

Love and Emotions in
Traditional Chinese Literature

Edited by
Halvor Eifring

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LOVE AND EMOTIONS IN TRADITIONAL CHINESE
LITERATURE

SINICA LEIDENSIA

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On behalf of all the contributors, I would like to thank Rudolf G. Wagner and Brill's anonymous reader for detailed and immensely useful comments on earlier versions of the papers.

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Halvor Eifring

INTRODUCTION

EMOTIONS AND THE CONCEPTUAL HISTORY OF *QÍNG* 情

HALVOR EIFRING

To what extent are emotions universal? Are joy, anger and fear the same in all cultures and in all historical periods? What about love? And what about exotic reports of emotions like the state of “being a wild pig” sometimes experienced by young men of the Gururumba people of New Guinea?¹ Such questions have long been the focus of intense controversy among anthropologists and cultural historians. One way of approaching the problem of emotions is through the study of emotional concepts.²

The present collection of essays attempts to do that, but instead of focusing on particular emotions, it is concerned with the notion of “emotion” itself. It is by no means obvious that all cultures and historical periods have a general concept corresponding to the English word *emotion*. The essays in this volume centre around the closest candidate in the Chinese language, the term *qíng* 情. What is the meaning of this term in different periods and in different genres? What are the types of discourse into which it typically enters? Together, the essays may be read as a first step towards a conceptual history of one of the key terms in traditional Chinese culture.

Each of the essays has its own unique form of presentation, and the collection approaches its topic from philosophical, historical, semantic, textual, literary, stylistic, and psychological points of view. This diversity, I think, reflects the open atmosphere in which the original drafts were first presented and discussed, at a seminar amidst

This introduction has profited much from the comments of Maram Epstein.

¹ See Dylan Evans: *Emotion: The Science of Sentiment*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2002, p. 17ff.

² For an impressive study of emotional concepts in late imperial China, see Paolo Santangelo: *Sentimental Education in Chinese History: An Interdisciplinary Textual Research on Ming and Qing sources*, Brill, Leiden 2003.

the mountains and glaciers of Finse in Norway in the autumn of 1997.

The present introduction will attempt to address some of the more basic questions which are not discussed in the individual papers, but underlie the study of the conceptual history of *qíng*. First of all, from a comparative perspective, what are the similarities and differences between *qíng* and similar Western concepts of emotion? Second, what makes us conceive of *qíng* as one term with many meanings and a complex historical development, rather than a number of different terms? And third, how does the meaning of *qíng* vary according to historical period and genre?

Qíng vs. Emotion

When comparing Chinese *qíng* with Western concepts of emotion, there are two obvious contrasts: First, while the history of Western concepts of emotion involves a number of terms from many different languages, the corresponding Chinese history centres around the single Chinese term *qíng*. Second, the meaning of *qíng*, especially in the classical period, turns out to be quite different from the meanings of the corresponding Western terms.

MONOLINGUAL VS. MULTILINGUAL

A history of the Western concept of "emotion" would have to take into account a number of different terms in a number of different languages, such as *emotion*, *feeling* and *sentiment* in English, *Gefühl* and *Gemütsbewegung* in German, *émotion* and *sentiment* in French (as well as similar terms in other Romance languages), and *čuvstvo* in Russian. All of these terms were central in the development of the interest in emotions aroused by Enlightenment and Romanticist thinking. If we go further back in time, to the Middle Ages or antiquity, we would also have to include the semantically wider Greek term *πάθος*, which was the term used in Aristotle's influential treatment of the subject, as well as the Latin terms *passio*, *affectus* and *affectio*. These terms also have their modern counterparts, such as English *pathos*, *passion*, *affect*, and *affection*.

In contrast, it is entirely possible for a corresponding conceptual history in Chinese to focus on one single term in one single language,

the Chinese term written 情 and transcribed (in modern Mandarin) as *qíng*. Of course, there also exist other terms of relevance, such as the modern word *gǎnjué* 感覺 'feeling', the classical words *gǎn* 感 'feeling, emotional response' and *huái* 懷 'feelings; state of mind', and a number of compounds that have *qíng* 情 as one of their constituent parts: *qíngxù* 情緒 'emotion, mood, temper', *qínggǎn* 情感 'emotion, feeling', *gǎnqíng* 感情 'feeling, affection', *xìngqíng* 性情 'emotional disposition, temperament, sensibility', and others. But from early antiquity until the eve of modern times, the moral, philosophical and literary debates on the role of what we would call emotions are centred around the single term *qíng* 情.

This reflects an important difference between the Western and the Chinese traditions. While philosophical debates in Europe have always taken place across language barriers, all similar debates in traditional China were conducted in the Chinese language, in particular classical or literary Chinese, though sometimes in more vernacular variants. The Chinese debates presuppose a much higher degree of linguistic homogeneity, and a corresponding degree of historical continuity.

This is reflected not only in the terms used, but also in the nature of the debates themselves. In the West, Enlightenment and Romanticist discussions of emotion have at best a tenuous relation with Aristotle's thinking on the subject. In contrast, the Chinese discourse on *qíng* shows a remarkable continuity over the almost two and a half millennia during which this notion has been a subject of dispute among Chinese thinkers. To a surprising extent, the same terminology and the same moral, philosophical and literary issues have dominated the debate all along.

SEMANTIC RANGE

The various terms that would have to figure in a history of the Western concept of "emotion" are, in fact, not entirely synonymous. As Anna Wierzbicka points out,³ one can talk about a *feeling* of hunger, but not about an *emotion* of hunger, and one can talk about a *feeling* of alienation, but usually not about an *emotion* of alienation. Wierzbicka argues that while *feeling* makes no distinction between the mental and the physical, *emotion* requires the presence of three

³ *Emotions across Languages and Cultures: Diversity and Universals*, Cambridge University Press, Paris 1999, p. 2ff.

elements: thoughts, feelings, and bodily events or processes. Since hunger lacks a cognitive element (thought), and since alienation is not seen as something that takes place in the body, neither of them counts as an emotion. The German word *Gefühl* and the Russian word *čuvstvo*, when used in the singular, have the same properties as *feeling*. The plural forms *Gefühle* and *čuvstva*, however, are seldom used to refer to purely physical sensations like hunger. The same is true in a more absolute sense of the French word *sentiment*. While one can translate *feeling of shame* as *sentiment de honte*, one cannot translate *feeling of hunger* as **sentiment de faim*. According to Wierzbicka, this is because *sentiment* includes only two elements, thoughts and feelings, but not bodily events or processes. Whatever one might think of Wierzbicka's explanations, her observations clearly reflect semantic differences between terms that are loosely synonymous with *emotion*.

Both the modern Chinese term *gǎnjué* 感覺 and its classical near-equivalent *gǎn* 感 resemble *feeling* in making no distinction between mental and physical feelings. This seems to be the more typical case with words for 'feeling; emotion' across the world's languages. In Wierzbicka's words, "all languages have a word for FEEL, undifferentiated between 'bodily feelings' (sensations) and 'cognitively based' feelings ('emotions')".⁴ In this respect, however, the Chinese term *qíng* is just as atypical as the English term *emotion*. As far as I know, it never, at any historical stage or any genre or style of writing, refers to purely bodily sensations like hunger, thirst, tiredness, itching, and pain.

The term *qíng* obviously has many things in common with its European near-equivalents. There are, however, important differences between *emotion* and *qíng*.

First, feelings of desire (*yù* 欲) and aversion (*wù* 惡), or, in another variant, liking (*hào* 好) and disliking (=aversion, *wù* 惡), are often included in lists of *qíng*, but at best find themselves on the outskirts of the semantic span of the word *emotion*.

Second, as mentioned above, whether or not in classical times the term could mean 'emotion' at all is a subject open to debate, and scholars have proposed a number of alternative translations: 'what is essential or genuine', 'reality feedback', 'basic instincts', and so on.

⁴ *Emotions across Languages and Cultures*, p. 276.

Third, the close relation between *qíng* and *xìng* 性 '(human) nature' in Chinese tradition implies a view of *qíng* as something that is essential to being human and brings *qíng* to the centre of the moral debates on whether human nature is good or bad. These issues have no direct counterpart in the Western tradition.

Fourth, while in the West, *emotion* (or *feeling*, *sentiment*, *passion* etc.) is most often contrasted with *reason*, the corresponding Chinese contrast is between *qíng* and *lǐ* 禮 'ritual propriety' or *lǐ* 理 'cosmic and moral order'. Chinese tradition has limited interest in the faculty of reason as such, and the concern with *qíng* is never primarily motivated by an interest in epistemology, as is often the case in 18th and 19th century Western thought.

The most conspicuous difference between *qíng* and *emotion*, however, is the much wider semantic range of the former. In addition to 'emotion', it has a number of different senses, some of which seem, at least on the surface, to have little in common. For classical Chinese, Harbsmeier makes a rough division of the semantic range of *qíng* into the following seven sense groups:

1. 'the basic facts of a matter'
2. 'underlying and basic dynamic factors'
3. 'basic popular sentiments/responses'
4. 'general basic instincts/propensities'
5. 'essential sensibilities and sentiments, viewed as commendable'
6. 'basic motivation/attitude'
7. 'personal deep convictions, responses, feelings'

Of these, the first two are non-personal; they do not relate to the human sphere. The remaining five are personal; they refer to emotional or near-emotional qualities in individuals or in groups. In most later usage, the non-personal senses only survive in compounds and fixed expressions. Moreover, new personal senses develop, such as 'emotions', 'positive feelings of intimacy', '(romantic or erotic) love', and the technical Buddhist meaning 'deluded mental activity'. At all points of time, the term *qíng* is highly ambiguous, much more so than the English term *emotion*.

One Term vs. Many

What, then, makes us conceive of *qíng* as one term? If its semantic range is so much wider than similar terms in the Western tradition, ranging from 'basic facts' to '(romantic or erotic) love', why do we not rather posit a number of different terms? And if both its pronunciation⁵ and meanings change so considerably over the millennia with which we are concerned, how can we still say that classical *qíng* and late imperial *qíng* are but variants of one and the same concept? Neither scholars nor laymen would usually hesitate to assert that we are indeed dealing with historical variants of the "same" word. The question is where this "sameness" resides.

WRITTEN FORM

Most obviously, we are, in most cases, dealing with the same written character, 情. Being relatively independent of pronunciation, the Chinese written language makes historically conditioned variations in

⁵ The transcribed form *qíng* reflects a modern Northern Mandarin pronunciation [tɕiŋ]. Edwin G. Pulleyblank reconstructs the Early Middle Chinese (A.D. 601) pronunciation as [dziaŋ], more or less corresponding to Bernhard Karlgren's reconstruction, in another notation system, *dz'jäŋ* and Chou Fa-kao's *dziæŋ*. For Old Chinese, Karlgren gives *dz'jǝŋ* and Chou *dzjieng*, while Li Fang-kuei gives *dzjiŋ* and Axel Schuessler *Csjij* (*C* representing an unknown consonant initial). Phonological change has affected different dialect areas in different ways. For instance, the Southern Min colloquial form is [ɕjãŋ] (transcribed as *ziá* in the pinyin system). In this dialect, however, as in many other (particularly southern) Chinese dialects, things are complicated by the existence of a parallel set of pronunciations of what is usually conceived to be one word. Thus, corresponding to the colloquial form [ɕjãŋ], there also exists a literary form [ɕjiŋ] (pinyin *zín*). Historically, the literary form is the result of borrowing from northern dialects. In the modern language, however, the literary form [ɕjiŋ] dominates completely, and the colloquial form [ɕjãŋ] is only used in a few compounds, e.g. [tɕimɕjãŋ] 親情 'relatives' and [ɕimɕjãŋ] (besides [ɕimɕjiŋ]) 心情 'mood'. See Edwin G. Pulleyblank: *Lexicon of Reconstructed Pronunciation in Early Middle Chinese, Late Middle Chinese, and Early Mandarin*, UBC Press, Vancouver 1991, p. 256; Chou Fa-kao: *A Pronouncing Dictionary of Chinese Characters in Archaic & Ancient Chinese, Mandarin & Cantonese*, Chinese University Press, Hongkong 1974, p. 101; Axel Schuessler: *A Dictionary of Early Chou Chinese*, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu 1987, p. 491; Xiàmén dàxué Zhōngguó yǔyán wénxué yánjiūsuǒ Hànyǔ fāngyán yánjiūshì 廈門大學中國語言文學研究所漢語方言研究室 (ed.): *Pūtōnghuà Mínnán fāngyán cídiǎn* 普通話閩南方言詞典, Joint Publishing Company, Hong Kong 1982, p. 637.

pronunciation much less conspicuous than sound-based writing systems. And being closely tied to the meanings of words, Chinese characters also give an impression of semantic unity even when the senses of a word (or a character) differ as much as is the case with *qíng*.

It is equally obvious, however, that the Chinese writing system cannot fully account for the perceived “sameness” of the different variants in question. First, in phonetic loans, 情 is sometimes used for what are usually conceived as different words with identical or similar pronunciation, such as 掙 *qìng* ‘to take’, 賙 *qíng* ‘receive (as a gift)’ and a dialect word of unknown origin pronounced *qíng* and meaning ‘to wait’.⁶ Second, in some historical sources, *qíng* is not always written with the character 情 (or any stylistic variant of this character), but instead with the characters corresponding to modern 青,⁷ 請,⁸ 精,⁹ and 靜.¹⁰ In these (admittedly few) cases, we would rather say that the term *qíng* has been written with different characters than postulate a new term for every new character. If *qíng* is one and the same term even when it is written with different characters, we are still left with the question of what constitutes the basis for this “sameness”.

⁶ I am grateful for the help rendered by Jiǎng Shàoyú 蔣紹愚 in identifying these usages of 情. For the meaning ‘to take’ (拿), see also *Hànyǔ dà cídiǎn* vol. 7 p. 576. For the meaning ‘to receive’, cf. the following example from Guān Hànrìng’s 關漢卿 play *Lord Guan Goes to the Feast with a Single Sword* 單刀會:

My elder brother ought to receive the inheritance of the Han clan.
俺哥哥合情受漢家基業。

For the meaning ‘to wait’ (等待), see *Hànyǔ dà cídiǎn* vol. 7 p. 577.

⁷ In some texts found in archeological material uncovered in the 1990s, such as the *Xìng zì mìng chū* 性自命出 discussed by Puett in this volume.

⁸ In the *Zhuāngzǐ* 莊子 (see A. C. Graham: *Studies in Chinese Philosophy & Philosophical Literature*, The Institute of East Asian Philosophies, Singapore 1986, p. 63n), *Xúnzǐ* 荀子, *Mòzǐ* 墨子, and *Lièzǐ* 列子 (see *Hànyǔ dà cídiǎn* vol. 11 p. 258).

⁹ In the *Zhuāngzǐ* 莊子, *Xúnzǐ* 荀子, *Lǚshì chūnqiū* 呂氏春秋, and *Shuōyuàn* 說苑 (see Wáng Shūmín 王叔民: *Zhuāngzǐ jiàokuán* 莊子校詮, 2nd ed., Zhongyang yanjiuyuan lishi yuyan yanjiusuo, Taipei 1994, p. 261f.).

¹⁰ In the *Yízhōushū* 遺周書, the *Lǐjì* 禮記, and the *Dà Dài Lǐjì* 大戴禮記 (see *Hànyǔ dà cídiǎn* vol. 11 p. 568).

ETYMOLOGY

Etymology clearly plays a role. In many, perhaps most, cases, a Chinese character is used to represent what might be called an etymological word, i.e. a word whose phonological and semantic variants derive from the same historical source, the same etymon. In all the usages discussed in this collection, from classical times to the late imperial period, the character 情 stands for one single word in this etymological sense. Even when the characters 青, 請, 精, and 靜 are used instead of 情, we are still dealing with the same etymological word. But this approach also leaves us with new questions. For what is the etymology of *qíng*? Paul K. Benedict postulates a development from Proto Sino-Tibetan *s-niŋ* 'heart' (cf. Written Tibetan *snyin* 'heart, mind', basically applied to feelings).¹¹ However, Axel Schuessler (personal communication) finds this phonologically unlikely. He proposes instead a relation to *shēng* 生 'live', but finds it difficult to account for the connection between the Old Chinese initials *sr-* (in *shēng*) and *dz-* (in *qíng*), and concludes that the etymology of *qíng* is not clear. With so little known about the origins of the term under discussion, we cannot even begin to ask other pertinent questions, such as, for instance, the etymological relation between *qíng* 情 'basic dynamic factors' and *jīng* 精 'essence'. A strictly linguistic approach to the etymology of *qíng*, therefore, seems to be problematic.

POLYSEMY VS. HOMONYMY

Semantics also clearly plays a role in determining whether *qíng* is one word or many. In order to argue that *qíng* is one word, we need to assume that *qíng* is one lexical item with many senses (polysemy) rather than several lexical items which happen to have the same pronunciation and to be written with the same character (homonymy)?¹² In other words, we need to show that the various meanings of *qíng* are somehow related to each other, not only historically, but also synchronically, since meanings that are historically related may, at a later stage, be conceived as synchronically unrelated, because

¹¹ "Sino-Tibetan: Another Look", *Journal of the American Oriental Society* vol. 96 (1976), p. 170 n. 8.

¹² For a discussion of the distinction between polysemy and homonymy, see, for instance, John Lyons: *Semantics*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1977, p. 550ff.

the link between them has become completely opaque except to the specialist.

Polysemy is often discussed in terms of a *basic meaning* with a number of *submeanings* derived from (or, in less historically laden terms, subordinated to) this basic meaning. The standard examples of polysemy are often metaphorical extensions, such as *mouth* referring not only to an organ of body, but also to the mouth of a river, the mouth of a bottle etc. Most of the meanings of *qíng* discussed in this volume, however, are not metaphorical extensions in the traditional sense, and 'love' is certainly not metaphorically derived from 'basic facts' or vice versa. Still, some scholars have assumed that the term *qíng* has, at least in its early usage, one basic meaning from which its submeanings are derived. Most famously, A. C. Graham has proposed that *qíng* refers to 'what is essential or genuine', and Chad Hansen has proposed a basic meaning 'reality feedback' or 'reality input'.¹³

None of the contributors to this volume seems to adhere to this idea of a single basic meaning from which a number of submeanings are derived. There are, however, other ways to conceive of relationships between different senses of the same word. One way is what Ludwig Wittgenstein calls "family resemblance". Among a number of senses A, B, C etc., A may not be *directly* related to C, but indirectly so, because A is related to B and B is related to C. In the case of *qíng*, 'basic facts' is not directly related to 'love', and there is no single basic meaning underlying both interpretations. Still, there is a connection between 'basic facts (of a matter)' and 'basic instincts (of man)', and between 'basic instincts' and 'emotions', and again between 'emotions' and 'love'. In this perspective, it makes sense to treat *qíng* meaning 'basic facts' as belonging to the same lexical item as *qíng* meaning 'love'. Otherwise, where would one draw the distinction? Between 'basic facts' and 'basic instincts'? Between 'basic instincts' and 'emotions'? Between 'emotions' and 'love'?

¹³ Graham: *Studies in Chinese Philosophy & Philosophical Literature*, p. 59ff.; Chad Hansen: "Qing (Emotions) 情 in Pre-Buddhist Chinese Thought", in Joel Marks & Roger T. Ames: *Emotions in Asian Thought: A Dialogue in Comparative Philosophy*, State University of New York Press, Albany 1995, p. 181-211. See Michael Puett's contribution to this volume for further details on Graham's and Hansen's views. For a different view of *qíng* in early Chinese thought, see Brian Bruya: "Qing 情 and Emotion in Early Chinese Thought", in *Ming Qing yanjiu* 2001 p. 151-76.

