic opposites of the *Yi* are *Qian* 天 and *Kun* 地, the "pure" trigrams and hexagrams (i.e., made up of all yang or all yin lines) that are considered in the *Yi jing* tradition to be the father and mother of all the other trigrams and hexagrams.<sup>20</sup> The relationship between *Qian* and *Kun* is so central to this stratum that as an independent text it might well be identified as the *Qian Kun zhuan* 天—[—地—.

天—L—a—A—[—w—o—C

Heaven being venerable and earth base, *Qian* and *Kun* are settled.

地—H—A—Q—o—C

The base and high being arrayed, the noble and mean are positioned.

日—R—A—X—\_—o—C

Motion and rest having constancy, the hard and soft are separated.

天—H—E—A—地—H—s—A—N—o—C The regions being gathered according to category, and things being divided according to groups, the lucky and ominous are generated.

天—b—H—A—地—b—a—A—o—C In the heavens completing images, and on earth completing forms, alternations and transformations are apparent.

天—O—G—A

This is why

---X---A-K---R	the hard and soft join each other, and the eight trigrams stir each other.
---H-p-^A ---H---B-A	Drum them with thunder and lightning; moisten them with wind and rain,
---B---A -@-H-@- -C	The sun and moon move in cycles, once cold once hot.
---D---k-A -[-D---k-A	The way of <i>Qian</i> completes the male, the way of <i>Kun</i> completes the female.
---j-l-A -[-@---C	<i>Qian</i> knows the great beginning, <i>Kun</i> does the completing of things. <sup>21</sup>
---H---A -[-H---C	<i>Qian</i> through exchange knows; <i>Kun</i> through its opening is capable. <sup>22</sup>
---h---A ---h---q-C	Exchanging it is easy to know; <sup>23</sup> open it is easy to follow.
---h---A ---q-h---\ -C	Being easy to know there is closeness; being easy to follow there is accomplishment.
---h-i-[-A ---\-h-i-j-C	There being closeness it can be long-lived; there being accomplishment it can be great.
-i-[-h---H---w-A-i-j-h---H---~ -C	Being long-lived it is the virtue of the worthy man; being great it is the patrimony of the worthy man.
---U---z-o-o-C	Through exchange and the opening the order of all under heaven is obtained.
---U---z-o---G---o-C	The order of all under heaven being obtained, one completes his position in its midst.

While the translation given here derives from a more explicitly sexual interpretation of the chapter than will be found elsewhere, I do not think it is at all radical to consider the main theme of the chapter to be the union of *Qian* and *Kun* – male and female, and that this union produces a "result" (*gong* = \), termed euphemistically the "virtue" (*de* = w) of being long-lived (*jiu* = [) and the "patrimony" (*ye* = ~) being great (*da* = j),<sup>24</sup> that is, I believe, simply the procreation of life. This entails a radical optimism both in the goodness of the natural world and also about man's ability to partake in that goodness. Indeed, according to my understanding of this portion of the text, simply by reproducing themselves men and women participate in the changes of the world and thus fulfill their basic responsibility in life.

This theme is maintained throughout all of what I perceive to be the first stratum of the *Xici*. Chapter A4 includes the succinct definition "one yin and one yang is what is called the Way" (*yi yin yi yang zhi wei dao* -@---@-----D), while chapter A5, which might be considered to be the conclusion to this stratum, begins with three other related definitions: "richly having it is called the great achievement" (*fu you zhi wei da ye* -I-----j-~), "daily renewing it is called full virtue" (*ri xin zhi wei sheng de* ---s-----w), and "generating life is called Change" (*sheng sheng zhi wei yi* -----). It then proceeds through a graphic description of sexual union and concludes, after recalling from chapter A1 that the *Changes* (or, perhaps, simply change) moves in the midst of these opposites, that "to create the inner-nature and to maintain it and to maintain it again is what is called the gate of the property of the Way" (*cheng xing cun cun, dao yi zhi men* -----s-s-A-D-q-----). This is, to be sure, a radical distillation of the theme of these chapters. Moreover, it does not do any justice to the intricacy with which the theme is interwoven through them (in part by way of recurrent vocabulary, acting almost like notes of music). Indeed, I suspect that the Interlocking Parallel Style in which this stratum is written was meant to be a conscious instantiation of the theme: positing two complementary natures, the union of which produces (*gu* -G or *shi gu* -O-G, "therefore" or "this is why") something new. I hope that the following translation of just chapter A5 will serve to demonstrate further the style of this author.

-----A-----A  
 ---U-----P-t-H-P-~A  
 ---w-j-~---o-v-C

Manifested in humaneness, and stored in use,  
 Encouraging the ten-thousand things  
 and yet not sharing the troubles of the sage,  
 the full virtue and great achievement is perfect  
 indeed!

-I-----j-~A  
 ---s-----w-C  
 -----A

Richly having it is called the great achievement;  
 Daily renewing it is called full virtue;  
 Generating life is called Change.

---H-----A  
 ---k-----[-A  
 -----e-C

Completing images is called *Qian*;  
 Imitating patterns is called *Kun*;  
 Going to the limits of numbers to know what is  
 to come is called prognosticating;  
 Penetrating alternations is called affairs;  
 The unfathomableness of yin and yang is called  
 spirituality.

-q-----A  
 -----C

-----s-o-j-o-C

The *Changes* is vast indeed, great indeed.

-H---G---h---m-A

In speaking in terms of the distant, it is not repelled;

-H---G---h-R-----A

in speaking in terms of the near, it is quiescent and upright;

-H---G---a-----h---o-C

in speaking in terms of what is between heaven and earth, it is complete.

-----A ---R- ]-M-A ----- ]---A

As for *Qian*, in quiescence it is curved, in motion it is straight;

-O-H-j---j-C

this is how greatness is generated by it.

---[ -A ---R- ]---A ----- ]-P-A

As for *Kun*, in quiescence it is shut, in motion it is open;

-O-H-s---j-C

this is how vastness is generated by it.<sup>25</sup>

-s-j-t---a-A

Vast and great it matches heaven and earth;

---q-t-|---A

Alternating and penetrating it matches the four seasons;

-----q-t-----A

The propriety of the yin and yang matches the sun and moon;

-----t---w-C

The goodness of exchange and openness matches perfect virtue.

-l---R -----o-G-C

The Master said: "Isn't the *Changes* perfect!"

-----A-t-H---H-R-w---s~ ]-CAs for the *Changes*,

it is that by which the sages raise virtue on high and make achievements vast.

---R-----A-R-----A---k-a-C

Knowing the heights and embodying the lowly, the heights imitate heaven

and the lowly is patterned on earth.

---a- ]-----G-----o-C

Heaven and earth gives it place

and the *Changes* moves in their midst;

-----s-s-A -D-q-----C

Completing the inner-nature and preserving it over and over again, it is the gate to the propriety of the way.

At least in this core portion of this first stratum, there is very little mention of any ethical notions; simply participating in the life of the world is regarded as good. It is doubtless this attitude toward the natural world that has led some to characterize the *Xici* as a "Daoist" text. On the other hand, this sort of optimism with respect to the nature of the world is by no means uncharacteristic of texts usually considered to be Confucian. It underscores, for instance,

theories of the transformative effects of music, as seen in the "Yue ji" 乐记 (Record of music) chapter of the *Li ji* 礼记 (Record of ritual).

-----a---M- ]-A -----a----- ]-C -M-A -G-----F ---A  
-G-s-----O-C

Music is the harmony of heaven and earth, and ritual is the sequence of heaven and earth. Being harmonious therefore the hundred beings all transform, and being in sequence therefore the groups of beings are all differentiated.<sup>26</sup>

Even if the author of the "Yue ji" were not to go on to paraphrase the opening chapter of the *Xici*, it would still be clear that these arguments share the *Xici*'s notion that man and the universe are on a par and that things are both differentiated and also harmonious. But the connection between the two texts becomes unmistakable in the next passage of the "Yue ji":

---L-a---A -g---w-o-C -----H---A -Q-----o-C ----R----` -A  
-p-j---o-C ---H---E-A ---H-s---A -h---R---P-o-C -b-----H-A  
-b-a-----F -p---h-----a---O- ]-C -a---W---A -----U---A  
-----A ----a-----F -----H-p-^A -----H---B-A  
-----H-|---A-----H-----A-----j-C-p---h-----a---M- ]-C

As heaven is lofty and earth base, ruler and minister are settled. Base and high being ranked, noble and mean are positioned. Motion and stillness having constancy, the small and great are differentiated.

The regions being grouped by category, and beings being divided by type, then natures and fates are not the same. In heaven there form images and on earth there form shapes; in this way then ritual is the differentiation of heaven and earth.

The earthly vapor rises up, while the heavenly vapor descends. The yin and yang join each other, and heaven and earth stir each other. Drumming them with thunder and lightning, and rousing them with the wind and rain, moving them with the four seasons, and brightening them with the sun and moon, the hundred transformations all arise in it. In this way then music is the harmony of heaven and earth.<sup>27</sup>

In addition perhaps to suggesting a process by which Confucian thinkers undertook appropriation of the *Xici*, this "Yue ji" passage is important too for helping to establish the date of the earliest stratum of the *Xici*. The *Li ji* is notoriously difficult to date. It almost surely was not put into final form until well into the Han dynasty. On the other hand, it surely also includes much earlier material, as demonstrated in the preceding chapter in the case of the "Zi yi" 子衣 or "Black Jacket," the discovery of which among the Guodian 郭店 manuscripts goes far toward substantiating its traditional attribution to Zi Si 子思, the grandson of Confucius. The "Yue ji" is traditionally attributed to Gongsun Nizi 公孫尼子, supposed to



have been a contemporary of Zi Si. While there are also other traditions and especially other viewpoints regarding the authorship of the text, it seems likely that it dates to the mid-Warring States period, no later than about 300 B.C.<sup>28</sup> And since at least the lengthy passage of it quoted above seems clearly to be drawing from the opening of the *Xici*, it is reasonable to conclude that at least that opening – and indeed the entirety of what I perceive to be the first stratum of the *Xici* – were in circulation in the fourth century B.C.

## The Second Stratum: Divination as a Language of Change

What I perceive to be the second stratum of the *Xici* is striking for its insistence on defining terms by way of equational sentences (i.e., sentences of the type Noun Noun = ] ) and for its preoccupation with divination. Thus, chapter A2, the first chapter in the received text that exhibits these features, includes a chain of definitions regarding terms occurring in or associated with the *Yi jing*, before introducing the divinatory use of the text by the noble man (*junzi* 君—子), and then concluding with a quotation from the text:

—N—A —o—H— ]—C

”Auspicious” and ”ominous” are images of gain and loss;

—[ —A —~—H— ]—C

”regret” and ”distress” are images of sorrow and concern;

————A —i—h—H— ]—C

alternation and transformation are images of advance and retreat;

—X—A — ]—H— ]—C

the hard and soft are images of day and night;

————A —T—D— ]—C

and the motion of the six lines is the way of the three extremes.

—O—G—g—l—~—w—A ————— ]—

This is why that in which the noble man resides and takes comfort is the sequence of the *Changes*,

—————A ————— ]—C

and that which he manipulates and takes pleasure in is the statements of the lines.

—O—G—g—l—~—h—[ —H—A

This is why when the noble man resides he views its images and manipulates its statements,

—h—[ —————e—C

and when he moves he views its alternations and manipulates its prognostications.

—O—H—@——————A—N—A—L—Q—

Thus, ”From heaven blessing it, auspicious, there is nothing not beneficial.”

Chapter A3 continues all of these features both formally and conceptually:

-----G-H----- ]-C

-----G----- ]-C

-N-----G-----o- ]-C

---[ -----G---p--- ]-C

-L-S-----L- ]-C

-O-G-C-Q-----s-G---C

---p-j---s-G---C

---N-----s-G---C

-~---[ ---s-G---C

-\_-L-S---s-G---C

-O-G-----j-p-A

-----I---C

--- ]-U-----C

The Judgments are what speak of images.

The Line Statements are what speak of alternations.

"Auspicious" and "ominous" are what speak of loss and gain.

"Regret" and "distress" are what speak of small blemishes.

"No trouble" is what is good at repairing mistakes.

This is why what arrays the honored and mean resides in position;

what equalizes the small and great resides in the hexagrams;

what distinguishes "auspicious" and "ominous" resides in the statements;

what worries over "regret" and "distress" resides in the interstices;

and what shakes up "no trouble" resides in "regret."

This is why of hexagrams there are great and small,

and of statements there are dangerous and easy.

As for statements, each points to where it goes.<sup>29</sup>

The final chapter of what has traditionally been identified as the first half of the *Xici* (i.e., the *Shang zhuan* 上篇) presents something of a conclusion to this stratum,<sup>30</sup> providing an ethical rationalization for this interest in divination. Another series of definitions comprises the central portion of this chapter, A12. This series begins with a definition of the Way or *dao* as "that which is above forms" (*xing er shang* 上形) as opposed to "implements" (*qi* 器) that are "that which is below forms" (*xing er xia* 下形), apparently the *locus classicus* for these expressions that would come to be so important in later Chinese metaphysics. It then moves through such terms as *bua* 化, "transformation," *bian* 变, "alternation," and *tong* 通, "penetration," that are central to describing the dynamic nature of the *Yijing*, before returning to the word *xiang* 象, "image," with which this stratum started in chapter A2, and

then coming finally to the "appending of statements" (*xi ci* 繫辭), another term also found in chapter A2 and which came to be the name for the entire text.<sup>31</sup>

—O—G—W—D—A

———U———A

———A

———q—A

— | ———U———~—C

—O—G—H—t—H—H—U—A

———e—H———y—C

—O—G———H—C

—t—H—H———U———A

——[ ——— | —q—H———A

———j—H—\_——N—C

—O—G———C

This is why what is above forms is called the Way, and what is below forms is called implements.

To snip a transformation is called an alternation;<sup>32</sup>

To push and put it into motion is called penetration;

and to raise it up and distribute it to the people under heaven is called service and achievement.<sup>33</sup>

This is why images are what the sages use to display the vestiges under heaven, and imitating them in their shape and form give image to the properties of things; this is why they are called images.

The sages use them to display the movements of all under heaven,

and observe their convergence and penetration in order to give motion to their canons and rituals,

and append statements to them in order to decide their auspiciousness and ominousness; this is why they are called lines.