CULTURAL PERCEPTION

In the end, the unity of the term under discussion cannot be established on the basis of any single criterion. It is a matter of cultural perception, and a number of factors influence this perception of unity. Chinese readers with a sufficiently high degree of literacy in vernacular as well as literary and classical Chinese would tend to treat all the different historical variants of *qíng* as being exactly that: variants of one word. This is at least partly due to the following linguistic factors:

1. The use of the single character 情 to represent this term dominates all sources that might influence such cultural perceptions. (The use of 青 in some recently excavated texts is irrelevant in this context, since the existence of these texts was unknown until the 1990s. The occasional use of 請, 精 and 靜 in some classical texts is so rare that it is culturally unimportant.)
2. Even if the exact etymology of *qíng* is uncertain, all the relevant phonological and semantic variants of the word most probably stem from the same etymon.
3. There is a fairly clear semantic relationship (in the Wittgensteinian sense discussed above) between the various senses of *qíng*; in other words, the term is polysemous.

In addition to these linguistic factors, the fact that *qíng* has been a key term in Chinese moral, philosophical, and aesthetic discourse for more than two millennia greatly increases the cultural perception of its historical continuity.

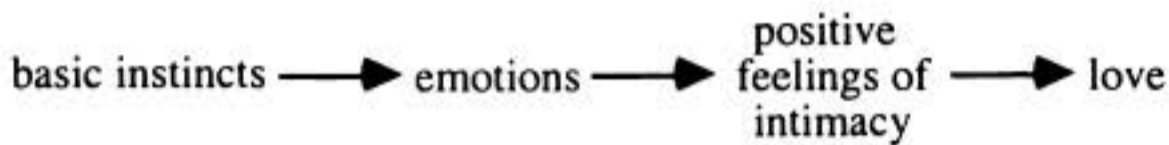
Note how differently the cultural perceptions of the historical continuity of a term works in the Chinese and in the European traditions. In traditional China, the three factors mentioned above not only *increase* the sense of continuity, but are actually seen as prerequisites for the perceived unity of a term. In Europe, both the alphabetic script and the multilingual nature of philosophical debates have often made it impossible to assume a common etymon, not to speak of a common written form, behind culturally important key terms. But precisely because of this, neither the written form nor a common etymology has been seen as absolute prerequisites for the perceived unity of a term. The fact that the French word *passion* and the German word *Leidenschaft* have no morphemes in common does not mean they are not conceived of as representing essentially the same concept.

In the same way, etymologically unrelated words like *feeling*, *emotion* and *sentiment* may still be conceived of as linguistic variants of more or less the same philosophical key term. This contrasts sharply with the Chinese case.

Semantic Change

The term "traditional" in the title of this book refers to any period before the fall of the Chinese empire in 1911, though no attempt is made at comprehensiveness. Like most words, the term *qíng* has changed its range of meaning during this period. Some of these changes have already been mentioned above.

Most notably, at some point in time, *qíng* came to mean 'feelings; emotions', and then 'positive feelings of intimacy' and, probably much later, '(romantic or erotic) love'. One possible way of accounting for this development is to see these senses as ultimately deriving from an older sense glossed by Harbsmeier as 'basic instincts':¹⁴



If this is correct, we have a case of multi-tiered semantic specialisation. Love is a subclass of positive feelings of intimacy, which are a subclass of emotions, which are a subclass of (or one aspect of) basic instincts.

It goes without saying that such semantic innovation is often cumulative. The emergence of a new sense does not mean that the older senses necessarily disappear. On the contrary, old and new senses of *qíng* often cooccur in the same historical periods and even in the very same texts.

In the following, we shall take a closer look at each stage in the model of semantic specialisation outlined above. We shall also, however, discuss some of the factors that threaten to break down this neat

¹⁴ For practical reasons, in the following discussion, I will consistently use simple glosses like 'basic instincts', 'emotions', 'love' etc., while being well aware that many of the nuances of the word in its actual contexts are thereby lost.

model of linguistic development, including the complexity of semantic meaning (which goes far beyond what simple glosses like 'basic instincts', 'emotions' and 'love' seem to indicate) and the diversification of meaning according to genre (which often turns out to be at least as important as any purely historical development).

FROM 'BASIC INSTINCTS' TO 'EMOTIONS'

The gloss 'basic instincts', as used in this introduction, refers primarily to an innate propensity to react emotionally in certain ways, and secondarily to the emotional reactions themselves. These reactions correspond roughly to the emotions, but only insofar as they are seen as aspects of human nature. Basic instincts are innate, something of which one is "capable without study" 弗學而能,¹⁵ and they constitute "the substance of (human) nature" 性之質.¹⁶ In this sense, the term *qíng* is not used to refer specifically to any individual emotion, but rather generally to emotional reactions and the propensity to react emotionally as an essential part of being human.

At some point, however, *qíng* came to denote emotions without regard to their relation to human nature, without any reference to an underlying innate propensity, and, sometimes, with a more specific focus on individual emotions.

Such semantic specialisation is a gradual process, where "the more specialised acceptations are at first context-bound; they are no more than shifts, different shades of the same sense, not different senses of the same word".¹⁷ Long before 'emotions' became a separate sense of the term, it could actually be used to refer to emotions. It may, therefore, prove difficult to fix the date of the semantic specialisation of *qíng* from 'basic instincts' to 'emotions'.

The problem has to do with the distinction between *sense* and *reference*. Even in the sense of 'basic instincts', the term very often

¹⁵ *The Book of Rituals* 禮記, Lǐyùn 禮運 chapter, quoted from *Shísān jīng jīnzhù jīnyì* 十三經今注今譯, Yuelu shushe, Changsha 1994, vol. 1, p. 818.

¹⁶ *Xúnzǐ* 荀子 85/22/63, quoted from *Xúnzǐ yǐndé* 荀子引得, Shanghai guji chubanshe, Shanghai 1986.

¹⁷ Stephen Ullman: *The Principles of Semantics*, 2nd ed., Basil Blackwell, Oxford 1959, p. 183.

actually *refers* to emotions, as when the *Lǐ yùn* 禮運 chapter of the *Book of Rituals* 禮記 equates *qíng* with a list of seven emotions:¹⁸

... joy and anger, sorrow and fear, love, aversion and desire ...
喜怒哀懼愛惡欲

Thus, in both stages of the development outlined above, emotions belong within the reference of *qíng*, but in stage 1, 'emotions' does not yet, according to this analysis, constitute a separate sense. In stage 2, 'emotions' has become more clearly identifiable as a separate sense.

This distinction between sense and reference is by no means unproblematic. Theoretically, at stage 1, emotions belong within the reference of the term *qíng* only insofar as the one who uses the term believes emotions to be part of man's basic instincts. Conversely, at stage 2, one should be able to use the term *qíng* to refer to emotions even if one does not believe emotions to be part of man's basic instincts. In practice, however, one is hard put to find any attempt, at any stage of the development, to explicitly deny that emotions are basic human instincts. Furthermore, the term *qíng* in the classical sense of 'basic instincts' possibly never concretely refers to anything but emotions (though it does imply a specific way of viewing them, viz., as basic instincts). If emotions are basic instincts and basic instincts are nothing but emotions, what is actually implied by the shift from stage 1 to stage 2?

Before answering this question, we first need to address the question of whether or not it is actually true that the term *qíng* in the classical sense of 'basic instincts' never concretely refers to anything but emotions (including *yù* 欲 'desire' and *wù* 惡 'aversion', see above). In his study of the term *qíng* in Chinese literary criticism, Wong Siu-kit seems to think otherwise:¹⁹

In the Classics and the writings of the Han ..., when the word is used often freely interchangeably with words such as [*zhì*] (志), [*qíng*] covers

¹⁸ P. 818. On the pairing of the terms, see below.

¹⁹ "Ch'ing in Chinese Literary Criticism.", Ph. D. dissertation, Oxford University, 1969, p. 12f. A similar argument is presented by James J. Y. Liu in his *The Art of Chinese Poetry*, Chicago University Press, Chicago 1962, p. 73.

the whole range of the inner, non-physical activities of man; it covers all the activities of the “heart-mind” (*[xīn]* 心) as distinguished from the body ... There is no emphasis on the emotional (as against the “intellectual”, the “thinking” in the later sense of certain periods).

However, while the writings to which Wong refers are not concerned with the distinction between emotions and thoughts, or between *qíng* and *zhì* 志 ‘intent’, this does not mean that the reference of *qíng* goes beyond the realm of emotions. In fact, one of the recently discovered fragments from *Confucius’s Discourse on the Songs* 孔子詩論, which is a predecessor to some of the texts Wong examines, does seem to make a clearer distinction between *qíng* and *zhì*:²⁰

There is no poetry without intent (*zhì*); there is no music without basic instincts (*qíng*); there are no writings without language (*yán*).
 詩（詩）亡隱（離）志，樂亡隱（離）情，文亡隱（離）言。

The large number of different lists of *qíng* from the same period (like the one quoted from *Lǐjì* above) mention emotions only, never thinking or intellectual activity. I have found no positive evidence, either in the material examined by Wong or in other texts, that *qíng* in this sense ever refers to anything but emotions.

One famous passage in the *Zhuāngzǐ* 莊子 seems at first to be an exception. Under one common reading of the following sentence, *qíng* refers to the ability or habit to distinguish between right and wrong rather than to emotions:

是非吾所謂情也。

The early commentator Guō Xiàng 郭象 (d. 312) understands this passage as indicating that *Zhuāngzǐ* “takes *qíng* to be [the distinction

²⁰ Mǎ Chéngyuán 馬承源: *Shànghǎi bówùguǎn cáng Zhànguó Chǔ zhúshū* 上海博物館藏戰國楚竹書, vol. 1, Shanghai guji chubanshe, Shanghai 2001, p. 123 (slip 1). Since *yán* ‘language’ is clearly distinct from both *qíng* and *zhì*, so *qíng* and *zhì* should also be seen as clearly distinct. Although Wong is probably right in assuming that *zhì* may include thoughts, the contrast between *qíng* and *zhì* is not simply one between “feeling” and “thought”. Stephen Owen translates *zhì* as ‘what is on the mind intently’, see his *An Anthology of Chinese Literature: Beginnings to 1911*, W. W. Norton & Co., New York 1996, p. 26.

between] right and wrong” 以是非為情. As Graham points out,²¹ this would clearly bring us beyond the realm of emotions (or, in Graham's words, “passions”). However, the modern scholar Wáng Shūmín 王叔岷 argues plausibly that one should not read 是非 as ‘right and wrong’, but should instead read 是 as 此 ‘this’ and 非 as a negative copula, resulting in a completely different translation: ‘This is not what I mean by *qíng*.’²² In the sentence that follows, Zhuāngzǐ himself clearly associates *qíng* with emotional qualities, viz., those of liking and disliking 好惡 (which are near-equivalents to desire and aversion 欲惡, as discussed above):²³

By being without *qíng* I mean that man will not wound his person by his likes and dislikes, that he always follows the spontaneous course, and that he does not add anything to life itself.

吾所謂無情者，言人之不以好惡內傷其身，常因自然而不益生也。

To the writers of the classical period, therefore, basic instincts and emotions seem to have been coreferent notions.

The shift from stage 1 to stage 2 does not seem, therefore, to alter the actual reference of the term in any substantial way. It is probably best conceived of as an increasingly frequent use of the term *qíng* to refer to emotions in contexts where the question of man's basic instincts is not part of the discussion. The shift is gradual, and I am not sure at what time such a usage would be frequent enough for us to posit a new separate sense of the word. The vast material studied

²¹ Graham, *Studies in Chinese Philosophy & Philosophical Literature*, p. 62.

²² Wáng Shūmín: *Zhuāngzǐ jiàoquán*, p. 201 n. 4. Against Wáng's view one may object that 好惡是非 occurs as one expression meaning, roughly, ‘to differentiate on the basis of likes/dislikes and right/wrong’, in the *Zhuāngzǐ* itself, though in a later layer of the text, see *Zhuāngzǐ jiàoquán* p. 1096. Even if Wáng is right, however, one might argue that Guō Xiàng's gloss demonstrates that at least one writer of early literary Chinese conceived of *qíng* as having non-emotional aspects. It must be remembered, however, that the language of the *Zhuāngzǐ* was far removed from Guō Xiàng's own language; that is the reason why he had to gloss it.

²³ More than a millennium later, Zhū Xi also includes liking and disliking 好惡 among *qíng*:

Liking and disliking belong to *qíng*. (*Zhūzǐ Yùlèi* p. 230)
好惡是情。

by Harbsmeier in this volume seems to indicate that in the classical period, 'emotions' has not yet been properly established as a separate sense, although in some of his examples from *Songs of the South* 楚辭, *qíng* comes close to meaning 'emotions', especially in expressions like *shū qíng* 抒情 'dredge out one's feelings'.

FROM 'EMOTIONS' TO 'LOVE'

In his contribution to this collection, Harbsmeier points out that the first known use of *qíng* occurs in a love poem in the *Book of Songs* 詩經:²⁴

I certainly have love (for you), but no admiration.
 洵有情兮，而無望兮。

Although this is long before '(romantic or erotic) love' has become an identifiable sense of the word, *qíng* in this poem does refer to affectionate feelings for a loved one. The aforementioned list of *qíng* in the *Lǐjì* and several other similar lists mention *ài* 愛 'love' as one of seven (or more) kinds of *qíng*. In classical sources, therefore, love clearly lies within the scope of reference of *qíng*, but it is not yet a separate sense.

When does 'love' become an identifiable sense of the word *qíng*? One plausible way of accounting for the emergence of this sense is to view it as a result of further semantic specialisation of *qíng* 'emotions':

emotions → love

This development implies an increase in the use of *qíng* to refer to love in contexts where emotions in general (not to mention basic instincts) lie outside the focus of interest.

As indicated above, the development from 'emotion' to 'love' may have gone through an intermediary stage, where *qíng* was used to refer to any kind of positive feelings of intimacy between persons, such as family members or, as in the following example from the

²⁴ Also referred to in the recently discovered fragments of *Confucius's Discourse on the Songs* 孔子詩論 (p. 151, slip no. 22):

匄（洵）又（有）情，而亡望。

5th-century collection *A New Account of Tales of the World* 世說新語, friends:²⁵

Initially, Wáng Gōng and Wáng Jiànwǔ were close friends [lit.: had much *qíng*].

王恭始與王建武甚有情。

The usage glossed as 'love', therefore, emerges when *qíng* is used not just for any intimate relationship, but, more specifically, for an erotic or a romantic one.

Again, it is hard to tell when such usage is frequent enough for us to posit a separate sense 'love'. Wong Siu-kit argues that in the Six Dynasties (220-589), "there is ... a narrowing down of the range of [*qíng*] to the more private kind of emotion, predominantly the sad and the romantically erotic". In the 3rd century AD, Zhāng Huá 張華 (232-300) wrote a series of five poems on the longing feelings between a husband and a wife who were forced to live apart. He called the series "Qíngshī wǔ shǒu" 情詩五首, which translates quite naturally as "Five love poems", though the semantic range of *qíng* may also include other feelings, such as sadness and longing—and note that the term *qíng* does not occur in the poems themselves. In the 6th century, the Liang dynasty crown prince Xiāo Tǒng 蕭統 (501-531) used the term *qíng* to designate a section of his *Anthology of Literature* 文選 containing romantic-erotic *fù* 賦 poetry on love between men and women.²⁶ The association between *qíng* and love seems to have become considerably closer during the Six Dynasties.

By the Tang dynasty, the use of *qíng* to refer to love has become so common that it may seem natural to posit 'love' as a separate sense of the word. This is clearly borne out in the Tang dynasty tale (*chuánqí* 傳奇). For instance, "Yingying's Story" 鶯鶯傳 by Yuán Zhěn 元稹 (779-831), a short narrative of less than 3000 characters, contains 15 instances of the word *qíng*, most of which unmistakably refer to the love between the student Zhang and Madame Zheng's daughter:²⁷

²⁵ *Shishuō xīnyǔ* 世說新語, 6th ed., Shijie shuju, Taipei 1987, ch. 8, p. 401.

²⁶ See Wong Siu-kit, "Ch'ing in Chinese Literary Criticism", p. 29ff.

²⁷ Quoted from LI Fǎng 李昉 et al. (ed.): *Tàipíng guǎngjì* 太平廣記, Wenshizhe chubanshe, Taipei 1987, vol. 5, p. 4012-17. The translations from "Ying-ying's

Zhang was, of course, infatuated with her, and he wanted to express his feelings but had no way.

張自是惑之。願致其情。無由得也。

You should try to seduce her by composing poems that express your love indirectly.

君試為喻情詩以亂之。

... the successful scholar holds love to be but of little account ...

達士略情。

I sob over this paper and cannot fully express my love.

臨紙嗚咽。情不能申。

When he flirted, at first she gently refused,
but in secret soft passions already conveyed.

戲調初微拒。柔情已暗通。

In these examples, the story reveals little interest in the problem of man's basic instincts,²⁸ or of emotions in general, and it seems

Story" are by Stephen Owen, see his *An Anthology of Chinese Literature*, p. 540-49.

²⁸ Only in the very first occurrence of *qing* in "Yingying's Story", the old sense of 'basic instincts' may still be seen to vibrate along with the newer sense of 'love':

... and this tells me that I am not one of those free of passion.

是知其非忘情者也。

The expression translated as 'free of passion' is *wàng qing* 忘情, where the literal meaning of *wàng* is 'forget' (or, possibly 'lose' or 'lack'). The expression implies that *qing* is a capacity for love rather than the feeling of love itself. The speaker argues that there is nothing wrong with his capacity for love, though he has not yet encountered anybody who has aroused it 適不我值. If *wàng* is understood in its most common meaning 'forget' (or in the less common meaning 'lose'), the implication would be that an unfeeling person is one who has "forgotten" (or lost) his innate capacity for love. This would conform well with the idea that basic instincts are innate capacities, of which one is "capable without study" 弗學而能, as the term *qing* is defined in *The Book of Rituals* 禮記. Alternatively, *wàng* (sometimes pronounced *wáng*) may also be understood as meaning 'lack; not have', in which case an unfeeling person may just as well be seen as someone who has never had a capacity for love, not indicating that *qing* is innate. Of course, by the time of "Ying-ying's Story", *wàng qing* is a fixed idiomatic expression, and using it does

reasonable to posit 'love' as a separate sense of *qíng*. Of the 15 occurrences of *qíng* in the story, only one has no direct connection with love:

Zhang constantly asked about how Madame Zheng felt...
張生常詰鄭氏之情。

Zhang's question regards Madame Zheng's feelings for the liaison between Zhang and Madame Zheng's daughter. These may be feelings for a love relationship, but do not in themselves constitute feelings of love. In the remaining 14 instances, *qíng* translates naturally as 'love'. It is still possible to translate *qíng* as 'feelings' or 'passions', but this is simply because these words in English are also often used to refer to love.