Divination is crucial to the author of this stratum of the *Xici* not, I think, because he was interested in divination *per se*,<sup>34</sup> but rather because it is his contention that it is the *Yijing*'s use in divination that makes it unique within the entire textual tradition of ancient China (the *dian li* 典利, "canons and rituals" of the final sentence here). Like other texts, the *Yijing* is constituted of pictures (*gua* 卦) and statements (*yao* 爻 or *ci* 辭). But unlike other texts, which are fixed for all time, the *Yijing* is dynamic, is alive, changing with each new use, each new reading. Divination is what puts the text into motion, causing it to "transform," to "alternate" and to "penetrate," making its images changeable. This argument, implied in the passages already translated above, is made explicit in a passage at the beginning of this chapter A12. It is in the form of a dialog between Confucius and some unidentified interlocutor:

—l—R———A———N—C

—M—h—t—H—N—A———i——G—C

— l — R — t — H — H — H — N — A — ] — H — — — — — A — — — — — j — H — — — — — A  
 — — — — — q — — — — — H — — — — — Q — C  
 — — — — — R — — — — — H — — — — — C

The Master said: "Writing does not fully express speech, and speech does not fully express thought."

"This being so, then can the thoughts of the sages not be seen?"

The Master said: "The sages established images in order to express fully their ideas, and set up hexagrams in order to express fully the characteristics (of things), appended statements to them in order to express fully their words, (alternated and penetrated=) caused them to change in order to express fully their benefit, and drummed them and danced them in order to express fully their spirit."

In making this argument, the author of this second stratum of the *Xici* was participating in a debate about the nature of language and writing that, based on the evidence currently available, seems to have emerged within a decade or so of 300 B.C. and then became quite ubiquitous by the middle of the following century. In the *Mengzi* — s — l, of the last decades of the fourth century B.C., one finds a statement suggesting that the writings of antiquity are sufficient to put one on intimate terms with their writers.

— s — l — — — — — U — — — — — R — @ — m — — — — — h — A — — — — — @ — m — — — — — h — F — @ — — — — — h — A  
 — — — — — @ — — — — — h — F — — — — — U — — — — — h — A — — — — — U — — — — — h — C  
 — H — — — — — U — — — — — h — — — — — A — S — | — — — — — j — — — — — H — C — | — — — — — A — — — — — A  
 — — — — — H — i — G — H — O — H — — — — — @ — ] — A — O — | — — — — — ] — C

Mengzi addressed Wan Zhang saying: "A fine gentleman of a single town may befriend another fine gentleman of a single town; a fine gentleman of a single state may befriend another fine gentleman of a single state; and a fine gentleman of the world may befriend another fine gentleman of the world. But if befriending another fine gentleman of the world is not yet sufficient, then one can still assay the men of antiquity. By chanting their poetry and reading their writings, is it possible for one not to know them as men? In this way, by assaying their times, one can still befriend them."<sup>35</sup>

In the nearly contemporary *Zhuangzi* — — — — — l, on the other hand, we find numerous passages arguing the contrary, that writing is but a fossilized vestige of an earlier intellectual moment. Particularly relevant to the relationship between "thought" (*yi* — N), "speech" (*yan* — —) and "writing" (*shu* — —) in the above passage from the *Xici* is the Zhuangzi's well known analogy between speech and fishtraps and rabbit snares.

-----H-b-----A-o-----C-----H-b-----A-o-----  
 ---C-----H-b-N-A-o-N-----C-^w-o-----H---  
 -P-----v-C

The fishtrap exists for the sake of fish; once you have gotten the fish, you can forget the fishtrap. The snare exists for the sake of the rabbit; once you have gotten the rabbit, you can forget the snare. Speech exists for the sake of the idea; once you have gotten the idea, you can forget the speech. Where can I find someone who has forgotten speech, so that I might speak with him?<sup>36</sup>

This passage explicitly points only to the incommensurability of thought and speech. However, Zhuangzi’s tongue-in-cheek conclusion to the passage recognizes that speech is in some sense “alive,” that being able to speak with someone allows the sort of interaction that can render thought intelligible.<sup>37</sup> Other passages of the *Zhuangzi* make clear that writing, on the other hand, does not share this flexibility; once something is written, it is fixed in place, and thus becomes “dead.” For instance, consider this apocryphal dialog between Confucius and Laozi — I found in the “Tian yun” — B chapter.

— I — C — R — C — v — K — g — A — H — [ — o — C — E — G — o — C  
 -H- l - C-Q-G-g-----D-----P-l-----A-@-g-L- \_ -----o-C  
 - - - H - - - - - ] - A - D - - - - - H - - - l - - - R  
 ---o-l-----J-v-@---g- ]-C-----g-A----- ]-C -Z---  
 ---H---v-I---l-----S--- ]-C-----i-----X-----Z-i-v-I

Confucius said to Lao Dan: “I have put in order the six classics, the *Poetry*, *Documents*, *Ritual*, *Music*, *Changes*, and *Spring and Autumn*, considering myself that I have done so for a long time and that I know well their reasons? Having sought out seventy-two lords, I have discoursed on the way of the former kings and the footprints of (dukes of) Zhou and Shao, but it has gone so far that not a single lord has accepted what I have had to say. Is the difficulty in persuading people because of the difficulty in understanding the Way?”

Laozi said: “Fortunately for you you have not met with a lord who puts in order the age. The six classics are the old footprints of the former kings; how could they be what made the footprints? What you are now speaking about is nothing more than footprints. Footprints are what are produced by shoes; how could they be the shoes?”<sup>38</sup>

In a related chapter, the “Tian dao” — D, which Chen Guying and others have seen as closely related with the *Xici*,<sup>39</sup> the same attitude toward writing is stated in a more systematic fashion.

-@ ---Q-D---A--- ]-C ---L-y-C-y---Q- ]-C-y---Q  
 ---A-N- ]-C-N---H-C-N---H---A---i-H--- ]-C---@  
 - ]-Q-----C-@---Q---v-A-----Q- ]-C-----Q-D---Q- ]-C  
 -G ---i---A---P--- ]-C ---i-D---A-W-P-n- ]-C-d

---A -@ -H -H --- -W -n --- -A -H -o --- -C --- -W -n -G  
 --- -H -o --- -A -h --- -A --- -A --- -@ -Z ---  
 -v-C

The way that is valued by the world is writing. Writing is nothing more than language (or: writing does not surpass language). Language has something of value. What is valued in language is ideas. Ideas have that which they follow. That which ideas follow cannot be transmitted through speech. And yet because the world values speech it transmits writings. Although the world values them, they are not worth being valued. What is considered as valuable about them is not their value. Therefore, what you can see when you look at something is shape and color; what you can hear when you listen to something is words and sound. What a pity that people of the world take shape and color, words and sounds to be sufficient to get the characteristics of that (i.e., the Dao or Way). Since shape and color, words and sounds are certainly insufficient to get the characteristics of that, then the one who knows does not speak, and the one who speaks does not know, yet does the world record this!<sup>40</sup>

The conclusion of this passage – “the one who knows does not speak, and the one who speaks does not know” (*zhizhe bu yan, yanzhe bu zhi* --- --- --- ---A --- --- ---) – clearly alludes to the *Laozi*, famous for the notion that language is an insufficient medium to transmit understanding of the Way. Thus, the usual interpretation of the famous first sentence of the *Laozi*, *dao ke dao, fei chang dao* <sup>1</sup>D-i-D-A-D---D, is “the way that can be spoken of is not the eternal way.” However, it is interesting to note that another text probably also written in the third century B.C., the *Wenzi* ㄅㄚㄣ, <sup>41</sup> offers a very different interpretation. In the context of a discussion of laws needing to change with the times – the political corollary of this linguistic debate – the *Wenzi* quotes this line with the sense: “A way that is able to be the Way is not a constant way,” meaning that it must constantly change to adapt to new situations; as soon as a way has any fixed characteristic, it becomes finite. For the same reason, the *Wenzi* goes on to say that “a (name=) word that is able to be the (Name=) Word is not stored in writings”; once it is written down, it becomes fixed, and thus dead.