MULTIPLE MEANINGS

Historical developments are, of course, much more complex than the account above seems to indicate. In actual language use, the borderlines between the various senses of a word are seldom as neat as in our theoretical discussions. Several layers of meaning are often allowed to vibrate together. This is the case, for instance, in the expression *yǐ qíng wù dào* 以情悟道 'attain enlightenment through *qíng*' in the Qing dynasty novel *The Story of the Stone* 石頭記.²⁹ In the context of the expression, at least four different translations of *qíng* seem to be both possible and plausible:

1. 'love' (this translation corresponds best with the immediate context of the word)
2. 'emotions' (this translation reflects the wider concern of the novel with sensitivity and sensibility)

not necessarily imply an acceptance of all its philosophical implications. In this case, however, both the expression itself and the context in which it occurs tell us that the sense of 'love' may very well be combined with some of the more complex philosophical implications of earlier usages of *qíng*.

²⁹ Only found in the 1754 甲戌 edition, see Cáo Xuěqín 曹雪芹: *Zhīyànzhāi chónghéng Shítóujì jiǎxū běn* 脂硯齋重評石頭記甲戌本, Zuojia chubanshe, Beijing 2000, p. 167.

3. 'basic instincts' (this translation reflects the centrality in the novel of the classical contrast between *qíng* and *lǐ* 禮 'ritual propriety')
4. 'activities of the unenlightened mind' (only this translation properly brings out the paradoxical Buddhist logic of the expression)³⁰

The reader, of course, is never forced to decide between these four senses. Rather than being strictly separate senses, they constitute layers of meaning that cooccur without problem. Since love is an emotion, and emotions belong to basic instincts (in classical thought) as well as to activities of the unenlightened mind (in Buddhism), there is never any real conflict between them.

Such examples, however, by no means indicate that the model of semantic specialisation presented above is wrong. On the contrary, such multiplicity of meaning presupposes some kind of mechanism whereby a word develops different senses. The fourfold ambiguity presented above would not have been possible before 'love', 'emotions', and 'activities of the unenlightened mind' had developed as more or less separate senses.³¹

The neat account of the semantic specialisation of *qíng* given above also disregards the fact that general glosses like 'basic instincts', 'emotions', 'positive feelings of intimacy', and 'love' are at best

³⁰ For the development of the Buddhist meaning(s) of *qíng*, see Christoph Anderl's and Robert Buswell's contributions to the present volume.

³¹ The multiple meanings of *qíng* are often utilised in order to deliberately create ambiguity. The title of the late Ming story collection *Qíngshǐ* 情史 is usually translated as *History of Love* or *Anatomy of Love*, since all stories in the collection are in fact love stories. Nevertheless, one of the two prefaces in the collection, in its eager attempt to increase the respectability of the collection, primarily uses the term *qíng* to refer to emotional ties between friends and, in the appended *gatha*, between father and son and between lord and vassal. To translate the famous *qíngjiào* 情教 'qing teachings' that the *gatha* propagates as 'teachings of love' would therefore correspond badly with the actual contents of both the preface and the *gatha*, unless 'love' is taken in a completely non-romantic and non-erotic sense. The other preface is also clearly designed to add to the respectability of the collection, but does so by showing how the relation between man and woman stands at the centre of attention in the Six Classics 六經. It states quite explicitly that "*qíng* begins with the relation between men and women" 情始於男女. Even this preface, however, also uses the term *qíng* to refer to the ties between lord and vassal, father and son, elder and younger brother, and friends. These kinds of *qíng*, however, are seen as derivative from the more basic *qíng* between men and women.

crude labels that disregard the enormous complexity of semantic nuance that appears in the interplay between the word *qíng* and the contexts in which it occurs. An abstract but philosophically central key term like *qíng* is repeatedly given new shades of meaning by its users, through the discourse of which it is a part.

Again, however, this is not in contradiction to the model of semantic specialisation presented above. Instead, it reminds us that the specialisation of meaning has as its basis context-bound shifts or shades of meaning that happen to become so common that they gradually develop into separate senses.

It is true of any word that its meaning is largely formed by the way it enters into relations with other words within the same semantic field. so that, for instance, the German word *braun* 'brown' meant something slightly different before the French loanword *violet* 'purple' took over a part of its original meaning.³² This is even more true, however, of abstract philosophical terms like *qíng*. Because the reference of the word is much less readily identifiable than that of a more concrete term, much of its meaning is context-bound and derives from its position within one or more semantic fields, as well as its use in specific philosophical arguments or literary contexts.³³ At best,

³² See Lyons: *Semantics*, p. 254.

³³ Much of traditional Chinese philosophical discourse on *qíng* actually consists of repeated attempts to define and redefine the semantic fields of which the term is a part. This is especially true of the Neo-Confucian scholars of the Song dynasty. In fact, the whole of *juàn* 5 of *Zhūzǐ yǔlèi* is concerned with defining a number of central concepts, of which *qíng* is one, in relation to each other. It is particularly interested in the relation between *qíng* and *xìng* 性 '(human) nature', as well as their relation to terms like *mìng* 命 'fate', *xīn* 心 'heart/mind', *yù* 欲 'desire', *yì* 意 'will', *zhì* 志 'intent', and others:

What in Heaven is fate (*mìng*) becomes human nature (*xìng*) when received by men, and basic instincts (*qíng*) when aroused. (p. 90)

在天為命，稟於人為性，既發為情。

Human nature (*xìng*) is unstirred, and basic instincts (*qíng*) are stirred, while the heart/mind (*xīn*) includes both stirred and unstirred. (p. 93)

性是未動，情是已動，心包得已動未動。

If the heart/mind (*xīn*) is like water, nature (*xìng*) is water in stillness, while basic instincts (*qíng*) are water flowing, and desires (*yù*) are the billows on the water, but some of the billows are good and others not. (p. 94)

心如水，性猶水之靜，情則水之流，欲則水之波瀾，但波瀾有好底，有不好底。

the general glosses referred to above designate a common core of meaning shared by many usages. They by no means exhaust the semantic range of the word in any given instance.

Genre Orientation

The essays included in the present volume discuss texts of widely different genres, from moral, philosophical, religious, political and historical prose to poetry, drama and fiction. It turns out that the meaning of *qíng* varies not only according to historical period, but also according to genre. The word tends to mean different things and to invoke different connotations in different genres and styles of writing.

GENRE DISTINCTIONS IN THE MING

Let us begin with an account of how the meaning of *qíng* is at least partly determined by genre in writings from the Ming dynasty (1368-1644). By this time, all the senses of *qíng* referred to above have been thoroughly established. Not all of them, however, are used in all genres and styles.

When writers of philosophical prose discuss *qíng*, for instance, they are seldom concerned with specific emotions and even less with love. Their focus mostly follows the lead of classical and early Neo-Confucian philosophers. Although there may be differences of nuance, the term is basically used in its old sense 'basic instincts'. Consider,

Basic instincts (*qíng*) are the marrow of the will (*yì*). Intent (*zhì*) and will both belong to basic instincts, so the notion of basic instincts is wider. (p. 96)

情又是意底骨子。志與意都屬情，「情」字較大。

Although the Neo-Confucians are extreme in their eagerness to compare and define their concepts, they build on a long tradition, as witnessed by the following example from *Xúnzǐ* 荀子:

Human nature (*xìng*) is the tendency which is from Heaven, basic instincts (*qíng*) are the substance of human nature, desires (*yù*) are the responses of *qíng*. (85/22/63)

性者天之就也，情者性之質也，欲者情之應也。

In most texts, however, such semantic fields are not explicitly discussed or consciously created, but they are still equally effectual in shaping the shades of meaning of the term.

for instance, the following statement by the famous Neo-Confucian philosopher Wáng Yángmíng 王陽明 (1472-1529):

Joy and anger, sorrow and delight, are the *qíng* of *xìng*.³⁴
喜、怒、哀、樂，性之情也。

This statement occurs in a reply to the following question:

Do joy and anger, sorrow and delight, really belong to *qíng*?³⁵
喜怒哀樂，果情乎？

Evidently, the conceptual distinction between *qíng* 'basic instincts' and the emotions to which the term usually refers has, in this type of discourse, by no means disappeared.

The list of four emotions also represents a continuation of classical and early Neo-Confucian thinking, as does the use of the aforementioned list of seven emotions:³⁶

Joy and anger, sorrow and fear, love, aversion and desire, these are called the seven *qíng* ...
喜、怒、哀、懼、愛、惡、欲，謂之七情……

Although love is mentioned as one of the seven emotions, Wáng Yángmíng never makes it the focus of discussion, at least not in the *Instructions for Practical Living* 傳習錄.

Wáng Yángmíng also inherits the Neo-Confucian scepticism towards *qíng* and repeatedly warns against "the danger of giving free rein to *qíng* and *yì* [will]" 任情恣意之害.³⁷ This scepticism towards

³⁴ Wáng Yángmíng 王陽明: *Chuánxílù* 傳習錄, Guangzhou chubanshe, Guangzhou 2001, p. 155.

³⁵ *Chuánxílù*, p. 154.

³⁶ *Chuánxílù*, p. 240. In fact the printed version referred to here includes *lè* 樂 'delight' as well (between *āi* 哀 and *jù* 懼), but judging from other versions, and from the fact that even this version uses the number "seven", the inclusion of an eighth emotion is probably a slip-of-the-hand.

³⁷ *Chuánxílù*, p. 107. Cf. also similar attitudes towards "giving free rein to *qíng* and *yù* (desire)" 恣情縱欲, p. 177, and "giving free rein to *qíng* and *yì* (will)" 任情任意 (in a letter to Wèi Shiyuè 魏師說, see *Wáng Wénchéng gōng quánshū* 王文成公全書, *juàn* 6, Zhongyang shudian, Shanghai 1936, p. 158).

qíng was widespread even in liberal thinkers who have later, paradoxically, become associated with the so-called late Ming “cult of *qíng*”. Even the illiterate thinker Yán Jūn 顏鈞 (fl. 1540s), who was known as an excessive liberal with little regard for caution, seems to have followed mainstream Neo-Confucianism in valuing both *xìng* 性 ‘(human) nature’ and *xīn* 心 ‘the heart/mind’ over *qíng*.³⁸

Among my disciples, I can speak with Luó Rǔfāng of following *xìng* and with Chén Yīquán of following *xīn*. The others only speak of following *qíng*.

吾門人中，與羅汝芳言從性，與陳一泉言從心，餘子所言，只從情耳。

His relatively low regard for *qíng* bears witness to the impact of orthodoxy. There is, in fact, a direct line from Wáng Yángmíng, through his famous disciple Wáng Gě 王艮 (?1483-1540) and Wáng Gě’s disciple Xú Yuè 徐樾 (fl. 1533) to Yán Jūn, who was a student of Xú Yuè.

The positive evaluation of *qíng*, for which the late Ming has become so famous, mainly belongs to an aesthetic and aestheticising type of discourse rather than a moral or philosophical one. For instance, Yuán Hóngdào 袁宏道, in a preface to a collection of his younger brother Yuán Zhōngdào’s 袁中道 poetry, talks of the auspicious moments when his brother’s “*qíng* meets with an external scene” 情與境會, so that his “*qíng* is transformed by the scene, and his writings are born out of his *qíng*” 情隨境變，字逐情生.³⁹ Yuán Hóngdào also speaks, in a letter to his friend Lǐ Zǐrán 李子髯, about the importance of “finding an outlet for one’s *qíng*” 情有所寄,⁴⁰ whether it be in chess 弈, female beauty 色, courtesans 妓 or literature 文, betraying a deeply aestheticising view of life.

Interestingly, Yuán Hóngdào adds to the traditional list of four *qíng* another four, one of which is in fact *qíng* itself:⁴¹

³⁸ *The Records of Ming Scholars* 明儒學案, by Huáng Zōngxī 黃宗羲, Zhonghua shuju, Beijing 1985, p. 703.

³⁹ Yuán Zhōngláng wénchāo 袁中郎文鈔 p. 5f., in *Yuán Zhōngláng quánjí* 袁中郎全集, Guangzhi shuju, Hong Kong n.d.

⁴⁰ Yuán Zhōngláng chǐdú 袁中郎尺牘 p. 9, in *Yuán Zhōngláng quánjí*.

⁴¹ Yuán Zhōngláng wénchāo p. 6, in *Yuán Zhōngláng quánjí*.

... joy and anger, sorrow and delight, obsession and fondness,
qíng and desire ...

喜怒哀樂嗜好情欲

Since the last four notions all denote some kind of positive urge, *qíng* in this case might perhaps best be translated as 'infatuation'.

Although aesthetic discourse in China often builds on philosophical discourse, and aesthetics and morals are often seen as strongly interrelated, aesthetic and aestheticising writings like those of Yuán Hóngdào, still clearly comprise a separate genre. Within this genre, the notion of *qíng* had always been central.⁴² Most notably, *qíng* plays a crucial role in the most oft-cited works of Chinese literary criticism, such as the *Great Preface* 大序, *The Poetic Exposition on Literature* 文賦 (which includes the famous dictum "poetry follows from *qíng*" 詩緣情⁴³), and *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons* 文心雕龍. According to Wong Siu-kit, "the Ming critics recognise the supreme importance of [*qíng*]" (p. 142), and "their criticism ... never fails to acknowledge the supreme importance of deep feeling [*qíng*] in poetry" (p. 138). According to Wong, however, *qíng* is not, for Ming writers, a central concept in the poetry itself, only in their critical writings. It is no coincidence that the quoted writings by Yuán Hóngdào were letters and prefaces, as these were in fact the most common channels for Ming-dynasty aesthetic writing.

In this period, *qíng* in the sense of 'love' primarily belongs to fiction and drama, such as the Ming drama *Peony Pavilion* 牡丹亭 discussed by Waiyee Li in this volume, and the Qing novel *Story of the Stone* 石頭記 discussed by her and myself. In part due to their concern with love, fiction and drama were never allowed a secure place in the traditional literary canon. Whether written in literary Chinese or in the vernacular, they were seen as less respectable. In a

⁴² In addition to Wong's work, see also extensive discussions of *qíng* in literary criticism in Stephen Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge 1992, as well as Cecilie Chu-chin Sun: *Pearl from the Dragon's Mouth: Evocation of Feeling and Scene in Chinese Poetry*, Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor 1995, and Cai Zongqi: "The Rethinking of Emotion: The Transformation of Traditional Literary Criticism in the Late Qing Era", *Monumenta Serica* 45 (1997), p. 63-100.

⁴³ See Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, p. 130.

roundabout way, this in turn made them freer to indulge in the unrespectable topic of love.

The use of *qíng* in the sense of 'love' is not restricted to the pieces of fiction or drama themselves, but often occurs in prefaces and commentaries to these pieces. Most famous is Tāng Xiǎnzǔ's 湯顯祖 preface to his play *Peony Pavilion*, where he asks:⁴⁴

Has the world ever seen a woman's love to rival that of [the main protagonist] Bridal Du?

天下女子有情，寧有如杜麗娘者乎！

After having summed up Bridal Du's extreme devotion to love and concluded that "to be as Bridal Du is truly to have known love" 如麗娘者，乃可謂之有情人耳, he goes on to discuss *qíng* more generally:

Love is of source unknown, yet it grows ever deeper. The living may die of it, by its power the dead live again. Love is not love at its fullest if one who lives is unwilling to die for it, or if it cannot restore to life one who has so died. And must love that comes in dream necessarily be unreal?

情不知所起，一往而深。生者可以死，死可以生。生而不可與死，死而不可復生者，皆非情之至也。夢中之情，何必非真？

In the end, he is sufficiently philosophically inclined to contrast *qíng* with *lǐ* 理 'principle; reason':

How little it is known that that which cannot be within the realm of reason simply has to be within the realm of love.⁴⁵

第云理之所必無，安知情之所必有邪！

⁴⁴ Quoted from Tāng Xiǎnzǔ 湯顯祖: *Mǔdān tíng* 牡丹亭, Renmin wenzue chubanshe, Beijing 2002 (no page number). Translations are by Cyril Birch (*The Peony Pavilion*, Cheng & Tsui Company, Boston 1994, p. ix).

⁴⁵ Translation by Wai-ye Li (*Enchantment and Disenchantment: Love and Illusion in Chinese Literature*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1993, p. 51.)

In a short preface of only 224 characters, the word *qíng* occurs six times. In all occurrences, it is most naturally translated as 'love', although Maram Epstein insists that there is more to the term:⁴⁶

Here *qing* cannot be translated simply as "love", for although *qing* is expressed in its most narrow form as romantic love in the play, its import is more akin to the dynamic life force that generates Liniang's [i.e., Bridal Du's] miraculous resurrection.

Epstein points to the fact that Tāng was a student of Luó Rǔfāng 羅汝芳, who, according to her, identified *qíng* as the energy that drives cosmic vitality. While this may not preclude our interpretation of *qíng* as 'love' in Tang's preface, it endows the word with deeper philosophical connotations. In fact, Luó Rǔfāng was a student of Yán Jūn, so there is a direct line from Wáng Yángmíng to Tāng Xiǎnzǔ.

We have, then, identified three different genre-determined usages of *qíng* in the late Ming:

1. Philosophers like Wáng Yángmíng and Yán Jūn use *qíng* in its traditional sense of 'basic instincts' and with the traditional Neo-Confucian attitude of scepticism.
2. Critics and aesthetes like Yuán Hóngdào use the term in a looser sense, sometimes referring to 'deep feelings', sometimes to 'infatuation', and almost always with a positive attitude.
3. Writers and critics of fiction and drama often use the term in the sense of 'love', also often with a positive attitude.

This is, of course, not a complete list, just an illustration of how the semantic features of *qíng* may vary with genre during one specific historical period.

'LOVE' AND POPULAR POETRY

In principle, there is no contradiction between our historical model of semantic specialisation and the fact that meaning is partly determined by genre. In the case of key terms like *qíng*, however, it is surprising

⁴⁶ Maram Epstein: *Competing Discourses: Orthodoxy, Authenticity and Engendered Meanings in Late Imperial Chinese Fiction*, Harvard University Center, Cambridge 2001, p. 95.

how stable the association between genre and meaning is. We have seen above that in the Ming dynasty, the almost 2000 years older classical sense 'basic instincts' remained dominant in moral and philosophical prose. We have also seen how the emergence of the newer sense 'love' in the Tang dynasty largely coincides with the rise to prominence of a new genre, the Tang dynasty tale. Is it possible to envisage a development where the meaning of such key terms is more or less stable, and the vast changes that do take place are basically changes in genre?

Take the development of *qíng* from 'basic instincts', which is primarily used in moral and philosophical prose, to 'love', which only becomes widespread through the emergence of the Tang dynasty tale. In order for our historical model of semantic development to work, the new genre must have picked up a notion from an older genre and invested it with a new and more specialised meaning that reflected its new interest in the romantic and erotic. As we have seen, this may have gone through one or two intermediate stages, but with the same ultimate result.

In moral and philosophical prose from the classical period, love is not a central aspect of *qíng*. In the various lists of *qíng*, *ài* 愛 'love' is at best one of several manifestations of *qíng*:

... cheerfulness and gloom, joy and anger, sorrow and delight,
love, aversion and desire ...⁴⁷
說故喜怒哀樂愛惡欲

... joy and anger, sorrow and fear, love, aversion and desire ...⁴⁸
喜怒哀懼愛惡欲

⁴⁷ *Xúnzǐ* 荀子 83/22/18.

⁴⁸ Interestingly, in the *Xìng zì mìng chū* 性自命出 a similar list is used to define or describe *xìng* 性 '(human) nature':

The emanation of joy and anger, sorrow and sadness belongs to nature.
喜(喜) 怒(怒) 依(哀) 悲之熒(氣) · 皆(性) 也。

See Michael Puett's contribution to this volume, and for a different version of the same text, the *Xìngqíng lùn* 性情論 in Mǎ Chéngyuán: *Shànghǎi bówùguǎn cáng Zhànguó Chǔ zhúshù*, p. 220 (slip 1).

Only one thing sets *ài* apart from the other terms: It is the only term that is not paired with another term.⁴⁹ Apart from this formal trait, nothing makes it stand out. If anything, *ài* seems to be *less* important than the other kinds of *qíng*, for in all shorter versions of these lists, *ài* is left out altogether:

... aversion and desire, joy and anger, sorrow and delight ...⁵⁰
惡欲喜怒哀樂

... fondness and aversion, joy and anger, sorrow and delight ...⁵¹
好惡喜怒哀樂

... great joy, great anger, great grief, great fear, great sorrow ...⁵²
大喜大怒大憂大恐大哀。

⁴⁹ The term 惡 'aversion' is paired with the following 欲 'desire' rather than the preceding 愛 'love', cf. the pair 惡欲 'aversion and desire' in the six-character expression 惡欲喜怒哀樂 below, cf. also the same pair in the reverse order in the following quote from the Lǐyùn chapter of the *Book of Rituals*:

飲食男女，人之大欲存焉。
死亡貧苦，人之大惡存焉。
故欲惡者，心之大端也。

As a curiosity, note that love is the only one among the so-called "higher cognitive emotions" that is included in any of the standard lists of *qíng*. Higher cognitive emotions, such as love, guilt, shame, embarrassment, pride, envy and jealousy, involve more cortical processing than basic emotions and are therefore more susceptible to influence from conscious thoughts and cultural patterns, and they take longer to build up and to die away. See Dylan Evans: *Emotion: The Science of Sentiment*, p. 28ff.

⁵⁰ *Zhuāngzǐ* 莊子 64/23/68, quoted from *Zhuāngzǐ yǐndé* 莊子引得, Shanghai guji chubanshe, Shanghai 1986; *Lǚshì chūnqiū* 呂氏春秋 part 25, 有度, p. 1142, quoted from *Lǚshì chūnqiū jíshì* 呂氏春秋集釋, Shijie shuju, Taipei 1988; *Zuǒzhuàn* 左傳 414/昭25/2左, quoted from *Chūnqiū jīngzhuàn yǐndé* 春秋經傳引得, Shanghai guji chubanshe, Shanghai 1986.

⁵¹ *Xúnzǐ* 83/22/3; *Zuǒ zhuàn* 414/昭25/2左.

⁵² *Lǚshì chūnqiū* part 3, 盡數, p. 148.

... joy and anger, sorrow and delight ...⁵³
喜怒哀樂

... sorrow and delight, joy and anger ...⁵⁴
哀樂喜怒

To judge from this, love does not have a central position among the various kinds of *qíng* within this genre of writing. There seems to be little reason, therefore, why the semantic specialisation of *qíng* should result in the sense of 'love'.

There is, however, another possible explanation for the origin of the sense of 'love'. As mentioned above, *qíng* occurs in a love poem in the "Guófēng" 國風 section of the *Book of Songs* 詩經, which is usually assumed to be based on folk songs. In this poem, *qíng* refers to affectionate feelings for a loved one. As Harbsmeier points out, love is the only emotion to which the word *qíng* refers discreetly in this way.⁵⁵

From the very beginning, therefore, there seems to exist a special affinity between *qíng* and the emotion of love. We should perhaps not be surprised that this affinity is not brought out in elite-oriented prose, in which love is usually not a respectable topic at all. To judge from the *Book of Songs*, the strong connection between *qíng* and love

⁵³ *Zhuāngzǐ* 4/2/13, 55/21/32; *Doctrine of the Mean* 中庸 p. 349, quoted from Qián Mù 錢穆: *Sì shū shì yì* 四書釋義, Xuesheng shuju, Taipei 1978.

⁵⁴ *Guóyǔ* 國語 *Jinyǔ* 晉語 p. 220, quoted from *Guóyǔ Wèishì jiě* 國語韋氏解, 3rd ed., Shijie shuju, Taipei 1975; *Lǐjì* 禮記 *Yuèjì* 樂記 chapter p. 890.

⁵⁵ It is interesting to note that bamboo slip no. 11 of *Confucius's Discourse on the Songs* 孔子詩論 (p. 141) begins with the following three characters:

青（情）雝（愛）也。

According to the modern editors, these are probably the last three characters of a comment on the poem "Yānyān" 嘒嘒 (corresponding to 燕燕 in the standard edition of *The Book of Songs*), which was characterised with the single word *qíng* 情 on slip 10 (p. 139). Since we do not know the content of the text immediately preceding these three characters, it is impossible to know exactly how to interpret them. They might constitute a full sentence by themselves: '[The meaning of] *qíng* is love.' Or the two characters 青雝（情愛）might constitute a compound noun meaning something like 'deepfelt love'. In either case, the connection between *qíng* and *ài* 愛 'love' is unusually explicit. The question is, however, whether this is linked to romantic love. The poem in question does refer to a young woman who is travelling

that eventually leads to the establishment of 'love' as a separate sense of the word, has its basis in layers of the language that are seldom represented in early written texts. As the *Book of Songs* makes clear, folk songs are much more likely to be concerned with feelings of love than early philosophical, historical, or political treatises.

It is possible, therefore, that the ubiquity of the word *qíng* in the sense of 'love' in "Yingying's story" is due not to linguistic development, but to the fact that love has by now come to the forefront of a new literary genre, the Tang dynasty tale. While this genre is written by and for an elite of literati, its interest in love reflects a more popularist sensibility than most earlier forms of writing. It seems likely that the special affinity between *qíng* and love that we find in the *Book of Songs* continued to exist in popular usage all along, although for a long time it is not reflected in the written sources that have been passed down to us.

The relevant part of the *Book of Songs* is popular in style, and that may account for its near-identification of *qíng* with love in the single occurrence of the word in the book. Even after the sense of 'love' has become more common, it is usually restricted to fiction, drama, and (especially popular or pseudo-popular) poetry, as well as some critical writings on these genres. It is not unlikely that the increasingly strong association between *qíng* and romantic and erotic love is at least partly due to the increasing importance of these genres and the popularist sensibility associated with them rather than just to the process of semantic specialisation outlined above.

It is also possible, of course, that these two processes have worked together: On the one hand, the old association between *qíng* and love in popular usage is picked up by a new literary genre. On the other hand, the classical usage of *qíng* in the sense of 'basic instincts' gradually develops through multi-tiered semantic specialisation into the sense of 'love'.

Continuity and Pseudo-continuity

The development of a key term like *qíng* is extremely complex. It is always possible to pick up usages from any earlier historical period and any genre and use them in new contexts. As an example of how the notion of *qíng* is discussed in similar terms in expository prose

from the classical period and in fictional texts written more than two thousand years later, consider the following excerpt from chapter 111 of *The Story of the Stone* 石頭記, written in the 18th century:

Earthlings treat lust [*yínyù* 淫欲] and love [*qíng*] as one and the same thing. By this means they practise all manner of lechery and immorality, and pass it off as “harmless romance” and “sensibility” [richness in *qíng*]. They do not understand the true meaning of the word “love” [*qíng*]. Before joy and anger, sorrow and delight stir within the human breast, they belong to human nature [*xìng* 性]. The stirring of joy and anger, sorrow and delight causes passion [*qíng*]. Our kind of love [*qíng*], yours and mine, is the state where love [*qíng*] has not yet been stirred. It is like a bud. Once open, love [*qíng*] ceases to be true love [*qíng*].⁵⁶

世人都把那淫欲之事當作「情」字，所以作出傷風敗化的事來，還自謂風月多情，無關緊要。不知「情」之一字，喜怒哀樂未發之時，便是個性；喜怒哀樂已發，便是情了。至於你我這個情，正是未發之情，就如那花的含苞一樣。欲待發泄出來，這情就不為真情了。

This short excerpt contains numerous elements that are already present in the discussions of *qíng* in moral and philosophical prose from the classical period:

1. The opposition between *qíng* and *yù* 欲 ‘desire’ was mentioned already in the *Zhuāngzǐ* 莊子 (4th-2nd century BC) and the *Xúnzǐ* 荀子 (3rd century BC) and soon became a standard part of discussions of *qíng*.
2. The opposition between *qíng* and *xìng* 性 ‘(human) nature’ was also mentioned in the *Zhuāngzǐ* 莊子 and the *Xúnzǐ* 荀子 and became a standard part of discussions of *qíng*.
3. As we have seen, the various lists of emotions referred to by *qíng*, such as *xǐ nù āi lè* 喜怒哀樂 ‘joy and anger, sorrow and delight’, were used in several classics, and have continued to be used throughout Chinese intellectual history.

far to get married, but the emotional focus is not on her feelings of love, but on the feelings of sadness of the first-person narrator, who sends her away.

⁵⁶ John Minford’s translation, modified for the present context by me, see Cao

4. The philosophical distinction between *wèi fā* 未發 'not yet stirred' and *yǐ fā* 已發 (or *jì fā* 既發) 'already stirred' in discussions of *qíng* and *xìng* does not, as far as I know, go back to the classics, but is central to Zhū Xī 朱熹 (1130-1200).⁵⁷

Although not mentioned in the excerpt quoted above, the opposition between *qíng* and *lǐ* 禮 'ritual', which harks back at least to the *Lǐ yùn* 禮運 chapter of the *Book of Rituals* 禮記 (1st century BC or earlier), is also of central concern to this novel.

It should be sufficiently clear that the novel's 18th-century authors feel free to pick up and reformulate in their own context usages of *qíng* from any part of the history of Chinese literature and thought. Far from being exceptional, they are typical examples of virtually all writers on *qíng* from classical times until modernity. It is this that makes *qíng* a key term in Chinese culture.

Not only will Chinese writers seldom hesitate to quote what thinkers one or two millennia apart have to say about *qíng* and assume that they are discussing one and the same term (and, indeed, one and the same phenomenon). They will sometimes even pick up and revive long-dead meanings of the term, which is what Yè Xié 葉燮 (1627-1703) does when he uses *qíng* in a non-personal sense to refer to "‘reality’, as against appearance, the *real* condition of things",⁵⁸ a sense that had not been common since Lù Jī 陸機 (261-303) made use of it in his *Poetic Exposition on Literature* 文賦. This is linguistic borrowing, not from another language or dialect, but from an earlier historical period.

The perceived continuity in the term, however, is sometimes deceptive. While the excerpt above from *The Story of the Stone* represents a continuation of a number of debates on *qíng* in classical and early Neo-Confucian sources, its use of *qíng* differs from all these sources. In the excerpt, *qíng* mainly refers to romantic love, an aspect of *qíng* with which neither the classics nor Zhū Xī were much concerned.

A similar case of pseudo-continuity, mentioned by Martin W. Huang,⁵⁹ regards the following statement:

Xueqin: *The Story of the Stone*, vol. 5, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth 1986, p. 210.

⁵⁷ See, for instance, LI Jingde 黎靖德: *Zhūzi yǔlèi* 朱子語類 vol. 1, Zhonghua shuju, Beijing 1986, p. 64 and p. 90.

... the place where feelings are most concentrated is precisely among people like ourselves.⁶⁰

情之所鍾，正在我輩。

In the first occurrence of this statement in *A New Account of Tales of the World* 世說新語 (compiled ca. AD 430), the term *qíng* refers to a father's feelings towards his deceased child.⁶¹ More than a millennium later, the novel *Jin Ping Mei* 金瓶梅 (late 16th or early 17th century) picks up the same statement, but now the term *qíng* unmistakably refers to erotic, physical love.⁶² The use of an old expression with new nuances of meaning provides a good illustration of how continuity and change work together.

The full semantic range of a key term like *qíng*, therefore, will often be a product of its meaning in the contemporary language and various historical layers of meaning that are brought in to increase its depth. One can hardly explore such a term without entering into an investigation of both the synchronic and historical context in which it occurs. In the study of *qíng*, therefore, a narrow linguistic approach is important, but must be supplemented with a much wider examination of the moral, philosophical and literary debates of which the term is a part.⁶³

⁵⁸ See Wong Siu-kit, "Ch'ing in Chinese Literary Criticism", p. 18.

⁵⁹ Martin W. Huang: *Desire and Fictional Narrative in Late Imperial China*, Harvard University Asia Center, Cambridge 2001, p. 43.

⁶⁰ Richard Mather's translation, see Liu I-ch'in: *A New Account of Tales of the World*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis 1976, p. 324.

⁶¹ Ch. 17, item 4, p. 401.

⁶² Ch. 1, *Jin Ping Mei cihua* 金瓶梅詞話, Xianggang Taiping shuju, Hong Kong 1982, p. 1.

⁶³ For a similar conclusion, see Wong Siu-kit: "Ch'ing in Chinese Literary Criticism", p. 356.

The Essays

The present collection of essays contains two papers from each of three different fields:

- the classical period (Puett and Harbsmeier)
- Chan Buddhism (Anderl and Buswell)
- Ming-Qing drama and fiction (Li and Eifring)

Among the many fields *not* covered, it is worth mentioning that Neo-Confucian ideas of *qíng* are treated at length by Paolo Santangelo in his essay “Emotions and the Origin of Evil in Neo-Confucian Thought” in an earlier volume I have edited, *Minds and Mentalities in Traditional Chinese Literature* (Culture and Art Publishing House, Beijing 1999).

Michael Puett’s contribution to this volume starts with an analysis of *qíng* in the Guōdiàn text *Xìng zì mìng chū* 性自命出, before discussing the more well-known texts *Xúnzǐ* 荀子, *Huáinánzǐ* 淮南子, and the writings of Dǒng Zhòngshū 董仲舒. He shows how the meaning and usage of the term *qíng* are coloured by the philosophical point each of the texts attempts to make.

Christoph Harbsmeier’s contribution also covers the classical period, but from a linguistic angle, and it is based on a wider selection of texts—though not including the Guōdiàn material. What are the meanings of *qíng*? He ends up distinguishing seven basic meanings of the term: factual, metaphysical, political, anthropological, psychological, personal, and emotional.

With Christoph Anderl’s and Robert E. Buswell Jr.’s contributions, we not only enter into a much later period, the Five Dynasties and the Song dynasty, respectively, but also a different way of thinking, that of Chan Buddhism. As in some of the classical texts, *qíng* is a technical term, and the attitude towards it is predominantly negative, because it deludes the mind. Anderl discusses the usage of *qíng* in the *Zǔtángjí* 祖堂集, especially the doctrine of ‘non-sentient beings teaching the dharma’ 無情說法. Buswell is concerned with one specific emotion, doubt 疑情, and its transformation into a positive tool on the path to enlightenment.

With Waiyee Li’s and my own contributions, we move in time into the Ming and Qing dynasties and in genre into the realm of

drama and fiction. Although the older meanings of *qíng* still exist, the term now primarily refers to love. Li discusses the stylistic variations in the expression of love in the Ming play *Peony Pavilion* 牡丹亭 and the Qing novel *The Story of the Stone* 石頭記, while I discuss the psychology underlying the treatment of *qíng* in *The Story of the Stone*.

As it stands, the present collection gives some glimpses into the history and the many usages of a fascinating concept that has played a central role in Chinese culture for almost two and a half millennia. The papers bear witness to the extremely diverse interpretations of this concept at all historical stages, and at the same time show the high degree of continuity throughout the period covered.

THE ETHICS OF RESPONDING PROPERLY
THE NOTION OF *QÍNG* 情 IN EARLY CHINESE THOUGHT

MICHAEL PUETT

Scholars have long wrestled with the problem of finding the precise meaning of the term *qíng* 情 in early Chinese texts. Until recently, most scholars translated the term as “emotions”, or “passions”—meanings that the term clearly possessed in later periods. Several recent analysts, however, have argued against such a traditional reading, claiming that the term had no such connotations in the early period. For example, A.C. Graham has gone so far as to state:

Although the word *qing* is very common in pre-Han literature I should like to risk the generalisation that it never means ‘passions’ even in the *Xunzi*, where we find the usage from which the later meaning developed.¹

He argues instead that the basic meaning of the term is “what is essential” or “genuine”, and that the meaning of “passions” only develops in the Song period.² Some hints of this shift, however, can already be detected in the *Xúnzǐ* 荀子 and the *Lǐjì* 禮記, where, Graham argues, the term for the first time came to be imbued with emotional connotations: “In these texts, but nowhere else in pre-Han literature, the word refers only to the genuine in man which it is polite to disguise, and therefore to his feelings.”³

This paper has been improved tremendously from the invaluable comments by Eric Hutton.

¹A. C. Graham, “The Background of the Mencian Theory of Human Nature”, in *The Tsing Hua Journal of Chinese Studies*, New Series, 1967, 6.1-2. Reprinted in Graham, *Studies of Chinese Philosophy*. (Singapore: The Institute of East Asian Philosophies, 1986), page 59.

²Graham, “The Background of the Mencian Theory of Human Nature”, pages 59-65.

³Graham, “The Background of the Mencian Theory of Human Nature”, page 64.

Chad Hansen, however, has argued strongly against such a view:

Graham's explanation that *qing* somehow goes from meaning "reality" (cum "essence") to meaning "passions" is also unsettling. It still requires that the term shifted from referring to something metaphysical and objective (reality, essence, or the facts) to referring to something subjective and psychological (passions)... Postulating such a radical meaning change also violates the principle of humanity's call for explanation on analogy to us. Our words would hardly be intelligible if they arbitrarily changed meaning so radically while no one seemed to notice.⁴

Since Hansen does not believe that such a shift is possible, he argues that one must find a "single, unified meaning" to the term.⁵ His proposal is that *qíng* refers to "reality feedback",⁶ or "reality input"⁷:

Qing, in sum, are all reality-induced discrimination or distinction-making reactions...⁸

These reactions can include things like "pleasure, anger, sadness, fear, love, hate, desire", but the term itself refers to the reality feedback, not the emotional states themselves.⁹

This single, unified meaning holds for all early Chinese texts, Hansen argues. Hansen does, however, allow for some historical change in the way that *qíng* was utilized: even though the basic meaning of the term remained constant, the attitude toward *qíng* slowly evolved over the course of the Warring States period. His argument, in a nutshell, concerns the perceived relationship between *qíng* and *yù* 欲 ("desires"). In terms of basic meaning, he argues, the two terms are quite different:

⁴ Chad Hansen, "Qing (Emotions) in Pre-Buddhist Chinese Thought", in Joel Marks and Roger T. Ames, *Emotions in Asian Thought: A Dialogue in Comparative Philosophy* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), page 195.

⁵ Hansen, "Qing (Emotions) in Pre-Buddhist Chinese Thought", page 183.

⁶ Hansen, "Qing (Emotions) in Pre-Buddhist Chinese Thought", page 196.

⁷ Hansen, "Qing (Emotions) in Pre-Buddhist Chinese Thought", page 201.

⁸ Hansen, "Qing (Emotions) in Pre-Buddhist Chinese Thought", page 196.

⁹ Hansen, "Qing (Emotions) in Pre-Buddhist Chinese Thought", pages 196-197.