-e -Q --- -A --- -k -j -F -e -P --- -A --- -U -C -G -t -H -k  
 -P --- -A --- -P -U --- -A --- -A --- -A -k --- -O -A -U - ] --- -y -C  
 -G --- -j --- -i -D -A --- -U --- -h - ] -C -w --- --- -Y -D ---  
 --- -F -D --- -Y -o --- -H --- -C -o --- -H --- -A --- ---  
 - ] -C -G --- -D -i -D -A -D - -D - ] -F -W -i -W -A -D - -W - ] --- -C

If you are to benefit the people, you do not necessarily have to take antiquity as a law; if you are to be well-rounded in affairs, you do not necessarily have to follow the customary. Therefore, the laws of the sages changed with the times and their rituals transformed with the customs. Clothing and tools, laws, measures, statutes and ordinances were each based on what was appropriate

for it. Therefore, changing the ancient cannot yet be rejected, and following the customary is not yet sufficient. Reciting the books of the former kings is not as good as hearing their speech; hearing their speech is not as good as getting the reason why they spoke. Getting the reason why they spoke, it is a speech that cannot be spoken. Therefore, "a way that is able to be the Way is not a constant way."<sup>42</sup>

As one final example of this attitude toward writing, let me cite what is usually regarded as the earliest commentary on the *Laozi*, the "Yu Lao" chapter of the *Han Feizi*. Ironically, Han Feizi was a stutterer and was forced by this circumstance to put his philosophy into writing to have it accepted at the court of King Zheng of Qin, better known by his subsequent title of Qin Shi huangdi. In the anecdote, the protagonist is so persuaded of the uselessness of his books that he burns them and then dances on them – a perhaps chilling presentiment of the "burning of the books" that Li Si, a onetime classmate of Han Fei, proposed in a memorial to the Qin court in 213, just twenty years after Li had engineered Han Fei's own suicide there.

t-----A }-----P---C -----R ----- ]-C -----A  
 -----L-` ---C ----- ]-C -----A -----C  
 --- l---W-t-----H  
 --- 0 --- ] - I ----- ? - C - G ----- H ----- A  
 ---z-----H-----C

Wang Shou was walking along carrying books, and saw Xu Feng on the road to Zhou. Feng said: "Service is doing, and doing is born from timeliness; one who knows timeliness is without any constant service. Books are words, and words are born from knowing; one who knows does not store books. Now why do you alone walk along carrying them?" With this Wang Shou accordingly burned his books and danced on them. Therefore, the knowing don't use word-talk to teach, and the wise don't store books.<sup>43</sup>

After this somewhat lengthy detour through the linguistic turns of the third century B.C., let us now return to the *Xici*. The author of what I perceive to be the second stratum of the text seems to accept the *Zhuangzi*'s notion of the fixed nature of books. However, he does not accept that this pertains to the *Yi*. For him the *Yi* is a book of a very different sort, made up not of written words but rather of changing – and thus living – images. That is why in Confucius's riposte to his interlocutor, after noting that the sages established the images and hexagrams and appended statements to them, they then "(alternated and penetrated=) caused them to change in order to express fully their benefit, and drummed them and danced them in order to express fully their spirit." This too, I would suggest, is why the author of this stratum of the *Xici* insists on the divinatory nature of the *Yi*: if one simply reads it, it is dead just like any other book of wisdom; but if one uses it in divination, setting its changes in motion, then it comes alive, changing so as to comment on each new situation addressed to it. Just as the author of

the first stratum of the *Xici* regarded the human sexual act as the paradigmatic manifestation of man's participation in the generation of the world, similarly for the author of the second stratum the interaction between the user of the *Yi* and the *Yi* itself results in a constant process of recreation, but this time the recreation is that of the text.

## Conclusion

The final redaction of the *Xici* was certainly more complex than this two-stage process on which I have focused in this study. As I have noted in passing above, the *Xici* also contains other chapters, several (A6, A7, B2, B4) with a distinct, third authorial hand that are found already in the Mawangdui manuscript of the *Xici*. In addition, I suspect that the several chapters found in the Mawangdui text "Yi zhi yi" and now found in the second section of the *Xici* (i.e., i.e., B4-B8) were doubtless added to the text sometime during the Han dynasty. Finally, I suspect that the "Da yan" chapter was added independently, also sometime during the Han dynasty but well after the time of the Mawangdui manuscript. A fuller study of the redaction of the *Xici zhuan* would attempt to account for all of these portions of the text. Nevertheless, I think it was the authors of the two strata studied here who made the *Xici* the all-encompassing statement that it is.

The first of the two strata that I have identified suggested that the *Yi* or *Changes* could serve as the necessary ontological linkage between the processes of the natural world and the human community, while the second stratum might be said to have supplied the epistemological basis whereby the text could provide readers with an intelligible but never fixed meaning. I suspect that this second stratum postdates the first. Not only does it take up philosophical concerns that seem to belong to a somewhat later period (as I have tried to demonstrate), but, perhaps even more important, it seems to show an awareness of the other section. For example, as discussed above, chapter A12 is an ideal example of this stratum, including the crucial passage about the unique textual nature of the *Yi*. The chapter begins in the fashion typical of this stratum with a series of definitions, including *bian*, "alternation," and *tong*, "penetration, words seen consistently throughout the stratum. The last of the definitions of this paragraph introduces a term new to it, *shi ye* 事業, "service and achievement," the second word of which seems to be an appropriation of the word *ye* that features so prominently in the first stratum (where I translated it as "patrimony"), even if the sense in which the word is defined seems somewhat different.<sup>44</sup>

—O—G—W—D—A  
 —U—A  
 —A

This is why what is above forms is called the Way,  
 and what is below forms is called implements.  
 To snip a transformation is called an  
 alternation;<sup>45</sup>



—————q—A

To push and put it into motion is called penetration;

— | —————U—————~—C

and to raise it up and distribute it to the people under heaven is called service and achievement.

An even clearer example of such appropriation is to be seen in chapter B9, the final chapter of the entire text and another clear example of the second stratum:

----- A ----- U ----- ] - F - w ----- H ----- I - C ----- [ - A  
 -----U----- ]-F -w-----H-----C

*Qian* is the most vigorous thing under heaven; its virtue moves constantly with ease in order to know of danger. *Kun* is the most compliant thing under heaven; its virtue moves constantly with simplicity in order to know of obstructions.