Qing...were theoretically distinguished from *yu* by being presocial bases for the application of terms, while *yu* may be natural or socially induced attitudes toward the things as named.¹⁰

Qing, in other words, are presocial, *yù* are socially induced. However, over the course of the Warring States period there was a "gradual narrowing" between the two concepts, caused by a "growing skepticism" as to whether *qing* are really free from conventional, linguistic distortion.¹¹

As with Graham, Hansen portrays Xúnzǐ as the pivotal figure in this development. But, unlike Graham, Hansen does not believe that Xúnzǐ started a shift in the term's meaning. Instead, his importance comes from the fact that Xúnzǐ "effectively closes the gap"¹² between the two terms: "For Xunzi, *qing* and *yu* are alike in that they disrupt ritual, conventional order."¹³

This philosophical assertion about the equivalence of *qing* and *yù* explains the later shift in the term's meaning. According to Hansen, the crucial event in this shift occurred with Buddhism, which introduced into China an "Indo-European psychology" based upon emotions and passions.¹⁴ And because of the particular connotations that *qing* had been given by Xúnzǐ, it became the term that was used to translate the concept of "passion":

The domination of authoritarian Confucianism (and its offspring, Legalism) when Buddhism first reaches China gives us the outline of an explanation why Buddhist translators would have adapted *qing* to refer to our familiar Western *feeling*-concepts. *Qing* threaten the order of ritual for Xunzi as passions or emotions disturb reason for Buddhists and Greeks.¹⁵

Since Xúnzǐ and his followers had presented *qing* in a negative fashion, it was natural, claims Hansen, that translators would use that same

¹⁰ Hansen, "Qing (Emotions) in Pre-Buddhist Chinese Thought", page 202.

¹¹ Hansen, "Qing (Emotions) in Pre-Buddhist Chinese Thought", pages 202-203.

¹² Hansen, "Qing (Emotions) in Pre-Buddhist Chinese Thought", page 203.

¹³ Hansen, "Qing (Emotions) in Pre-Buddhist Chinese Thought", page 203.

¹⁴ Hansen, "Qing (Emotions) in Pre-Buddhist Chinese Thought", page 203.

¹⁵ Hansen, "Qing (Emotions) in Pre-Buddhist Chinese Thought", page 203.

term when faced with the problem of how to translate “passions” or “emotions” into Chinese.

Graham and Hansen, then, agree that “emotions” or “passions” was not one of the meanings of *qíng* in the early period. Indeed, both argue that the term had only one meaning in the early period, and that a separate meaning of “passion” arose only later. Graham marks this shift as beginning, albeit to an extremely limited extent, with Xúnzǐ; Hansen sees Xúnzǐ as crucial in defining *qíng* and *yù* as related, but the shift in the basic meaning of *qíng*, according to Hansen, occurs only with the introduction of an Indo-European psychology by Buddhism.

In terms of the actual definitions proposed by Graham and Hansen, it should be stated at the outset that there is indeed substantial textual evidence that would seem to support each of these readings. Although each of the scholars in question provides strong evidence in support of their readings, the best examples can be found (not coincidentally, as I will argue below) in the early Han. In terms of Graham’s reading, one can refer to the *Xìcí* 繫辭. We are informed there that one of the reasons Fúxī created the trigrams was,

以類萬物之情

... in order to categorize the *qíng* of the myriad things.¹⁶

Graham’s reading of *qíng* as “essential qualities” would clearly work well here.

And support for Hansen’s view is easy to come by as well. One finds the following statement in the *Huáinánzǐ* 淮南子:

夫人之所受於天者耳目之於聲色也口鼻之於芳臭也肌膚之於寒燠其情一也

Generally speaking, in what humans receive from Heaven, the *qíng* of the ears and eyes relating to sounds and colors, the mouth and nose to fragrance and foulness, the flesh and skin to cold and warmth are all one.¹⁷

¹⁶ Zhōuyì, “Xìcí,” B/2.

¹⁷ *Huáinánzǐ*, “Shuzhen”, 俶真, Sibu beiyao 四部備要 edition (hereafter SBBY), 2.11a; Chinese University of Hong Kong, Institute of Chinese Studies, Ancient Chinese Text Concordance Series (hereafter cited as ICS), 2/16/6-2/16/7.

Qíng, in this formulation, are the ways that humans relate to the world, or, more explicitly, the ways in which particular faculties relate to external stimuli. Hansen could, quite plausibly, cite such a passage in support of his “reality feedback” definition.

Similarly, one finds the following passage from the *Huáinánzǐ*:

夫七尺之形心知憂愁勞苦膚知疾痛寒暑人情一也

Generally speaking, in regard to the [human] form of seven *chǐ*, the heart understands anxiety, sadness, weariness, and bitterness, and the skin understands sickness, pain, cold, and heat: the *qíng* of humans are one.¹⁸

Here, the term is used to refer generally to the “fundamental” aspects of humans, aspects which include the height of a person and the way one experiences heat and cold. This would certainly support Graham’s reading of *qíng* as referring to the “essential qualities” of something. Clearly, the meaning of the term here is not restricted to “emotions”.

And support for Hansen’s view is easy to come by as well. Again from the *Huáinánzǐ*:

But, if both of these interpretations seem to have some validity, then can we at least say that both authors are correct in their rejection of the traditional reading of the term as referring to emotions or passions? Here too, I would argue that such usages can be found in the early Han. I quote here from one of Dǒng Zhòngshū’s 董仲舒 memorials to Hàn Wǔdì 漢武帝: “Human desire (*yù*) I call *qíng*” 人欲之謂情.¹⁹ I will argue below, in opposition to Hansen, that Dǒng Zhòngshū is indeed defining *qíng* as “emotions” or “passions”.

It would appear, then, that each one of the major scholarly attempts to define a basic meaning of the term has some validity: textual evidence can be cited in support of each of these views. The wide disparity of scholarly opinion as to the meaning of the term, then, is due not to a poverty of scholarly expertise. At the same time, none of these definitions seems to account for all of the meanings of the term.

¹⁸ *Huáinánzǐ*, “Xiūwù”, 修務 19.11a; ICS 19/207/24.

¹⁹ *Hànshū* 漢書, Zhonghua shuju 中華書局 edition, 26.2515.

Instead, I will argue, this disparity of opinion is due to the nature of the object of study. I will propose that the term *qíng* has a broad semantic range, including such meanings as basic tendencies, inclinations, dispositions (including emotional dispositions), and fundamental qualities,²⁰ and that this breadth of semantic range is precisely why the term came to be so important in early Chinese thought: during the fourth through second centuries BC, for reasons that will be discussed below, thinkers found it helpful to utilize the term *qíng* and re-define it for their own purposes. The term was, as Lévi-Strauss would say, “good to think”.²¹

Instead, then, of seeking a single, unified meaning of the term in all early Chinese texts, I propose that we turn the question around and ask why it is that certain thinkers at a certain time chose to utilize the term, and how and why they exploited, enhanced, and shifted the meanings of the term for their own purposes. In other words, the goal should be less to find some “basic meaning” of the term than to reconstruct the debate within which the term came to be seen as useful, within which the meanings of the term were contested, and within which those meanings came to be imbued with so many complex resonances and connotations.

This may also help us to provide a more adequate explanation of how the meaning of the term changed over time: instead of trying to find the moment when the term changed in meaning from X to Y, we may find instead that the term always had a broad semantic range, and that various meanings were developed and reinterpreted over the course of a gradually unfolding debate.

A full analysis from this perspective would require a study of all of the debates surrounding *qíng* from the fourth century BC on. Although such an exercise lies well beyond the limits of this essay, I do hope to make a small contribution to such an endeavor here by analyzing one specific line of the debates within which *qíng* came to play a crucial part: the debates from the fourth through second centuries BC over whether or not traditions from the past should be followed. As the forms of political ideology associated with the Zhou state

²⁰ This breadth of semantic range has already been brilliantly demonstrated by Christoph Harbsmeier in his contribution to this volume.

²¹ See Lévi-Strauss, *Totemism*, translated by Rodney Needham (Boston: Beacon Press, 1963) p. 89.

became discredited (or at least unconvincing), thinkers during this period began to turn to alternate bases on which to root their arguments. For many figures, this resulted in a search for cosmological patterns in terms of which particular visions of the state and of human action could be legitimated. But several thinkers were interested in resting claims of legitimation, as well as critiques of existing practices, in terms of the sage—the sage who, in any given context, will know what actions to take.

These figures thus appealed to the terms that could be helpfully used to discuss those human faculties which, if used properly, would enable the practitioner to become a sage. Several such terms became important during this time—words such as *xìng* 性 (human nature) and *xīn* 心 (heart or mind). And *qíng* was another such term. As a word with a broad semantic field including various internal qualities, *qíng* came to be employed by different figures who wished to exploit particular shades of meaning in the term.

In tracing this debate, I will begin with a discussion of the *Xìng zì mìng chū* 性自命出, a text from the Guōdiàn 郭店 tomb that attempts to develop an ethical position in part based upon the notion of *qíng*. I will then take a brief look at how Xúnzǐ uses the term. I will argue that Xúnzǐ's usage is indeed important in the development of the significance of the term, although not in the way that Graham and Hansen have argued. I will conclude with a discussion of the ways in which the term was utilized in the early Han. Here too, I will read the texts in context, attempting to see how the authors of the works were reacting against earlier usages, and how their particular usages fit into their larger goals. As we shall see, most of the various meanings that analysts have assigned to the term were utilized during this period, but always for specific reasons within this larger debate.

The Xìng zì mìng chū

The *Xìng zì mìng chū* is one of the texts from the Guōdiàn tomb.²²

²² My understanding of the *Xìng zì mìng chū* text has been greatly enhanced by the the discussions that ensued in the Guōdiàn Reading Group that I organized at Harvard University over the summer of 1998. I would like to thank all of the participants of the reading group, and in particular Sarah Allen, Peter Bol, Erica

The tomb itself dates to around 300 BC, so the text presumably belongs to the late fourth century BC.²³ It is of particular interest to us for the light it sheds on the early debate surrounding the term *qíng*.

The text opens with a strong claim concerning the nature of humanity:

凡人唯（雖）又（有）性（性），心亡莫志，走（待）勿（物）而句（後）復（作），走（待）兌（悅）而句（後）行，走（待）習而句（後）奠。

In general, although humans possess nature (*xìng*), their mind is without a fixed purpose. It depends on things and only then becomes active; it depends on pleasures and only then is moved; it depends on repeated study and only then becomes fixed.²⁴

If humans do not have a fixed purpose, their nature will simply be moved by external forces: they will be stimulated simply by sensing an object and will be activated simply through pleasures. It is only

Brindley, Jack Chen, Stephen Chou, Shari Epstein, Natasha Heller, Christopher Nugent, Sarah Queen, Benjamin Schwartz, Tu Wei-Ming, and Susan Weld. Various portions of my argument concerning the *Xing zi ming chu* were also presented at the Warring States Working Group meeting in October 1998, at the University of Michigan in January 1999, and at the Association for Asian Studies meeting in March 1999. My thanks as well for all of the helpful comments that I received on these occasions.

²³ For a discussion of the Guōdiàn find itself, see “Jingmén Guōdiàn yī hào chǔmù”, 荊門郭店一號楚墓, *Wénwù* 文物 (1997) 7: 35-48. Since the time when this essay was written, an enormous outpouring of scholarship has developed concerning the Guōdiàn materials. The following are some of the most helpful: *Dàojiā wénhuà yánjiū* 道家文化研究 17 (1999): *Guōdiàn Chǔ jiǎn zhuānhào* 郭店楚簡專號. *Zhōngguó zhéxué* 中國哲學 20 (1999): *Guōdiàn chǔjiǎn yánjiū* 郭店楚簡研究. *Guōdiàn Chǔ jiǎn guójì xuéshù yántǎohuì lùnwén jí* 郭店楚簡國際學術研討會論文集 (Wuhan: Hubei renmin chubanshe, 2000). Sarah Allan and Crispin Williams, editors, *The Guodian Laozi: Proceedings of the International Conference, Dartmouth College, May 1998* (Berkeley: The Society for the Study of Early China and Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, 2000). Ding Sixin 丁四新, *Guōdiàn Chǔmù zhújiǎn sīxiǎng yánjiū* 郭店楚墓竹簡思想研究 (Beijing: Dongfang chubanshe, 2000). Guō Yí 郭沂, *Guōdiàn zhújiǎn yǔ xiān Qín xuéshù sīxiǎng* 郭店竹簡與先秦學術思想 (Shanghai: Shanghai jiaoyu chubanshe, 2001).

²⁴ *Xing zi ming chu*, strip 1, *Guōdiàn chǔmù zhújiǎn* 郭店楚墓竹簡 (Beijing: Wénwù, 1998), p. 179.

through repeated study that the minds of humans can move beyond this and develop a fixed purpose.

These points are elaborated in the immediately succeeding lines:

喜（喜）怒（怒）哀（哀）悲之熒（氣），皆（性）也。及其見於外，則勿（物）取之也。皆（性）自命出，命自天降。The *qi* of joy, anger, sorrow, and sadness are given by nature (*xìng*). When it comes to their being manifested on the outside, it is because things have called them forth. Nature (*xìng*) comes from the decree (*mìng*), and the decree is handed down from Heaven.²⁵

Part of the endowment of humans—traceable ultimately back to Heaven—is that we possess the *qi* 氣 of emotions. And, again, it is by reacting to things that these forms of *qi* become manifested.

Thus far, the text is strongly emphasizing the passivity of humans in relation to the world, and is claiming that this remains true until the purpose of the mind can become fixed. At this point, the reader might assume that the authors would next introduce a discussion of how the mind overcomes this passivity and controls the nature through something like ritual, mental techniques, etc. Instead, the text introduces the notion of *qíng*:

衍（道）司（始）於青（情），青（情）生於皆（性）。司（始）者近青（情），終者近義。

The way (*dào*) begins in *qíng*, and *qíng* is born from nature. At the beginning one is close to *qíng*, and at the end one is close to propriety.²⁶

Although the text is not explicit, it appears to be positing *qíng* as the ways that humans relate to the world. If *xìng* consists of the actual nature with which we are endowed, such as the fact that humans have the *qi* of happiness, sadness, etc., then *qíng* is the consequent way that *xìng* is brought out in response to different aspects of the world. For example, the fact that one has the *qi* of sadness is part of one's *xìng*; but the fact that one will grow sad in a given circumstance

²⁵ *Xìng zì mìng chū*, strips 2-3, *Guōdiàn chǔmù zhújiǎn*, p. 179.

²⁶ *Xìng zì mìng chū*, strip 3, *Guōdiàn chǔmù zhújiǎn*, p. 179.

is due to one's *qíng*. In this sense, the text is positing a definition of *qíng* very similar to the meaning proposed by Chad Hansen: the responses that one has in particular circumstances. Indeed, perhaps the most accurate—albeit very ungainly—translation of the term would be something like “dispositional responsiveness”: one's disposition to respond in certain ways. Unlike Hansen's proposal, however, there is clearly a strong emotional connotation to the term: *qíng* here refers to one's emotional disposition, to the ways that one's emotions will be pulled out in particular circumstances.

Insofar as activity begins in *qíng*, in the ways that the *xìng* interacts with the external world, the Way starts with *qíng*. The Way, therefore, is apparently being defined in terms of movement: the Way begins when movement begins, and movement begins with *qíng*—with the interaction, in other words, of nature and things. However, as is already clear from the opening lines of the text, the authors believe that one's dispositional responses to the outside world are insufficient, and the text accordingly brings in the issue of self-cultivation: one begins with *qíng*, but one must devote oneself to working toward *yì* 義, propriety. *Qíng*, in this text, is how one would spontaneously respond to a situation, while *yì* is how one ought to respond. One of the central issues for the text, therefore, is to explain how humans can move from *qíng* to *yì*. As the text will argue later, acting with propriety will result in a higher form of the Way.

The argument continues:

智（知） [青（情）者能] 出之，智（知）宜（義）者能
內（納）之。

Those who understand [the *qíng* are able to] express it, while those who understand propriety are able to internalize it.²⁷

Qíng involves simply expressing one's nature in circumstances, while propriety involves internalization. This formulation immediately, however, raises one of the crucial points for the text: propriety does not result from overcoming or even controlling one's *qíng*. It is rather an

²⁷ *Xìng zì míng chū*, strips 3-4, *Guōdiàn chǔmù zhújiǎn*, p. 179. (Accepting Qiú Xigui's recommendation for reading the missing graphs, *Guōdiàn chǔmù zhújiǎn*, p. 182, footnote 3.)

internalization, and, as we will see, a refinement, of the *qíng*. Indeed, value judgments themselves properly come out of *qíng*:

好亞（惡），皆（性）也。所好所亞（惡），勿（物）也。善不□□□，所善所不善，執（勢）也。

Likes and dislikes are nature; that which one likes and that which one dislikes depend on the things. Deeming things good [and deeming things bad are *qíng*], that which one deems good and that which one deems bad depend on circumstance.²⁸

What will be found good or bad depends on circumstance, and is thus associated with *qíng*. Here again, the text is not claiming that *qíng* is bad and needs to be overcome: humans should not stop with *qíng*, but the process of self-cultivation simply involves refining that which comes through *qíng*.

The obvious question then comes down to how one can cultivate oneself so as to move from *qíng* to this higher level, yet to do so without losing one's *qíng*. This question is addressed in the next section. The text begins by reiterating the claim that humans must learn to use their minds:

四悞（海）之內其皆（性）弋（一）也。其甬（用）心各異，養（教）使（使）狀（然）也。

As for everyone within the four seas, their nature is one. That they are different in the way they use their minds is brought about by education.²⁹

The text then turns to describing how this is achieved. It first gives a taxonomy of different ways that nature is moved:

凡皆（性）或動（動）之，或達（逢？）之，或交之，或萬（厲）之，或出之，或養（養）之，或長之。凡動（動）皆（性）者，勿（物）也；達（逢？）皆（性）者，兌（悅）也；交皆（性）者，古（故）也；萬（厲）皆（性）者，宜

²⁸ *Xing zi ming chu*, strips 4-5, *Guōdiàn chǔmù zhújiǎn*, p. 179. My reading of the missing graphs here is based upon the evident parallel of the lines.

²⁹ *Xing zi ming chu*, strip 9, *Guōdiàn chǔmù zhújiǎn*, p. 179.

(義)也；出眚(性)者，執(勢)也；美(養)眚(性)者，習也；長眚(性)者，衍(道)也。

In general, as for one's nature, some [things] move it, some entice it, some link with it, some discipline it, some bring it out, some nurture it, some let it grow. In general, that which moves nature is things, that which entices nature is pleasure, that which makes links with nature is intention, that which disciplines nature is propriety, that which brings nature out is circumstance, that which nurtures nature is repeated study, that which causes nature to grow is the Way.³⁰

Each of these is then defined:

凡見者之胃(謂)勿(物)，快於己(己)者之胃(謂)兑(悅)，勿(物)之執(勢)者之胃(謂)執(勢)，又(有)為也者之胃(謂)古(故)。義也者，群善之幽(蘊)也。習也者，又(有)以習其眚(性)也。衍(道)者，群勿(物)之衍(道)。

In general, what is seen I call things; those that bring happiness to oneself I call pleasurable; the circumstance of things I call circumstance; activity I call intention. Propriety is the compiling of the myriad [things deemed] good. Repeated study is bringing repeated study to one's nature. The Way refers to the ways of the myriad things.³¹

Following this taxonomy, the text then defines what is peculiar about human action:

衍(道)四述(術)，唯人衍(道)為可衍(道)也。其參(三)述(術)者，衍(道)之而已。

As for the Way's four techniques, only the human way can be way-ed [i.e., only the human way involves a fixed purpose]. As for the other three techniques, the person is moved and that is all.³²

³⁰ *Xing zi ming chu*, strips 9-12, *Guōdiàn chǔmù zhújiǎn*, p. 179.

³¹ *Xing zi ming chu*, strips 12-14, *Guōdiàn chǔmù zhújiǎn*, p. 179.

³² *Xing zi ming chu*, strips 14-15, *Guōdiàn chǔmù zhújiǎn*, p. 179. This passage, I might add, sheds interesting light on the opening line of the *Lǎozǐ* 老子. The line is

Only the human way involves more than simply passive responsiveness, for only the human way involves a purpose fixed by the mind. Although the text does not specify what the three other techniques are, they presumably include the forms of passive responsiveness that the text mentioned earlier.

The text goes on to explain how this way can be achieved. It begins by explicating the formation of the crucial traditions which should be followed:

時（詩）、箸（書）豐（禮）、樂、其司（始）出皆生於人。
 時（詩），又（有）為為之也。箸（書），又（有）為言之也。
 豐（禮）、樂，又（有）為盥（舉）之也。

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.³³

Each of these four traditions, in other words, arose out of earlier practices. Certain events occurred, such as the conquest of the Shang, and these were then spoken about. Such speeches came to be known as the *Documents*. These events could also be re-enacted; these were the *Poetry*. (A possible example here would be the cycle of poems from the *Poetry* concerning the Zhou conquest.) The emotions involved in those actions could also be “raised up” in the form of music and rituals. Thus, for example, the “Wǔ” 武, a piece of music celebrating the Zhou conquest, was composed to raise up the martial emotions

usually read as, “The Way that can be spoken of is not the enduring Way”. This is certainly a possible reading, and we will see later in this paper that the authors of the “Fàn lùn xùn” chapter of the *Huáinánzǐ* interpret it this way as well. However, when read in light of the *Xìng zì míng chū*, the *Lǎozǐ* line could be read as saying, “The Way that can way-ed is not the enduring Way”. That is to say, there is a more enduring Way than the path forged by human intentionality. It is possible, in other words, that these lines from the *Xìng zì míng chū* and *Lǎozǐ* were written in opposition to each other. (Considering the impossibility of assigning absolute dates to either text, however, there is no way to determine which text is responding to which, or whether both are responding to a third, now-lost, text.)

³³ *Xìng zì míng chū*, strips 15-16, *Guōdiàn chǔmù zhújiǎn*, p. 179.

involved with the conquest. (The piece is mentioned later in the *Xìng zì mìng chū* as an exemplary piece of music.³⁴)

In all of these cases, the sense seems to be that particular actions were taken at some point in the past, and that these actions were seen as exemplary and were therefore discussed, re-enacted, and raised up. Following this, the sages (or possibly just “the sage”—Confucius) organized these traditions:

聖人比其類（類）而論（論）會之，審（觀）其之途而廷訓之，體其宜（義）而即慶之，里（理）其青（情）而出內（入）之，狀（然）句（後）復以壽（教）。壽（教），所以生息（德）于中（中）者也。豐（禮）復（作）於青（情）……

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 (*lǐ* 理) their *qíng* 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 *qíng*...³⁵

The sages took the worthy traditions from the past, organized them, patterned (*lǐ*) their *qíng*, and thereby made them available to educate the latter-born.

The text is thus making a strong argument for why the four traditions of *Poetry, Documents, Rituals, and Music* should be utilized in education. These traditions, organized by the sages, originated from the exemplary actions of the past, and the latter-born, by training themselves through these traditions, can refine themselves as well. The following sections of the *Xìng zì mìng chū* contain explicit examples, primarily drawn from music, to demonstrate how this self-cultivation occurs.

The authors of the *Xìng zì mìng chū*, therefore, have utilized the term *qíng* as a means of defending their support for following the *Poetry, Documents, Rituals, and Music*. The practices are defined as arising out of the exemplary actions of humans, and these actions are

³⁴ *Xìng zì mìng chū*, strip 28, *Guōdiàn chǔmù zhújiǎn*, p. 180.

³⁵ *Xìng zì mìng chū*, strips 16-18, *Guōdiàn chǔmù zhújiǎn*, p. 179.

themselves rooted in the basic emotional dispositions of man. Accordingly, the traditions are defined as that which allows for a refinement of, but never a loss of, the basic qualities of humanity. *Qíng*, in other words, becomes the basis of the ethical system in the text: by defining it as the inherent emotional disposition of humans, the authors are able both to explicate the emergence of the traditions of *Poetry*, *Documents*, *Rituals*, and *Music* and to defend their importance.

Usages of Qíng in the Xúnzǐ

It is with this usage in mind, I would argue, that Xúnzǐ's claims become more readily explicable. This is not, of course, to say that Xúnzǐ necessarily read the *Xìng zì mìng chū*. But the ideas found in the *Xìng zì mìng chū* may help us to understand some of the background context out of which Xúnzǐ was operating. Indeed, I will argue that Xúnzǐ's argument is actually closer to the *Xìng zì mìng chū* than might at first appear the case.

To begin with a passage from the "Róngrù" 榮辱 chapter:

人之情食欲有芻豢衣欲有文繡行欲有輿馬又欲夫餘財蓄積之富也然而窮年累世不知不足是人之情也

It is the *qíng* of man that, for food, he desires to have grass- and grain-fed animals; for clothing he desires to have them ornamented and embroidered; for traveling he desires to have carriages and horses. He moreover desires the wealth of surplus resources being accumulated. However, when going through long stretches of time in poverty he will not be aware that there is something lacking. This is the *qíng* of man.³⁶

³⁶ Xúnzǐ, "Róngrù", SBBY, 2.12b; Harvard-Yenching Sinological Index Series (hereafter cited as HY), 11/4/60-11/4/62. My translations of Xúnzǐ have been aided by the following works: *Hsün Tzu: Basic Writings*, translated by Burton Watson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963); *Xunzi: A Translation and Study of the Complete Works*, three volumes, translated by John Knoblock (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988-1994); *Hsün-tzu*, translated by Hermann Köster (Kaldenkirchen: Steyler Verlag, 1967). On Xúnzǐ's overall philosophy, see Paul Rakita Goldin's *Rituals of the Way: The Philosophy of Xunzi* (Chicago: Open Court Press, 1999).

Xúnzǐ then goes on to argue that humans gradually learn to moderate their desires in order to prolong their lives and increase their happiness. The passage demonstrates clearly Hansen's argument that, for Xúnzǐ, *qíng* and *yù* are related. As Anthony C. Yu has argued in relation to another passage, Xúnzǐ is placing *qíng* and *yù* "on one continuum".³⁷

Given the fact that *qíng* must be controlled, Xúnzǐ argues,

況夫先王之道仁義之統詩書禮樂之分乎……夫詩書禮樂之分固非庸人之所知也……以治情則利

How much more are the way of the former kings and the ordering of humanity and propriety [found in] the distinctions of the *Poetry, Documents, Rituals, and Music*.... Now, the distinctions of the *Poetry, Documents, Rituals, and Music* are assuredly opposed to that which the common man understands.... If you use them to regulate the *qíng*, there will be benefit.³⁸

If it is beneficial for man to control his *qíng*, then how much more beneficial it is for man to follow the ancient kings, who discovered the proper way for society to be organized. Accordingly, Xúnzǐ concludes, one should regulate *qíng* by studying the principles discovered by the sages and transmitted in the *Poetry, Documents, Rituals, and Music*.

As in the *Xìng zì mìng chū*, the argument here is being developed in terms of the relationship between *qíng* and the *Poetry, Documents, Rituals, and Music*. At first glance, however, the argument would appear to be directly opposite that given in the *Xìng zì mìng chū*. In the *Xìng zì mìng chū*, these four traditions were presented as growing out of *qíng*, and, for the latter-born, following the four traditions was presented as refining one's *qíng*. Here, the two are presented oppositionally: *qíng* are described in fully negative terms, and the sages are defined as having created textual traditions to overcome and control the *qíng*.

This negative usage of *qíng* is why, as mentioned above, Graham sees passages such as these as marking the beginning of the semantic shift of the term, and why Hansen sees such passages as marking the

³⁷ Anthony C. Yu, *Reading the Stone: Desire and the Making of Fiction in Dream of the Red Chamber* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), page 58.

³⁸ Xúnzǐ, "Róngrù", 2.13a; HY 11/4/66-12/4/71.

conflation of *qíng* and *yù* that would later allow for the semantic shift under the influence of Buddhism. However, I would question an explanation of this passage made either in the form of a claimed semantic shift from “essential” to “emotion”, or in the form of a single, unified meaning as proposed by Hansen.

The crucial questions to tackle here are how and why Xúnzǐ is defining *qíng*, the ways that the sages initially generated proper traditions, and the means by which the latter-born should use these traditions to control their *qíng*.

生之所以然者謂之性性之和所生精合感應不事而自然謂之性
性之好惡喜怒哀樂謂之情情然而心為之擇謂之慮心慮而能為
之動謂之偽

That by which someone is at birth as he is, I call nature. The part of nature that harmonizes with the delicately fitting stimulus and response it generates and is spontaneous and without interference, this I also call nature. The likes, dislikes, pleasures, anger, sorrows, and joys of nature I call *qíng*. The *qíng* being thus, the mind makes them choose; this I call thinking. When the mind thinks and is able to make them move; this I call artifice (*wěi* 偽).³⁹

“Artifice” is thus a product of the mind working upon the *qíng*. Although this clearly prioritizes the mind over the *qíng*, the *qíng* do not appear to be presented as negatively as in the quotations above.

Elsewhere, Xúnzǐ presents the *qíng* in even favorable ways:

天職既立天功既成形具而神生好惡喜怒哀樂臧焉夫是之謂天
情耳目鼻口形能各有接而不相能也夫是之謂天官心居中虛以
治五官夫是之謂天君財非其類以養其類夫是之謂天養順其類
者謂之福逆其類者謂之禍夫是之謂天政

With the work of Heaven established and the accomplishments of Heaven completed, the form prepared and the spirit born, likes, dislikes, pleasure, anger, sorrow, and joy are stored within: these I call the Heavenly *qíng*. The ears, eyes, nose, mouth, and body each have that with which they connect, but they cannot substitute for each other: these I call the Heavenly faculties. The mind resides

³⁹ Xúnzǐ, “Zhèngmíng”, 正名 16.1a-1b; HY 83/22/2-83/22/4.

within the central emptiness so as to rule the five faculties: this I call the Heavenly ruler. Making into produce what is not of one's kind in order to feed one's kind: this I call the Heavenly nurturance. Those who accord with their species are called fortunate, and those who oppose their species are called unfortunate; this I call the Heavenly governance.⁴⁰

This passage, from the "Tiānlùn", stresses the degree to which *qíng*, along with the faculties and mind, are of Heaven. As such, he goes on to argue, they must be nurtured, not rejected:

暗其天君亂其天官棄其天養逆其天政背其天情以喪天功夫是之謂大凶聖人清其天君正其天官備其天養順其天政養其天情以全其天功如是則知其所為知其所不為矣則天地官而萬物役其行曲治其養曲適其生不傷夫是之謂知天

To darken one's Heavenly ruler, bring disorder to one's Heavenly faculties, discard one's Heavenly nurturance, disobey one's Heavenly governance, turn one's back on one's Heavenly *qíng*, and thereby destroy the Heavenly accomplishments: these are called great inauspiciousness. The sage clears his Heavenly ruler, rectifies his Heavenly faculties, prepares his Heavenly nurturance, accords with his Heavenly governance, nourishes his Heavenly *qíng*, and thereby brings completion to the Heavenly governance. If he does so, then he knows what he is to do and not to do. Heaven and Earth then perform their functions and the myriad things serve him. His movements are fully ordered, his nurturance fully appropriate, and his life is without injury. This is called knowing Heaven.⁴¹

The emphasis has shifted entirely from the statements quoted above in which Xúnzǐ presented the *qíng* as simply needing to be controlled. Here, the *qíng* are Heavenly qualities that must be nurtured; to turn against them is folly. And certainly no conflation is implied here with *yù*. In direct contrast to the usages discussed above, *qíng* here refers to those fundamental dispositions that are natural to and inherent

⁴⁰ Xúnzǐ, "Tiānlùn", 天論 11.10a; HY 62/17/10-63/17/13.

⁴¹ Xúnzǐ, "Tiānlùn", 11.10b; HY 63/17/13-63/17/16.

in all humans, and the sage is simply he who nurtures such dispositions so that humans can be what they properly ought to be.

In such contexts, Xúnzǐ is employing the term in much the same way as it was used in the *Xìng zì mìng chū*: *qíng* are those emotional dispositions which will be nurtured and aided by the traditions of past sages. Indeed, Xúnzǐ at times will go so far as to say that it is precisely because he is cultivated that the sage can maintain *qíng* and yet still be regulated:

聖人縱其欲兼其情而制焉者理矣

That a sage can abandon himself to his desires, fulfill his *qíng*, and yet be regulated, is due to his being patterned (*lǐ*).⁴²

It is by being patterned that the sage is able to fulfill his *qíng* and yet be properly regulated. This, in essence, is the argument of the *Xìng zì mìng chū* as well. And even the terminology here is similar: when the authors of the *Xìng zì mìng chū* discussed the sages' organization of the past traditions (which were, for the authors, a consequence of the *qíng* of particular circumstances), they were described as "patterning (*lǐ*) their *qíng*".

In these contexts, then, Xúnzǐ is making a larger claim about the rituals and traditions of the ancient sages, and it is one that is reminiscent of the *Xìng zì mìng chū*. Although Xúnzǐ wants to claim, unlike the authors of the *Xìng zì mìng chū*, that rituals and traditions are an artifice, he also wants to claim that they are, in a fundamental sense, correct: they may be artificial, but they are not arbitrary.⁴³

Thus, when Xúnzǐ speaks of patterns (*lǐ*), he is speaking of the patterns that the sages properly brought to the world of nature. As he argues in the "Wángzhì" 王制 chapter:

故天地生君子君子理天地君子者天地之參也萬物之摠也民之父母也無君子則天地不理禮義無統上無君師下無父子夫是謂

⁴² Xúnzǐ, "Jiěbì", 解蔽 15.8a; HY 81/21/66.

⁴³ For a fuller discussion of Xúnzǐ's emphasis on a non-arbitrary notion of artifice, see my article, "Nature and Artifice: Debates in Late Warring States China concerning the Creation of Culture", in *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 57.2 (December 1997), pages 471-518.

之亂君臣父子兄弟夫婦始則終終則始與天地同理與萬世同久夫是之謂大本

Therefore, Heaven and Earth gave birth to the gentleman. The gentleman gives patterns (*li*) to Heaven and Earth. The gentleman forms a triad with Heaven and Earth, is the summation of the myriad things, and is the father and mother of the people. Without the gentleman, Heaven and Earth have no pattern, ritual and righteousness have no unity; above there is no ruler or leader, below there is no father or son. This is called the utmost chaos. Ruler and minister, father and son, older and younger brother, husband and wife begin and then end, end and then begin. They share with Heaven and Earth the same pattern, and last for ten thousand generations. This is called the great foundation.⁴⁴

Heaven and Earth are thus defined as generating the gentleman, while the gentleman then gives patterns to Heaven and Earth: the generation of patterns by the sages is the teleological completion of the process begun by Heaven and Earth. The work of the sages is a continuation and completion of the work of Heaven.

And the same point, I would argue, holds for Xúnzǐ's treatment of *qíng*. A true fulfillment of a human's natural disposition requires the creation of artifice. The artificial patterns created by the sages serve ultimately to allow humans to realize fully their natural potential.

But how then do we account for this seeming ambivalence in Xúnzǐ concerning the term *qíng*? Why does he in some places emphasize the degree to which *qíng* must simply be controlled through the artifice of ritual, while elsewhere he emphasizes the degree to which such artifice in fact allows for a proper nourishment and fulfilling of *qíng*? Why, in other words, if his full argument is so similar to the *Xìng zì mìng chū*, does he spend so much time emphasizing the artifice of the rituals and the degree to which they must control the *qíng*?

The explanation, I would argue, has to do with the changing debate within which Xúnzǐ was operating. By the early third century BC, several figures had begun to turn to the term *qíng* precisely as a means of arguing that the traditions of the past need not be followed. For example, one finds in the "Nèi piān" 內篇 of the *Zhuāngzǐ* 莊子

⁴⁴ Xúnzǐ, "Wángzhì", 5.7a-7b; HY 28/9/65-29/9/67.

usages of *qíng* like that in the *Xìng zì mìng chū*, but with the precise opposite implication. In one passage, a certain Qín Yì is narrated as criticizing people mourning the death of Lǎo Dān:

必有不蘄言而言不蘄哭而哭者是遁天倍情

There were certainly those who spoke without wishing to speak, those who cried without wishing to cry. This is to flee Heaven and turn one's back on *qíng*.⁴⁵

The passage builds a dichotomy between the following of traditional rituals and the following of one's *qíng*: one who follows one's *qíng*, the text is implying, will not simply follow traditional customs for behavior. Heaven and *qíng* are thus linked, and both are presented as being in opposition to custom.

It was perhaps in response to notions such as these that Xúnzǐ emphasized so strongly the degree to which rituals were indeed an artifice—an artifice that was necessary to avoid the excesses that would come from following our *qíng*. But such a position also creates a problem: if Xúnzǐ wants to claim that the ancient rituals are artificial constructs of the sages, then why is it not acceptable for sages to arise now and create new artificial constructs? Why, in other words, should the traditions of the ancient kings be followed at all? To solve this possible problem, Xúnzǐ needs to argue that the ancient rituals are in fact correct—that they are the proper ones for humans to follow, and that it is not necessary to invent new ones. Xúnzǐ's move, therefore, is double-fold: he needs to argue that the ancient traditions are an artifice, but that they are proper for all times and must be followed.

And this explains the ambivalence for Xúnzǐ surrounding a term such as *qíng*. Xúnzǐ will define the mind, *xīn*, as something that, properly cultivated, will be able to generate the proper ritual order. As a polemic against those ideas at the time that would turn to *qíng* in opposition to ritual precedents, Xúnzǐ will then define *qíng* as those dispositions that need proper guidance and control by the artificial rituals of the sages. But he will on other occasions emphasize that such artificial rituals are proper by claiming that they allow for a nurturing of the fundamental qualities of man. In such places, *qíng* is

⁴⁵ Zhuāngzǐ, "Yǎng shēng zhǔ" 養生主 (chapter 3), SBBY, 2.3b; HY 8/3/17.

used much more to refer to those basic dispositions that allow humans to be properly human. Such a usage of *qíng* allows Xúnzǐ to root sagely activity in the mind, while still emphasizing the “naturalness” of the artifice of the mind.

The term *qíng*, therefore, occupies an ambivalent place in Xúnzǐ’s thought, and, I have argued, this ambivalence arises from his larger project. He needs not only to demarcate the radical difference between the artifice of the ancient sages and the natural guidelines supported by so many other texts, but also to claim that the artifice of the ancient sages is, in some sense, fitting and proper for humans. At times, therefore, it is rhetorically advantageous to underline the difference between artifice and *qíng*, claiming that the teachings of the ancient sages involve controlling the basic dispositions of humans, and at times it is advantageous to argue that such teachings allow for a proper fulfillment of those dispositions.

Uses of the Term in the Huáinánzǐ

If part of Xúnzǐ’s ambivalence concerning the term *qíng* can be explicated as a reaction against those attempts to utilize the term in opposition to the following of precedent, then the usages of the term in several chapters of the *Huáinánzǐ* show an even more radical development of precisely those tendencies that concerned Xúnzǐ so deeply. In two of the chapters that I will be discussing here, the “Jīngshén xùn” 精神訓 (chapter seven), and the “Fàn lùn xùn” 泛論訓 (chapter thirteen), *qíng* becomes one of the primary terms that is utilized to argue strongly against the following of earlier precedent. I will accordingly ask why this usage of the term emerges and what claims are being made through such a usage.⁴⁶

The “Jīngshén xùn”, chapter seven of the *Huáinánzǐ*, is a lengthy discussion of the human self and the consequent ways in which the self must be cultivated.⁴⁷ One of the crucial claims of the chapter is

⁴⁶ My understanding of the usage of *qíng* in the *Huáinánzǐ* has been helped tremendously by the analysis given by Griet Vankeerbergen in her dissertation, *The Huainanzi and Liu An’s Claim to Moral Authority* (Princeton University, 1996).