The two sentences both begin with the equational format of the second stratum, and the linkage in the first sentence between *yi* —, "ease," and *xian* —I, "danger," recalls a formulation seen earlier in chapter A3 of the same second stratum (*gua you da xiao, ci you xian yi* ———j—p—A ———I—, "of hexagrams there are great and small, and of statements there are dangerous and easy"). On the other hand, the pairing of *yi* — and *jian* —, "simple," is an obvious quotation of the pairing of these terms in chapter A1 of the first stratum, even if (perhaps especially since) the meanings of both words again appear to be used in senses different from those in the first stratum. The pairing of these words would appear to be unique within the philosophical expression of early China; their use in the first and last chapters of the *Xici* can only be seen as an intratextual reference – and it seems clear to me that the direction of reference is from what I have termed the first stratum to that of the second.<sup>46</sup>

It is perhaps appropriate that what I have termed the first stratum, the core concern of which is the constant production and reproduction of the world – both natural and human, should have generated a second (and, doubtless, third and fourth) attempt to explicate the process of the *Yi* or change. It is perhaps also appropriate that the second stratum, which I have argued is concerned primarily with questions of epistemology – how can we define the terms of the *Yi* or *Changes* and how is it that they differ from normal language in being ultimately undefinable, should signal its knowledge of the earlier stratum, and doing so with definitions that re-define some of its core terms. Together, these authors of the *Xici* crafted a pair of philosophical statements that transformed the *Zhou Yi* from a divination manual into the *I Ching (Yi jing)*, the first of all of China's classics.

## Notes

\* The substance of this paper, first entitled "The Authorial Context of the *Yijing's Xici Zhuan*," was presented to the Conference on Intellectual Lineages in Ancient China, University of Pennsylvania, 27 September 1997, and then in a revised form and with the revised title "The Ever-Changing Text: The Making of the *Tradition of the Appended Statements* and the Making of the *Yijing*," was presented as the Herrlee G. Creel Memorial Lecture at the University of Chicago, 29 May 1998. I also presented it in a Chinese version, entitled "Xici zhuan de bianzuan" 系辞传之编撰, at the conference celebrating the centennial of Peking University, Beijing, 5 May 1999; this Chinese version has been published, under that title, in in *Wenhua de yizeng: Hanxue yanjiu guoji buiyi lunwenji; Zhaxue juan* 文化之意义：汉学研究的国际会议论文集；哲学卷 (Beijing daxue Zhongguo chuantong wenhua yanjiu zhongxin (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2000), pp. 262-7; and under the title "Boshu Xici zhuan de bianzuan" 帛书系辞传之编撰, in *Daojia wenhua yanjiu* 道家文化研究 18 (2000): 371-81.

<sup>1</sup> For an introduction in English to this discovery, including a complete translation of the manuscript, see Edward L. Shaughnessy, *I Ching: The Classic of Changes, The First English Translation of the Newly Discovered Second-Century B.C. Mawangdui Texts* (New York: Ballantine, 1996).

<sup>2</sup> For Ouyang's most developed statement regarding the *Xici*, see his "Yi tongzi wen" 易童子文 (Ouyang Yongshu ji 欧阳永叔集 [Guoxue jiben congshu ed.], 9.62-7), which begins: "(The *Xici* ... is a mass of sayings jumbled and confused and is not even the words of a single individual. Those who studied the *Changes* in antiquity selected (quotations) at random to support their teachings, but the teachings were not of a single school. For this reason some are the same, some are different, some right, some wrong. What they chose not being to the point, it ended up harming the classic and confusing the ages—and yet they were appended to the sagely classic, and their transmission has already been long, and no one has been able to discern whence they came or to discriminate what is authentic or artificial about them" (9.62). For discussions in English of Ouyang's views on the *Xici*, see Iulian K. Shchutskii, *Researches on the I Ching* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1979), pp. 65-71; Kidder Smith, Jr., Peter K. Bol, Joseph A. Adler, and Don J. Wyatt, *Sung Dynasty Uses of the I Ching* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), pp. 26-42.

<sup>3</sup> Willard J. Peterson, "Making Connections: 'Commentary on the Attached Verbalizations' of the *Book of Change*," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 42.1 (1982): 79. Much of Su's commentary on the *Xici* focuses on the meaning of *dao*, often put in terms familiar from the *Laozi* and *Zhuangzi*. Indeed, whereas he explicitly criticizes Mengzi for not understanding human nature, on the same page he explicitly extolled Laozi's understanding of the nature of the *dao* (*Su Shi Yi zhuan* 7.159-60). For a study of Su's views of the *Yijing*, including especially the *Xici*, see Kidder Smith, Jr., Peter K. Bol, Joseph A. Adler, and Don J. Wyatt, *Sung Dynasty Uses of the I Ching* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), pp. 56-99.

<sup>4</sup> For mention of these scholars' views on the *Xici zhuan*, see Willard J. Peterson, "Making Connections: 'Commentary on the Attached Verbalizations' of the *Book of Change*," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 42.1 (1982): 76-7.

<sup>5</sup> For his first published statement of this view, see Chen Guying, "Yi zhuan Xici suo shou Laozi sixiang yingxiang – Jianlun Yi zhuan nai Daojia xitong zhi zuo" 易传系辞所受老子思想影响——兼论易传乃道家系统之作 (Beijing daxue Zhongguo chuantong wenhua yanjiu zhongxin (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1989), pp. 34-42, 54; for a more developed

statement, see Chen Guying, *Yi zhuan yu Daojia sixiang* -----P-D-a---Q (Taipei: Taiwan Shangwu yinshuguan, 1994), esp. 163-243.

<sup>6</sup> See Wang Baoxuan, "Cong Mawangdui boshu ben kan *Xici* yu Laozi xuepai de guanxi" -q-----P --- l-----Y, *Daojia wenhua yanjiu* -D-a-----s 1 (1992): 175-87; "Boshu *Xici* yu Zhanguo Qin Han Daojia Yi xue" -----P-----~D-a-----, *Daojia wenhua yanjiu* 3 (1993): 73-88.

<sup>7</sup> See Liao Mingchun, "Lun boshu *Xici* yu jinben *Xici* de guanxi" -----P-----Y, *Daojia wenhua yanjiu* 3 (1993): 133-43.

<sup>8</sup> For an overview of it, see Edward L. Shaughnessy, "A First Reading of the Mawangdui *Yijing* Manuscript," *Early China* 19 (1994): 47-73.

<sup>9</sup> There are two different enumerations of chapters (*zhang*<sup>31</sup>) within the *Xici* in customary use: that of the *Zhou Yi zheng yi* -P-----q of Kong Yingda ---o-F (574-648), and that of the *Zhou Yi ben yi* -P-----q of Zhu Xi ---Q (1130-1200). Here and throughout this paper (with one exception, for which see n. 00), I follow the chapters as given in the earlier of these two sources, "A" indicating the first or *shang* -W *zhuan* --, and "B" the second or *xia* -U *zhuan*.. The chapters missing from the Mawangdui manuscript correspond in Zhu Xi's numbering to chapters A9, much of B5, and B6 through B11.

<sup>10</sup> For translations of these texts, see Shaughnessy, *I Ching: The Classic of Changes*, pp. 213-34 and 235-44.

<sup>11</sup> Peterson, "Making Connections," p. 77.

<sup>12</sup> Gu Jiegang, "*Zhou Yi* gua yao ci zhong de gushi" -P-----G--, *Gu shi bian* -j-v-- 3 (1931; rpt. Shanghai: Shanghai Guji chubanshe, 1982), p. 25. Gu explicitly notes that by "*Yi zhuan*" ----, he intends not a single text but all of what are referred to as the "Ten Wings."