⁴⁷ My understanding of this chapter, and my translations of specific passages, have been aided greatly by the interpretation and translations offered by Harold Roth

that a sage follows *qíng*, rather than any kind of textual authority or cultural artifice.

The first claim in this larger argument occurs near the beginning of the chapter:

聖人法天順情不拘於俗不誘於人

The sage models himself on Heaven and follows *qíng*. He does not adhere to custom, he is not seduced by men.⁴⁸

The immediate move of the chapter is to claim an alternate basis of authority than tradition or custom: the sage is one who models himself upon Heaven and *qíng*. As in the *Zhuāngzǐ* passage discussed above, *qíng* is associated with Heaven, and placed in opposition to custom.

The text goes on to argue how one must cultivate oneself in order to achieve such a state. The goal of this cultivation is to bring oneself into accord with the patterns, or *lǐ*:

精神盛而氣不散則理理則均均則通通則神神則以視無不見以聽無不聞也以為無不成也

When the quintessential and the spirit are flourishing and the *qì* is not dissipating, then one will be patterned (*lǐ*). When one is patterned, one will be balanced. When one is balanced, one will penetrate. When one penetrates, one will be spiritual (*shén*). When one is spiritual, one will thereby see without anything not being seen, one will thereby hear without anything not being heard, and one will thereby act without anything not being completed.⁴⁹

The goal of the cultivation process is to make oneself patterned, and thus fully resonant, fully responsive, and fully able to act successfully.

Such a state is defined, among other ways, as according with *qíng* (*shì qíng* 適情):

in his "The Inner Cultivation Tradition of Early Daoism", *Religions of China in Practice*, edited by Donald S. Lopez (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), pp. 123-128 and 142-148, and by Claude Larre, *Le Traité VII du Houai Nan Tseu: Les Esprits Légers et Subtils Animateurs de L'Essence*. (Paris: Institute Ricci, 1982).

⁴⁸ *Huáinánzǐ*, "Jingshén xùn", SBBY, 7.1a; ICS 7/54/28-7/55/1.

⁴⁹ *Huáinánzǐ*, "Jingshén xùn", 7.2b; ICS 7/55/23-7/55/24.

聖人食足以接氣衣足以蓋形適情不求餘

The sage eats sufficiently so as to connect his *qì* and dresses sufficiently so as to cover his form. He accords with his *qíng* and does not seek what is superfluous.⁵⁰

The sage simply knows what to do: he eats the proper amount and clothes himself in the proper way without seeking superfluities. This state of reacting properly in situations is a result of according with his *qíng*. Such a usage of the term clearly accords with that found in the *Xìng zì mìng chū*.

But note that, as defined here, one of the consequences of according with one's *qíng* is that one will not seek what is superfluous—exactly one of the reasons that Xúnzǐ calls, in the “Róngrù” chapter, for the mind to control the *qíng*. Here, *qíng* is not only granted normative status, but the rituals and measures that Xúnzǐ would call to regulate the *qíng* would, it is implied, be listed here as superfluities. Indeed, the text goes on to make this point directly:

衰世湊學不知原心反本直雕琢其性矯拂其情以與世交故目雖欲之禁以度心雖樂之節之以禮……外束其形內總其德鉗陰陽之和而迫性命之情故終身為悲人

A decaying age amasses learning, but does not understand making the heart originary and returning to the basis. They carve and polish their nature, constrain and oppose their *qíng* so as to link up with the age. Therefore, although the eye desires something, they restrain it with measures. Although the heart enjoys something, they modulate it with ritual... Outwardly they bind their form, and inwardly they manage their potency. They manacle the harmony of yin and yang and oppress the *qíng* of nature and fate. Therefore, during their entire lives they are lamentable.⁵¹

Although the object of the critique is not spelled out, the text later singles out the “Ruists” as the main culprit.⁵²

In opposition to this, the text advocates the following:

⁵⁰ *Huáinánzǐ*, “Jingshén xùn”, 7.10a; ICS 7/59/16-7/59/17.

⁵¹ *Huáinánzǐ*, “Jingshén xùn”, 7.11b; ICS 7/60/6-7/60/8.

⁵² *Huáinánzǐ*, “Jingshén xùn”, 7.12a; ICS 7/60/13.

達至道者則不然理情性治心術養以和持以適樂道而忘賤安德而忘貧性有不欲無欲而不得心有不樂無樂而不為無益情者不以累德而不便性者不以滑和故縱體肆意而度制可以為天儀

He who penetrates the utmost Way, is not like this. He patterns (*lǐ*) his *qíng* and nature and brings order to the techniques of the mind. He nourishes them with harmony and supports them with what is appropriate (*shì*). He delights in the Way and forgets pettiness; he rests in potency and forgets poverty. As for his nature, there is that which it does not desire, but there is no desire that is not attained. As for his heart, there is that which it does not find joyous, but there is no joy that is not enacted. He who has nothing being added to *qíng* does not thereby bind potency, and he who does not make use of nature does not thereby gloss over harmony. Therefore, he lets go of himself and releases his thoughts, and the standards and measures can thereby become the model for all under Heaven.⁵³

Instead of constraining and opposing the *qíng*, the authors are advocating a “patterning” of the *qíng* and nature (*lǐ qíng xìng* 理情性). The term here, *lǐ*, is the same as that used earlier in the chapter to describe the state achieved after the mind has successfully gathered the quintessential and spiritual in man. It is also the same term used by Xúnzǐ to describe the patterns that the sage creates—the patterns that allow the sage to fulfill his *qíng* and bring order to Heaven and Earth. And, of course, patterning one’s *qíng* was the same phrase used in the *Xìng zì mìng chū* to describe the sages’ acts of organizing the past traditions of sagely actions.

Precisely like the *Xìng zì mìng chū*, then, the text is calling for the practitioner to refine his *qíng*, and thereby to be able to act properly. Ironically, however, this position is presented as being antithetical to the following of textual traditions, and is explicitly presented in opposition to the Confucians. And, similarly, the text is using terminology quite reminiscent of at least parts of the Xúnzǐ, but, again with the opposite implication. In the Xúnzǐ, patterns (*lǐ*) are defined as the artifice given by man that will allow nature to be properly ordered. In the “Jìngshén xùn” chapter of the *Huáinánzǐ*, the patterns are presented as the natural patterns with which the sage hopes to come into accord.

⁵³ *Huáinánzǐ*, “Jìngshén xùn”, 7.11b-12a; ICS 7/60/9-7/60/11.

And textual precedent and rituals are thus associated with an artifice that must be rejected.

The chapter thus roots legitimacy entirely in self-cultivation and cosmological understanding, rather than in transmitted textual authority. The sage is not one who has mastered a body of transmitted teachings from antiquity but is rather one who always acts properly insofar as he has brought his *qíng* in accord with the proper patterns of the universe. And the method for so doing involves not following transmitted teachings but rather cultivating oneself and refining one's *qì*.

A similar point is made as well in the "Fànlùn xùn", chapter thirteen of the *Huáinánzǐ*.⁵⁴ The "Fànlùn xùn" opens with a lengthy argument as to why sages must act in accordance with the changing times, and therefore cannot base their actions on what previous sages have done.⁵⁵ Thus, the text claims, the five thearchs and the three monarchies, "...changed in accord with the times" 因時變.⁵⁶

Accordingly, the text concludes, it is wrong to seek guidance from textual authority:

王道缺而詩作周室廢禮義壞邇春秋作……皆衰世之造也……
誦先王之詩書不若聞得其言聞得其言不若得其所以言得其所以言者言弗能言也故道可道者非常道也

When the way of the kings splintered, the *Poetry* was created. When the house of Zhou was neglected and rituals and propriety fell to waste, the *Spring and Autumn Annals* was created... Both are products of ages of decline... To recite the poems and texts of the former kings is not as good as hearing and attaining their words. And hearing and attaining their words is not as good as attaining that about which they spoke. As for attaining that about

⁵⁴ For a fuller discussion of the "Fànlùn xùn," see chapter four of my *The Ambivalence of Creation: Debates Concerning Innovation and Artifice in Early China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001).

⁵⁵ See *Huáinánzǐ*, "Fànlùn xùn", 13.1a-2a; ICS 13/120/3-13/120/17.

⁵⁶ *Huáinánzǐ*, "Fànlùn xùn", 13.3a; ICS 13/120/25. The "three monarchies" refers to the Xia, Shang, and Zhou dynasties. The "five thearchs" refers to the five rulers who preceded the Xia dynasty. Who precisely these rulers are varies from text to text.

which they spoke, speaking cannot speak it. Therefore: “The Way that can be spoken is not the enduring Way.”⁵⁷

Unlike the *Xing zì mìng chū*, which presented textual traditions as an organization of the earlier actions of the sages, the authors here present such texts as simply products of an age of degeneracy—simply attempts by the latter-born to recapture the attainments of the earlier sages. And, the authors argue, the attempt was foolhardy anyway, since words cannot explain what the early sages attained.

Moreover, since times change, one ought not seek to imitate the actions of the past sages anyway:

天下豈有常法哉

How can all under Heaven have constant models?⁵⁸

If however, textual precedent should not be the guide of the sages, then what should? Like *Xúnzǐ*, the text tries to root sagely action in the natural faculties. However, as we saw, *Xúnzǐ* did so in a way that emphasized the enduring importance of the ancient texts of the sages. But, if there is no universal artifice that should be followed through the ages, and if texts are denied the possibility of expressing authorial intent, then what should guide the actions of the sages? As with *Xúnzǐ*, the “*Fànlùn xùn*” argues that such guides should be located in something internal to the sage, but, in contrast to the *Xúnzǐ*, the text uses *qíng* as one of those anchors:

天下莫易於為善而莫難於為不善也所謂為善者靜而無為也所謂為不善者躁而多欲也適情辭餘無所誘惑循性保真無變於己故曰為善易

Nothing under Heaven is easier than doing good, and nothing is more difficult than doing what is not good. That which I call doing good is being still and not acting consciously. That which I call doing what is not good is being frenzied and increasing one’s desires. According with *qíng* and discarding what is superfluous, one will be without that which entices or deludes; following nature

⁵⁷ *Huáinánzǐ*, “*Fànlùn xùn*”, 13.3b; ICS 13/121/8-13/121/13.

⁵⁸ *Huáinánzǐ*, “*Fànlùn xùn*”, 13.4b; ICS 13/121/26.

and preserving the authentic, one will not alter what is within oneself. Therefore, I say: doing good is easy.⁵⁹

Qíng is what is within oneself and, if it is accorded with properly, can provide a natural basis for always, spontaneously, undertaking correct actions.

Both of these chapters of the *Huáinánzǐ* thus utilize the term *qíng* to refer to the ways in which one will naturally and spontaneously react to given circumstances. As such, Hansen's definition of "reality feedback" is, for these usages, not unhelpful—as long as we keep in mind that such a "reality feedback" is thought of as a disposition to respond spontaneously and resonately. Such a usage, clearly, accords with that seen in the *Xìng zì mìng chū*. But the overall argument of the text is reminiscent of passages in texts like the *Zhuāngzǐ*, only here developed into a full politico-ethical argument as to the full autonomy of the sage from tradition and custom. As a term employed to refer to the affective dispositions of humans in contingent circumstances, *qíng* becomes one of the crucial bases on which the authors can define an attraditional definition of sagely authority. The notion of *qíng*, in other words, provides a ground for ethical activity in a way that allows the authors to deny any need for following the past.

Such statements, of course, are being made during the early portion of Hàn Wǔdì's reign (141-87 BC), when issues of empire and the degree to which one should or should not follow precedents from the past were coming to a head.⁶⁰ It is not surprising that it is within this context that one will find some of the more extreme statements concerning these issues, and thus some of the more extreme usages of the term *qíng*.

Dǒng Zhòngshū

It is perhaps in response to such rejections of textual precedence that some of Dǒng Zhòngshū's arguments can be explicated. Dǒng Zhòngshū was committed to the importance of following the traditions

⁵⁹ *Huáinánzǐ*, "Fàn lùn xùn", 13.18b-19a; ICS 13/129/13-13/129/15.

⁶⁰ These issues are discussed in more detail in chapter four of my *The Ambivalence of Creation*

of Confucius—particularly the *Spring and Autumn Annals* 春秋—and he too was a major figure in the debates developing in the early portion of Hàn Wǔdì's reign.⁶¹ The memorials he composed to Wǔdì were, among other things, admonitions for the emperor to begin basing Han statecraft on the principles laid out in the textual traditions organized by Confucius. And it is precisely here that one finds some of the strongest critiques of the notion of *qíng*:

天命之謂命，命非聖人不行；質樸之謂性，性非教化不成；人欲之謂情，情非度制不節。是故王者上謹於承天意，以順命也；下務明教化民，以成性也；正法度之宜，別上下之序，以防欲也。

Heaven's command I call the mandate; the mandate can only be put into practice by a sage. One's substance I call nature; nature can only be completed through education. Human desire I call *qíng*; *qíng* can only be modulated (*jié* 節) through standards and regulations. It is for this reason that a king above is attentive to upholding the intent of Heaven so as to accord with the mandate, and below endeavors to clarify and educate the people so as to complete their nature. He corrects the appropriateness of the laws and standards and distinguishes the hierarchy of upper and lower so as to restrain their desires.⁶²

The argument is in some ways reminiscent of the teleological claims we noted in the *Xìng zì mìng chū* and in strands of Xúnzǐ's thought: Dǒng Zhòngshū is emphasizing the necessity of human action in fulfilling and completing the process begun by nature. First of all, Heaven grants a mandate, but the sage must use it. Secondly, humans are granted a nature, but this nature can only be completed if it is transformed through education. And, finally, humans are given desires. But here the argument shifts away from a teleological one and more toward the vocabulary used in other parts of Xúnzǐ's arguments: the

⁶¹ On Dǒng Zhòngshū, see Sarah Queen's extremely helpful *From Chronicle to Canon: The Hermeneutics of the Spring and Autumn Annals, According to Tung Chung-shu* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). Griet Vankeerbergen also has an excellent discussion of Dǒng Zhòngshū and the *Huáinánzǐ* in her dissertation, *The Huainanzi and Liu An's Claim to Moral Authority*, pp. 378-399.

⁶² *Hànshū*, 26.2515.

goal is not to fulfill one's *qíng* properly but rather to restrain and control it. And Dǒng Zhòngshū goes so far as to define *qíng* as simply desires. *Qíng* in this formulation does not refer to what is fundamental in humans, nor does it refer to one's spontaneous responses in situations. It rather refers to nothing other than desires, i.e., passions, and these must simply be controlled.

Like the authors of the *Xìng zì mìng chū*, and like Xúnzǐ, Dǒng Zhòngshū is attempting to defend the textual traditions of the ancient sages. By the early Han, however, the notion of *qíng*—the very term on which the *Xìng zì mìng chū* based its argument for following textual traditions—had come to be defined in explicit opposition to such concerns. It is perhaps in response to such developments that Dǒng Zhòngshū defined *qíng* as simply “desires”, and thus as something that required complete control and restraint. Gone here is not only the support of the term seen in the *Xìng zì mìng chū*, but even the ambivalence seen in Xúnzǐ. Here, *qíng* is defined as nothing but desires.

Conclusion

Over the period covered in this paper, we have noted a fascinating shift in the usage of *qíng*. In the *Xìng zì mìng chū*, *qíng* was the crucial term that allowed the authors the means of defending earlier traditions as being both natural and necessary. With Xúnzǐ, we noted an ambivalence in the usage of the term: at times, Xúnzǐ defined *qíng* as simply emotions that must be controlled through the artifice of rituals, and at other times he presented such artifice as being precisely what was necessary to nourish properly and fulfill the *qíng*. By the time we get to Dǒng Zhòngshū, however, the term had come to be downgraded even more. *Qíng* came to be defined as nothing but desires that require constant restraint and regulation.

Much of the impetus for this shift, I have argued, came from the debate within which these figures were operating. If *qíng* was the term that the authors of the *Xìng zì mìng chū* saw as most beneficial to their program of supporting traditions from the past, that same term came to be utilized as well by figures who wished to make the precise opposite claims. Indeed, by the time one gets to the early

Han, the term had been picked up in portions of the *Huáinánzǐ* to argue that one ought not follow precedents at all: insofar as *qíng* involved one's spontaneous responses, one need only refine oneself to become ever more resonant, and ever more in accordance with *qíng*, to be able to act properly. It is in response to positions such as these, I have suggested, that Dǒng Zhòngshū came to define *qíng* in purely negative terms.

Looking over this debate, it is clear that many of the definitions modern scholars have attributed to *qíng* did indeed appear, but it is only by the early Han that these various definitions came to be distinguished clearly. As we noted, the usages that appeared in the *Xìng zì mìng chū* were associated generally with a sense of idealized emotional dispositions, but any attempt to translate *qíng* in such a text as either simply "reality response" (with no affective sense) or simply "emotions" would be misleading. By the time we get into the intense debates that characterized the early Han, however, these definitions do become distinguishable. The usage of *qíng* in the "Jǐngshén xùn" and "Fànlùn xùn" chapters of the *Huáinánzǐ* does come in some ways close to "reality response", while the usage in Dǒng Zhòngshū can indeed be translated as "passions".

But the fact that these definitions do not become tightly distinguished until so late should show how incorrect it would be to read any of them as what Hansen would call the "single, unified meaning" of the term. And it would be equally unconvincing to read the early Han usages as reflecting a simple semantic shift in the term from meaning X to meaning Y. Instead, these various usages represent the ways that the term, which clearly had a broad semantic range to begin with, had come to be employed and utilized in these debates. As a consequence of the development of these debates, specific shades of meaning came to be emphasized by particular thinkers in opposition to those shades utilized by other thinkers, thus leading to a gradual refinement of and distinction between various connotations in the term.

Insofar as I have been focusing exclusively in this paper on the debate surrounding the following of traditions and the reasons and ways that the term *qíng* was utilized in this debate, I have by necessity discussed only a limited number of texts. A full study of the semantic range of *qíng* in early China will require analyses of more texts and

more of the debates within which the term was utilized, as well as full analyses of those other terms against which *qíng* was often defined—terms such as *xìng* (nature) and *yù* (desires). But I do hope I have made a small contribution to such a study by analyzing at least some of the rich ways that the term *qíng* was employed, defined, and debated in the early period, and by pointing out that some of the specific definitions of *qíng* discussed by recent scholars as representing the basic meaning of the term in fact emerged in the course of that debate itself.

THE SEMANTICS OF *QÍNG* 情
IN PRE-BUDDHIST CHINESE

CHRISTOPH HARBSMEIER

Linguistic articulation in speaking or writing involves a series of complex and variously motivated choices between culturally pre-defined linguistic alternatives.

In this case study, I shall deal with the notion of *qíng* 情 in the context of the repertoire of choices this word enters with semantically adjacent words. The appendix on near-synonyms and on antonyms will focus systematically on these contrasts.