<sup>13</sup> Peterson, "Making Connections," p. 77.

<sup>14</sup> I have elsewhere suggested (Edward L. Shaughnessy, "The Composition of the *Zhouyi*" [Ph.D. Diss.: Stanford University, 1983], 83-95) that the "Da yan" chapter presents a method of divination inconsistent with the earliest descriptions of divination with the *Zhou Yi* (i.e., those in the *Zuo zhuan* ----); that it is not included – anywhere – in the Mawangdui manuscript would seem to suggest that it is a later intrusion into the text. Chapters B5-B7 are consistent among themselves, but different from either of the other strata that I detect within the *Xici*; it seems appropriate that they are found in the "Yi zhi yi" text of the Mawangdui manuscript.

<sup>15</sup> The one place where I would diverge from the chapter divisions of the *Zhou Yi zheng yi*, and would accept the emendation of Zhu Xi, comes between chapters A3 and A4. In the *Zhou Yi zheng yi*, the following three sentences are attached to the end of chapter A3

----P----a---A -G-----a---D-C The *Changes* are on a level with heaven and earth,  
therefore they are able completely to assay the way of heaven  
and earth.

---H-[ -----A ---H-----a-z-C Looking up to observe the markings of heaven  
and looking down to examine the order of earth,  
this is why it knows the reasons for darkness and brightness.

---O-G-----G-C  
--- l-----A -G-----C Tracing the beginning and returning to the end,  
therefore it knows the explanations of death and life.

even though they have nothing to do with the preceding lines of chapter A3 (whether in terms of content or style) but instead are parallel with the following lines of A4:

-----A -----A Seminal fluids and vapor make up things,  
and wandering souls make up alternations,  
---O-G-----C this is why it knows the shapes and appearances of ghosts  
and spirits.

<sup>16</sup> For this term, see Rudolf G. Wagner, "Interlocking Parallel Style: Laozi and Wang Bi," *Asiatische Studien/Études Asiatiques* 34, 1 (1980): 18-58.

<sup>17</sup> I should note that this analysis does not include the following chapters: A8, A10, A11, B2, B5, which display neither pronounced Inter-locking Parallel Style nor a preponderance of equational sentences. Of these chapters, A8 and B5 display similar exegetical styles with respect to individual line statements of the *Zhou Yi*, and the other three chapters perhaps have similar overall structures. However, the final attribution of these chapters to either of the two strata I am proposing, or to yet another stratum, must await further analysis.

<sup>18</sup> Chapter A6 is perhaps the best example of this stratum. Like the second stratum mentioned just above, it too focuses on the role of language, but in this case the concern seems to be with ethics rather than epistemology. An introductory passage to the chapter concludes "Only after deliberating does one speak, and only after consulting does one move – deliberating and consulting in order to complete its alternations and transformations (*ni zhi er hou yan, yi zhi er hou dong, ni yi yi cheng qi bian hua* -----A -----A -----H-----). It then presents a series of quotations of line statements from the *Zhou Yi*, beginning with the Nine in the Second line of Zhongfu ☰☱. hexagram (#61):

—b—b—A—l—M—F—n—A—^—P—C

"A crane calls in the shade, Its child harmonizes with it; We have a fine chalice, I will drain it with you,"

which is provided with a quotation from Confucius (*Zi yue* —l—) stressing the necessary effect that one's speech has on others, concluding "Speech and action are the means by which the noble man moves heaven and earth; can one not be cautious about them!" (*yan xing, junzi zhi suoyi dong tian di ye; ke bu shen hu* -----A—g—l-----H-----a—]—F—i—V—G). Other statements in this chapter attributed to Confucius and stressing the importance of speech include "Words of the same heart, their fragrance is like an orchid's" (*tong xin zhi yan, qi xiu ru lan* —P-----A-----p—) and "As for whence disorder is generated, words and conversation are the stages" (*luan zhi suo sheng ye, yan yu yi wei jie* -----]—A—y—H-----).

Although it is of course possible that the shared interest in "speech" reflects some connection between this stratum and what I have termed the second stratum of the *Xici*, the dramatic difference in format between the two strata leads me to doubt this. Neither am I prepared to venture any hypothesis concerning the date of composition of this third stratum, or the date of its inclusion in the *Xici*. The format in which it is written, with a quotation of a canonical source followed by a comment by Confucius, seems to have been used consistently from the mid-Warring States period (fourth century B.C.) through the early Western Han (second century B.C.). Since this stratum is included in the Mawangdui manuscript of the *Yi jing*, it certainly predates the Han. I suspect that at least its original composition predates also that of the second stratum, but I have no way to demonstrate this. Therefore, I have chosen in this study to focus on the first two strata, about which I think I can say something.

<sup>19</sup> The theses that I describe here are similar to the four propositions that Willard Peterson detected in the *Xici*: that the *Yi* duplicates the universe, that the processes of change within the universe are intelligible to and enactable by humans, that we can know this by way of the *Yi*, and that the *Yi* is the best vehicle for knowing this; Peterson, "Making Connections," 85-110. I find the last two of his propositions more or less redundant; and for the second I would stress the ability of humans to enact, rather than to know, the processes of change within the world.

<sup>20</sup> I should point out here that instead of *Qian* and *Kun*, the etymologies of which are obscure, the Mawangdui manuscript reads the names of the two pure *Yi* hexagrams as *Jian* —, "linchpin," and *Chuan* —t, "river" (which, however, is perhaps to be understood as the unelaborated form of *shun* —, "compliant"). I have suggested in a conference presentation that the manuscript's readings seem to derive from characterizations of the male and female genitalia, and thus are probably to be

preferred over the traditional readings; "The Key and the Flow: Drying Out the Wet Woman of the *yijing's Xici Zhuan*," paper presented to the annual meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, Honolulu, Hawaii, 11 April 1996. While these sexual connotations are certainly consistent with the theme of this first stratum of the *Xici*, since this study is in large part an analysis of the received text of the *Xici* I here maintain the traditional readings.

<sup>21</sup> Zhu Xi's note to this line is relevant to the interpretation that I am presenting here. After having noted in the preceding line that the mention of "male" and "female" is "a further illustration of the *Yi's* appearance in concrete form" (*you ming Yi zhi xian yu shi ti zhe* ㊦㊧㊨㊩㊪㊫㊬㊭㊮㊯㊰㊱㊲{㊳㊴㊵㊶}), he says here:

—Z————\_————A————p—C—j—————A——I———C

As a general rule, of all beings that belong to the yin and yang, none is not like this: generally, the yang precedes and the yin follows, the yang gives and the yin receives.

<sup>22</sup> My translation here is indubitably unprecedented, and calls for more than just a brief note. It is based to some extent on the variorum *jian* —, "crack, interstice, opening," for *jian* —, "simple," found in the Mawangdui manuscript. *Jian* —, "crack, interstice, opening," is of course the protograph for *jian* —, "simple," and could be a meaningless graphic variant. However, as Zhu Xi notes about this context (see n. 21 above), the "male" and "female" of this passage are the concrete instantiations of *Qian* and *Kun*, yin and yang, and so it seems reasonable to find some concrete meaning for the terms here. Support for my interpretation is found in the word that I translate "capable": *neng* —, which could, I believe, equally well be translated "pregnant" (in the physiological sense as well in the extended sense of latent capacity). *Neng* is routinely glossed in early dictionaries and commentaries with the word *ren*, whether written — or —, which means "to bear; to harbor within." I think it is important that *ren* —, a cognate word written with the "female" signfic, is the standard word for physical pregnancy. This being so, I would suggest that my interpretation of it being through the "opening," i.e., the vaginal canal, that the female becomes pregnant, and thus "makes completed beings," makes far better sense than the various discussions of "simplicity" one usually finds with respect to this line.

I should go on to offer, though I do so with less confidence, a similar explanation of the preceding clause, *Qian* through exchange knows" (*Qian yi yi zhi* —H—). The original graphic form of *yi* —, "to change," depicts liquid spilling or being poured out of a vessel: xx (for this form of the graph, see the early Western Zhou *De ding* —w— inscription; *Yin Zhou jinwen jicheng* —P— [Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986-1994], #2405); the standard early form of the graph, xx, is surely a simplification of this fuller form), whence both the general meaning "to change" and the closely associated meaning "to award, to bestow" (i.e., *xi* — or *ci* —). Needless to say, it is liquid spilling from the male member that initiates the female's pregnancy.

<sup>23</sup> The two words *yi*, "change, exchange," and *yi*, "easy," here written with the same graph —, are disambiguated in the Mawangdui manuscript of the *Xici*, being written as —; see Shaughnessy, *I Ching, The Classic of Changes*, p. 188 and 325 n. 5.

<sup>24</sup> *Ye* —, usually translated as "achievement," is a term that entails not just a one-time event but rather an on-going result. Steven Owen has defined it cogently: "*yeh* is 'patrimony,' something one stores up and transmits to one's posterity; it is a term used for capital, property, learning, merit (the accumulated merit, *yeh*, of an official might be passed on to his children and increased or dissipated by their own acts). In later ages *yeh* is Buddhist *karma*, an accumulation of good or evil deeds that determines one's next life"; *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought* (Cambridge, Mass.: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1992), pp. 68-9.

<sup>25</sup> For a discussion of this reading, see Xia Hanyi —L—t—i (Edward L. Shaughnessy), "Shuo Qian zhuan zhi Kun xi pi xiang yi" —M— —[ —P—H—N, *Wenshi* —v 30 (1988), p. 24. It seems to me that most of the imagery of these lines is quite straight-forward (though nowhere, with the exception



differences. To "cut" (*cai* 一) a transformation means to stop its process, such that a different appearance analogous to that of an alternation.

<sup>33</sup> Note that the word *ye* 一 here, especially as paired as a compound with *shi* 一, "service," is clearly used in a different sense from that of the first stratum (where I translated it as "patrimony"); to underscore this difference, I here translate it as "achievement."

<sup>34</sup> As noted above (see, especially, n. 00), chapter A8 of the received *Xici*, the so-called "Da yan" 一 一 一 (Great Development) chapter, which provides a technical description of how at least one type of divination with the *Yi* was performed, is not included in the Mawangdui manuscript of the *Yijing*. I suspect that it is in fact a late insertion into the text.

<sup>35</sup> *Mengzi* 5B/8.

<sup>36</sup> *Zhuangzi* (Sibu beiyao ed.), 9.6a. The famous essay by Wang Bi 一 一 ] (226-249), "Ming xiang" 一 一 一 (Illustrating Images), one chapter of his *Zhou Yi lüeli* 一 一 一 (General principles of the *Zhou Changes*) develops these two passages from the *Xici* and the *Zhuangzi* in an interesting way. He begins with the *Xici*'s positive notion about the possibility for "images" (*xiang* 一 一) and "words" (*yan* 一) to be dynamic, but then dismisses this in favor of the *Zhuangzi*'s negative view. Since the most frequently cited translations of this essay (those of Hellmut Wilhelm, *Eight Lectures on the I Ching* [Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1960], pp. 87-8, and Richard John Lynn, *The Classic of Changes: A New Translation of the I Ching as Interpreted by Wang Bi* [New York: Columbia University Press, 1994], pp. 31-2) are both flawed in significant ways, it seems worthwhile retranslating the essay in its entirety here.

Images put forth ideas; words illustrate images. For fully expressing ideas, there is nothing like images; for fully expressing images, there is nothing like words. Words are generated from images, therefore one can follow words in order to view images; images are generated from ideas, therefore one can follow images in order to view ideas. Ideas are fully expressed by images, and images are made apparent by words. Therefore, words being that which is used to illustrate images, when you have gotten the image forget the word; images being that which preserve the ideas, when you have gotten the ideas forget the image. This is just the same as the use of the snare residing with the rabbit, so that when you have gotten the rabbit you forget the snare, and the use of the trap residing with the fish, so that when you have gotten the fish you forget the trap. This being so, words are the snare of images, and images are the trap of ideas. This is why one who preserves the words is one who has not gotten the images, and one who preserves the images is one who has not gotten the ideas. Images are generated from ideas, but by preserving the image in them, what one preserves is then not its image; words are generated from images, but by preserving the words in them, what one preserves is then not its word. This being so, then one who has forgotten images is one who has gotten the idea, and one who has forgotten words is one who has gotten the image. Getting the idea resides in forgetting images, and getting the image resides in forgetting words. Therefore, they establish images in order to express fully ideas, and yet the images can be forgotten; they doubled the pictures in order to express fully the situation, and yet the pictures can be forgotten. This is why to make contact with the category one can employ its image, and to match its idea one can employ its proof. If the idea resides in "vigor," what need is there for a "horse"; if the category resides in "compliance," what need is there for a "cow"? If the Line Statement matches "compliance," what need is there for *Kun* then to be a "cow"; if the meaning responds to "vigor," what need is there for *Qian* to be a "horse"? And yet there being those who fix the "horse" in *Qian*, and who quoting texts and citing hexagrams have the "horse" but not *Qian*, then false theories flood out such that it is difficult to keep track of them. If internal trigrams do not suffice, then they move on to hexagram changes, and if the change still doesn't suffice, they push on to the Five Phases. Once the root has been lost, then the cleverness becomes ever more extreme. Even if by chance there is a match, yet if the meaning has nothing from which it draws, this is just due to

preserving the image and forgetting the idea. By forgetting the image in order to seek the idea, the meaning will be evident in this.

The second half of this essay makes clear that Wang Bi was participating in a very different debate about language from that seen in either the *Xici* or the *Zhuangzi*, his essay being a polemic against the types of *Yi jing* exegesis that had developed in the intervening period, and especially in the two or three centuries preceding his time.

<sup>37</sup> A similar notion is apparent in the *Lüshi chunqiu* ㄈㄨㄟㄎㄨㄟ (Sibu beiyao ed.), (18.9a):

ㄆㄨㄟㄢㄨㄟㄣㄟ ㄐㄨㄟㄢㄨㄟㄣㄟ ㄢㄨㄟㄢㄨㄟㄣㄟ ㄢㄨㄟㄢㄨㄟㄣㄟ ㄢㄨㄟㄢㄨㄟㄣㄟ

Statements are the markers of ideas; to examine the marker and discard the ideas is absurd. Therefore, when the people of antiquity got the idea, they put aside the speech.

<sup>38</sup> *Zhuangzi*, 5.26a-b.

<sup>39</sup> This chapter of the *Zhuangzi* (5.14b) includes the following passage that seems to share ideas and wording with the first chapter of the *Xici*:

ㄅㄨㄟㄢㄨㄟㄣㄟ ㄅㄨㄟㄢㄨㄟㄣㄟ ㄅㄨㄟㄢㄨㄟㄣㄟ ㄅㄨㄟㄢㄨㄟㄣㄟ ㄅㄨㄟㄢㄨㄟㄣㄟ

ㄅㄨㄟㄢㄨㄟㄣㄟ ㄅㄨㄟㄢㄨㄟㄣㄟ ㄅㄨㄟㄢㄨㄟㄣㄟ ㄅㄨㄟㄢㄨㄟㄣㄟ ㄅㄨㄟㄢㄨㄟㄣㄟ

ㄅㄨㄟㄢㄨㄟㄣㄟ ㄅㄨㄟㄢㄨㄟㄣㄟ ㄅㄨㄟㄢㄨㄟㄣㄟ ㄅㄨㄟㄢㄨㄟㄣㄟ ㄅㄨㄟㄢㄨㄟㄣㄟ

The lord precedes and the minister follows, the father precedes and the son follows. ... Venerable and base, preceding and following are the motion of heaven and earth. Therefore, the sages take images from them. That heaven is venerable and earth base are the positions of spiritual brightness. That spring and summer precede and autumn and winter follow, is the sequence of the four seasons. That the ten-thousand beings transform and act, their sprouts and types having shape, is the cycle of fullness and decline and the flow of alternation and transformation. That heaven and earth are perfectly spiritual and yet still have the sequence of venerable and base, preceding and following, how much more so is this true of the way of man?

<sup>40</sup> *Zhuangzi*, 5.18a. As in the case of the first passage from the *Zhuangzi* cited above, the analogy between language and fishtraps and rabbit snares, this passage too ends with an ironic pun: the phrase *er shi qi zhi zhi zai* ㄦㄕㄨㄟㄑㄩㄟㄓㄨㄟㄓㄨㄟㄗㄞ ㄟㄗ ㄟㄨ ㄟㄨ could be interpreted to mean simply "and yet does the world recognize this," reading ㄩㄢ in its most common usage of *shi*, "to recognize." However, this graph has a second, regular reading of *zhi* (synonymous with ㄟ), "to inscribe, to record." Thus, the passage concludes its dismissal of writing and language with a lament that the world does not put this conclusion into writing.

<sup>41</sup> Suspicions about the authenticity of the *Wenzi*, first suggested by Liu Zongyuan ㄏㄨㄟㄨㄟ (773-819) in the Tang dynasty, had hardened by the first decades of the twentieth century to the point that the text was almost universally considered to be a forgery, copied after the *Huainanzi* ㄏㄨㄟㄢㄨㄟ. However, this consensus was shaken when a text of the *Wenzi* was discovered in 1973 (though not published until 1995) in the first-century B.C. tomb 40 at Dingxian ㄨㄨㄟ, Hebei; for a transcription and preliminary studies, see the articles in *Wenwu* 1995.12; for further studies of how this manuscript affects the debate about the text's authenticity, see the articles in the special issue of *Zhexue yu wenhua* ㄓㄨㄟㄒㄨㄟㄩㄟ ㄨㄟㄨㄟ 23.8 (August 1996). My own view is that the received *Wenzi*, though not without certain textual problems, is in large measure ancestral to the *Huainanzi*, and should date to the second half of the third century B.C.

<sup>42</sup> *Wenzi zhubi suoyin* ㄨㄟㄨㄟㄗㄨㄟㄑㄩㄟㄢㄨㄟㄢㄨㄟ, ed. Liu Dianjue ㄌㄩㄟㄉㄩㄟㄑㄩㄟ (Taipei: Taiwan Shangwu yinshuguan, 1992), p. 55. A similar notion with respect to the same passage of the *Laozi* appears in the "Dao yuan" ㄉㄞㄨㄟ chapter of the *Wenzi* (ibid. p. 2):

ㄉㄞㄨㄟ ㄉㄞㄨㄟ ㄉㄞㄨㄟ ㄉㄞㄨㄟ ㄉㄞㄨㄟ ㄉㄞㄨㄟ ㄉㄞㄨㄟ ㄉㄞㄨㄟ ㄉㄞㄨㄟ ㄉㄞㄨㄟ

ㄉㄞㄨㄟ ㄉㄞㄨㄟ ㄉㄞㄨㄟ ㄉㄞㄨㄟ ㄉㄞㄨㄟ ㄉㄞㄨㄟ ㄉㄞㄨㄟ ㄉㄞㄨㄟ ㄉㄞㄨㄟ ㄉㄞㄨㄟ

ㄉㄞㄨㄟ ㄉㄞㄨㄟ ㄉㄞㄨㄟ ㄉㄞㄨㄟ ㄉㄞㄨㄟ ㄉㄞㄨㄟ ㄉㄞㄨㄟ ㄉㄞㄨㄟ ㄉㄞㄨㄟ ㄉㄞㄨㄟ



Laozi said: "The generator of affairs moves in response to alternations; alternations are generated in time, and those who know the time have no constant motion. Therefore, 'The Way that can be the Way is not a constant way; the name that can be the name is not a constant name.' Writing is what is generated by words, and words come out of wisdom. That the wise do not know is because it is not a constant way; the name that can be the name is not what is stored in writings.

<sup>43</sup> *Han Feizi* (Sibu beiyao ed.), 7.4a, incorporating the textual emendations suggested at Chen Qiyou 陈其猷, *Han Feizi jishi* 韩非子集解 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1958), pp. 405-6.

<sup>44</sup> As we have seen, the first stratum is concerned with the long-term propagation of life, such that *ye* has almost a technical sense of that which is bequeathed to posterity (see especially n. 24). On the other hand, the point here in A12 seems to be on the effect on the contemporary world, such that the more general "achievement" better represents its meaning.

<sup>45</sup> My understanding of this difficult sentence is that whereas "transformation" (*bua* 化) is an on-going process, an "alternation" (*bian* 变) entails a momentary change between two extremes (in the case of the *Yi*, from yin to yang or vice versa), the isolation of these moments producing apparent differences. To "cut" (*cai* 裁) a transformation means to stop its process, such that a different appearance analogous to that of an alternation.

<sup>46</sup> There may also be intrusions of one stratum into the other. For example, chapter A5, which for the most part is a clear example of the first stratum, begins with a definition (*yi yin yi yang zhi wei dao* 一阴一阳之谓道, "one yin and one yang is what is called the way") and then continues with an equational sentence (*ji zhi zhe shan ye, cheng zhi zhe xing ye* 吉之者善也，成之者兴也 ], "what continues it is goodness, and what completes it is the inner-nature") that seems also to be very much out of context. Similarly, later in this chapter (A5), there are five phrases that superficially continue the same style of definition (something is called X), but which are not in Interlocking Parallel Style and which introduce terms from the second stratum:

—H—	What completes images is called <i>Qian</i> ;
—k—[	what imitates and takes as a model is called earth;
—————e	what goes to the end of numbers and knows what is to come is called prognostication;
—q—	what penetrates alternations is called affairs;
—————	and what is incommensurate with yin and yang is called spirituality.

The suggestion in the last line of this passage that "spirituality" (*shen* 神) is a mysterious process, beyond the ken of the natural world, seems also to be a notion foreign to the author of the first stratum.