Psychological Vocabulary in Early Inscriptions

One of the striking features of oracle bone characters is the almost complete absence in them of the “heart” radical, which became so common already in Warring States inscriptions. Xú Zhōngshū 1981, arranged according to radicals, brings this out most strikingly: under the heart radical, the columns with oracle bone and bronze inscriptions are pervasively empty.

Zhào Chéng 1988 divides oracle bone characters into 26 semantic groups: he has no category for psychological terms. Xú Zhōngshū 1981: 406-417 is naturally not up to date with recent discoveries, but the overall pattern that emerges from these pages is clear enough: the heart radical emerges as a productive formative element in the bronze inscriptions and develops considerably in Warring States inscriptions, e.g. markedly in the *Hóumǎ méngshū* 侯馬盟書 and fully flourishes throughout Han epigraphy. Shī Xièjié 1998: 114, a useful and remarkably beautiful survey of inscriptions from Wú and Yuè, lists 10 characters with the heart radical.

Consider a list of the (variously listed) seven “passions”: The antecedent of *xǐ* 喜 is used as a place name and a personal name, not

as a psychological term. *Nù* 怒, *āi* 哀, *jù* 懼, *ài* 愛, *wù* 惡, *yù* 欲 do not have recognised antecedents in oracle bone inscriptions.

The concepts of the *xīn* 心 “heart”, *sī* 思 “think of, long for”, *niàn* 念 “think about”, *zhì* 志 “ambition, aspiration”, *shèn* 慎 “be careful about”, *zhōng* 忠, *gōng* 恭 “respect”, *cí* 慈 “be loving”, *wù* 悟 “understand”, *wèi* 慰 “console”, *mù* 慕 “admire”, *xù* 恤 “show compassion”, *yú* 愚 “be stupid”, *dài* 怠 “be lazy”, *wàng* 忘 “forget”, *huò* 惑 “be confused”, *jì* 忌 “resent”, *yuàn* 怨 “resent”, *nù* 怒 “be angry”, *huǐ* 悔 “regret”, *bēi* 悲 “be sad”, *gǎn* 感 “be moved”, *kǒng* 恐 “be terrified”, *lián* 憐 “love” are absent in oracle bones and gradually emerge in the bronze, bamboo and silk inscriptions of later times. I take this to be an evolution not in the language but in the conventions regarding what was written down, and how things were written down.

There would be nothing unnatural in the oracle bones employing such psychological notions. The administrative practice of the archivists, however, was to exclude psychologising perspectives in their formal records. The scribal act was inconsistent with a psychological angle of attention.

There is good reason to study the emergence of the realm of the psychological and in particular of the emotional in epigraphy and in ancient Chinese recorded literature. In particular, SHI is already rich in psychological terminology which needs to be studied with close attention being paid to the dating of the various parts of the book.

One step further, beyond the development and deployment of a vocabulary for psychological terms, is the development and deployment of an abstract vocabulary for such general terms as that of the “emotions”, the “passions”. Thus we are interested not only in the conceptual repertoire of the ancient Chinese within the field of the emotions, we are also interested in the development of their abstract conceptualisations within this broad linguistic area.

In particular, we need to investigate the notion of *qíng* 情, which came to denote emotional reactions and came to resemble in certain ways what Western tradition called the passions of the soul, *pathēmata tēs psuchēs* in the language of Aristotle.¹

¹ The present paper concentrates on the received literature, because it was this literature which was widely read and thus shaped Chinese linguistic and intellectual history. It is obvious that this study would need to be supplemented by a detailed

For the purposes of this summary presentation I propose to distinguish only between the following basic meanings of *qíng* 情:

1. Factual: The basic facts of a matter.
This is particularly common in historical and “scientific” prose.
2. Metaphysical: Underlying and basic dynamic factors.
This is particularly common in YI and philosophical writings.
3. Political: Basic popular sentiments/responses.
This occurs in writings on political theory.
4. Anthropological: General basic instincts/propensities.
This is particularly common in writings on ritual and philosophy.
5. Positive: Essential sensibilities and sentiments, viewed as commendable.
This is particularly cultivated in Taoist writings.
6. Personal: Basic motivation/attitude.
This is particularly common in historical texts and texts on political philosophy.

contrasting survey of the huge corpus of excavated texts. In particular, the Guōdiàn strips contain at least 16 relevant occurrences of the graph 情 that can be plausibly transcribed as 情, which provide fascinating evidence that the word did indeed have clear psychological meanings in whatever period we must ascribe to these manuscripts. Moreover, the later bamboo manuscripts provide considerable further evidence of various uses of the word. It would be interesting to see if the contrasts between the use of the word in the received literature and the excavated literature are systematic.

When in Guōdiàn strip 342 we read 君子美其情 “the gentleman beautifies his essential nature/basic emotions”, that provides no challenge to what we would have predicted from the received texts. And when in strip 325 we seem to be told that 道始於情，情生於性；始者近情，終者近義, one might try to translate: “the Way starts out from the emotions, the emotions are born from (human) nature; in the beginning one is close to the emotions, but in the end one is close to rectitude.” However one will, in the end, come to read these Guōdiàn texts, it is clear that in them *qíng* 情 has become something of a central philosophical term that is psychological rather than generally metaphysical in nature. Indeed, the phrase 情生於性 was felt to be so important that it was repeated in strip 362.

7. Emotional: Personal deep convictions, responses, feelings.
This is predominant in lyrical poetry, particularly in CHUCI.

Some preliminary remarks may be useful although they will be felt to be superfluous by many familiar with work in conceptual history:

- In many contexts, these meanings shade into each other and overlap. Thus, as in any detailed historical dictionary, our concern in distinguishing meanings is with significant distinctions in focus, not with absolute differences of meaning.
- The labels I introduce are abbreviated labels of convenience only, and they must be understood as explained in the glosses that explain them. Thus, for example, "anthropological" does not refer to any branch of the social sciences in the context of this paper. It is simply the best I could do as a shorthand for the explanation of the category that I have given above.
- In order to highlight the contrasts concerned I shall naturally want to "overtranslate" and thus in a sense to overstate the distinctions that I find important.
- The subject of this paper is thus not the commonalities between the meanings, but their characteristic diversity.
- The last thing I aim for is consistency in translation even within a given category, because the aim is to show the variety of meaning produced by context even within each of our categories.
- The categories I introduce are developed from a detailed survey of many hundreds of examples. The aim of this conceptual analysis is not to impose such current schemes as "objective versus subjective", "constant versus dynamic", "universal versus unique", "manifested versus hidden", "commendatory versus pejorative" on the material. On the contrary, I try to reconstruct the clusters of usages that suggest themselves on the basis of the primary sources as one works through the hundreds of relevant example passages in the literature.

1. *Factual: The Basic Facts of a Matter*

In a wide range of usages, *qíng* 情 “the real facts, the basic fact, basic facts” is devoid of all emotional content, and is also devoid of all nuances of metaphysical depth. In this current meaning, we shall only understand the word properly to the extent that we learn to appreciate its specific difference in nuance from such other words as *shí* 實 “reality (versus mere name); objects”, *shì* 事 “the facts (as posing a task for human action)”, *shì fēi* 是非 “the rights or wrongs of a matter, what is right or wrong”. Thus in the examples that follow, the reader must constantly bear in mind two questions:

- A. Could any such near-synonyms have been used in the context?
- B. What semantic differences would by such substitutions.

Understanding factual *qíng* 情 is to be able to answer these two questions coherently and in a well-argued way.

The basic meaning of *qíng* 情 in ZUO is manifestly not emotional but relates to that proto-metaphysical meaning I have noted in YI, and in the following examples *qíng* 情 refers to the basic real facts of a situation.

(1) ZUO Zhuang 10.1 (684 B.C.); Yáng Bójùn 183; Wáng Shōuqiān et al. 125; tr. Legge 86

公曰：	The duke went on to say:
「小大之獄，	“In all matters of legal process,
雖不能察，	whether small or great,
必以情。」	although I may not be able to
	search them out <i>thoroughly</i> ,
	I make it a point to decide
	according to the <i>basic facts</i> .”

The decision is on the basis of real fact, not of prejudice or of hearsay. It is hard to see how any of the main synonyms could be used in this context.

A prototypical context in which *qíng* 情 is preferred is in context where these real facts might be hidden or are hidden:

- (2) ZUO Xiang 18.3 (555 B.C.); Y:1037; W:875; tr. Legge:478
 「吾知子，
 敢匿情乎？」
 “I know you well,
 and would never dare keep back *the truth* from you.”

In ZUO Ai 8.03 女言其情 “The lady told *the truth*”, ZUO Zhao 13.09 敢不盡情? “Must I not tell you the complete truth?”, ZUO Zhao 13.02 而告之情 “he explained the *basic situation* to them” reference is not to some abstract truth as opposed to lies, but “the basic relevant determinant features of a situation” as opposed to some mere appearances or made-up artificialities. No experienced reader of ZUO would be tempted to read any metaphysics or any emotions into contexts like these.

The role of *qíng* 情 is particularly complex in GUAN and HANFEI. Some examples link perfectly into the pattern established in ZUO:

- (3) GUAN 72.01.03; ed. Dai Wang 3.64; tr. Rickett 1998:373
 「吾欲藉（籍）於人，
 何如？」
 管子對曰：
 「此隱情也。」
 “I want to place a special tax on men.
 How about that?”
 Guǎnzǐ replied politely:
 “That will lead to their concealing *their true numbers*.”

This is not the hiding of some underlying number of people, it is the hiding of the plain facts about population numbers. This unmetaphysical function of *qíng* 情 may well be relevant in some of the cases where a more profound reading is made possible by the context, and often opted for by modern readers. In GUAN the manifestly unprofound cases abound:

- (4) GUAN46.01.80; ed. Dai Wang 3.55; tr. Rickett 1998:161
 尺寸尋丈者，
 所以得長短之情也，
 The chǐ and cùn, xún and zhàng
 are the means for determining *true length*.

The real underlying facts, the real story behind a matter are always something that may be hidden, disclosed, spied out, investigated, and the knowledge of which allows one to be in control of events:

(5) HANFEI 44.09:08; Chen Qitian 240; Chen Qiyou 925; Zhou Xunchu 603f; Zhu Shouliang 1538

察四王之情，

If one investigates *the basic facts* about these four kings carefully it turns out they were eager after gain;

貪得之意也；

if one assesses their conduct they were violent and rebellious military men.

度其行，
暴亂之兵也。

Here HANFEI speaks as a political philosopher. The focus is certainly not on feelings, but on the real story behind the kings. Like a lawyer, the political philosopher is trying to find out what really happened. This is not quite as trivial as some of the above cases, because it involves judgements of what is and what is not immediately relevant to a proper understanding of these kings.

The real facts are something that one clearly might like to learn about or understand:

(6) ZGC 1.25; tr. Crump 1979 no. 34, p. 47

秦之輕重，

It is as yet impossible to know how weak or strong Qín may be, but she wants the real situation in the Three States.

未可知也。

秦欲知三國之情，

(7) ZGC 1.26; tr. Crump 1979 no. 35, p. 47

盡輸西周之情於東周。

He revealed all of West Zhōu's affairs to East Zhōu.

There is normally no question of revealing a deep interpretation of the basic factors. What is being revealed is simply the relevant facts of the matters at hand. In contexts like these we do not in fact expect *shí* 實 “the facts” because the latter in this kind of meaning has a strong tendency to be used in explicit opposition to other terms like *míng* 名 “name only”.

(8) ZGC 3.13; tr. Crump 1979 no. 55, p. 64

陳軫去楚之秦。

Chén Zhēn left Chǔ and returned to Qín.

張儀謂秦王曰：
「陳軫為王臣，
常以國情輸楚。」

Zhāng Yí said to the King of Qín:
“When Chén Zhēn was your
minister,
he constantly divulged internal
affairs of the state to Chǔ.”

The old commentaries read: 情，謂國事之隱者。補曰：情，實也。
“*Qíng* refers to the hidden affairs of the state. Subcommentary: *qíng*
means ‘facts’.” We must learn to glean the relevant information from
this kind of commentary, and to go decisively beyond it in our ap-
preciation of semantic differences between just those words that are
customarily identified in the commentarial literature.

2. Metaphysical:

Underlying and Basic Dynamic Factors or Inherent Principles

There usually is nothing metaphysical about the facts of a matter. However, when one decides what are the basic facts, the crucial facts, the facts that constitute the underlying driving force in developments, then one enters the semantic development of a new realm. At the end of this development lies something like a metaphysics of essential inner driving forces that determine the course of changes in the universe.

In medical texts, *qíng* 情 gets naturally linked to an essential aetiology rather than to a study of symptoms:

SUWEN 12, ed. Shanghai 1995: 99 得病之情 is to “get to the dynamic inner cause of the disease, the basic inner condition versus the external symptoms”. Similarly for SUWEN 26, ed. Shanghai 1995: 204 莫知其情而見邪形也. “No one understands the real underlying factors, but they can see the nasty external symptoms.” Maybe this is a later conceptual development but it perfectly illustrates what I take to be the core “metaphysical” meaning of *qíng* 情. For I do not intend anything necessarily mystical or obscure, only something underlying, basic.

The Book of Changes, YI, has the notion of *qíng* 情 at the very core of its project:

(9) YI, ed. Lóu Yǔliè 1980 p. 373; tr. Lynn 1994, p. 329; cf. tr. Shaughnessy 1997, p. 205

天地感
而萬物化生，
聖人感人心

而天下和平：
觀其所感，

而天地萬物之情可見矣！

When Heaven and Earth stimulate
then the myriad things are created.
When the sage stimulating the
hearts of men
then the entire world finds peace.
If we observe how things are
stimulated,
then the *fundamental dynamic*
features shaping Heaven and Earth
and all the myriad things can be
seen.

My deliberate over-translation here is designed to make explicit the semantic features that I believe to be constitutive of the “metaphysical” meaning of *qíng* 情.

I note in passing that the notion of *gǎn* 感 which came to be heavily invested with psychological meanings, has no such connotations in early Chinese literature. When ZHUANG speaks of *gǎn ér hòu yìng* 感而後應 “first respond after one has been stimulated”, this does not involve human feelings, only external stimulation, so that the current lexicographic gloss *gǎnjué* 感覺 for *gǎn* 感 is an anachronism insofar as it suggests subjective feeling and emotion. In any case, the crucial phrase is repeated in YI, ed. Lóu Yǔliè 1980 p. 387; tr. Lynn 1994 p. 345 天地之情可見矣。 “The basic dynamic factors in Heaven and Earth may be seen.” To bring this about, to make this palpable, is the project of the Book of Changes. Cf. YI, ed. Lóu Yǔliè 1980, p. 558; tr. Lynn 1994 p. 77.

What YI is all about, is discovering the “essential dynamics” in the world of changes, the underlying realm of real dynamic characteristics that are the essential factors in bringing about change. At this crucial point in the book, the keyword is *qíng* 情. Interestingly, the Mǎwángduī 馬王堆 manuscripts never write our word with the heart radical, hesitating as they do between 請 and 精.

Interestingly, LAO seems not to have use for *qíng* 情 at all, and the word is not in the text at all, whereas ZHUANG is full of puzzling examples that seem close in force to the specific uses of the word

cultivated in YI. ZHUANG takes *qíng* 情 to be something deep-seated and constant, something constitutive, if not defining, something that does indeed make one think of the Latin word *essentia*:

(10) ZHUANG 6.223

死生，命也，
其有夜旦之常，

天也。
人之有所不得與，

皆物之情也。

Life and death are a matter of fate.
Their constant alternation, like that
of day and night,

is a matter of Heaven.

What man is unable to interfere
with

is always the *essential dynamic*
features in things.

There is nothing psychological or anthropological here, nothing observably factual: we have a neatly metaphysical use of *qíng* 情 in the technical sense I use the word here.

Fate and Heaven belong to a metaphysical realm of ineluctable constancy. The metaphysical *qíng* 情 belongs firmly in this realm, the profound realm with which it is not given man to interfere because they are 常 “basic and constant”. And this realm of the constant is not an abstract realm removed from the creatures of this world, it is inherent in the creatures of this world. Thus *qíng* 情 is always the *qíng* 情 of something. It does not exist *in statu absoluto*.

Imperceptibly, this usage may occasionally verge towards the more psychological:

(11) ZHUANG 32.1280; tr. CH

達生之情者傀，

達於知者肖；

He who reaches to *essential*
features of life is a giant;

he who reaches (mere)
understanding is slight.

Like the Way, *qíng* 情 is not something that is primarily understood, at most one can aspire to *dá* 達 “get to it”, and this raises one onto the new “metaphysical” level of something like the gigantic Nietzschean *Übermensch*. This one achieves because one operates no longer on symptoms but on essential realities.

Even in psychological contexts *qíng* 情 is by no means to be identified with *xīn* 心 “attitude” and retains, even within the psychological realm, something metaphysical. While we would never have *qíng zhī xīn* 情之心 we do find:

- (12) GUAN 49.02.01.01; ed. Dai Wang 2.99; tr. Rickett 1998:40
 彼心之情， The mind's *basic nature* is such
 利安以寧， that is benefited by rest and quiet.

The text is concerned with the dynamic essence of the mind, what underlies and dominates mental manifestations. *Xīn zhī qíng* 心之情 must be read just like *wù zhī qíng* 物之情, where the peculiar force of *qíng* 情 is to raise us to a level *below* something manifest and familiar. And certainly, there is no way of interpreting this text as speaking of the “passions of the mind” or “the emotions in the mind”. The two meanings are manifestly distinct, and the distinction must have been clear to readers who were expected to understand this passage.

In the political philosophy of HANFEI, again, *qíng* 情 is at the core of the intellectual *démarche*:

- (13) HANFEI 14.05:01; Chen Qitian 219; Chen Qiyou 248; Zhou Xunchu 132; Zhu Shouliang 483
 且夫世之愚學， The stupid ‘learned men’ of our
 time
 皆不知治亂之情， all fail to understand the *basic*
 factors involved in good
 government and chaos.

If we had read *shí* 實 here, we would have “the realities of good government and chaos”. But we read *qíng* 情, and so the discussion is of those underlying dynamic factors that bring about these political conditions. The stupid people are not so stupid that they cannot recognise the fact of good or bad government. What they do not understand is exactly what HANFEI sets out to uncover, namely those underlying essential structural factors that bring about good order or chaos. Within its proper realm of the political, HANFEI continues the essential enterprise of the Book of Changes.

The current alternation with *shí* 實 “facts, reality” is significant:

(14) HANFEI 14.05:04; Chen Qitian 219; Chen Qiyou 248; Zhou Xunchu 132; Zhu Shouliang 483

而聖人者，
審於是非之實，

察於治亂之情也。

But as for the sage,
he examines carefully the facts of
right and wrong
and he investigates the *real*
decisive factors involved in good
government and chaos.

Shí 實 refers to “objective facts” versus mere opinion or nomenclature. *Qíng* 情 refers to the real underlying and operative factors and principles involved. In our context, then, this must count as a neat case of “metaphysical”, and it does not matter for my purpose that one does not normally use the word “metaphysical” in this sense. “The facts of right and wrong”, on the other hand, have nothing to do with underlying factors: here we have an abstract moral reality referred to, not any underlying principle. Hence the use of the non-metaphysical word *shí* 實.

Again, we find that the combination of *qíng* 情 with *shì* 事 “matter” is not coordinate in the grammatical sense:

(15) GUAN 46.01.146; ed. Dai Wang 3.59; tr. Rickett 1998:168

明主之治也，

審是非，

察事情，

以度量案之，

When the enlightened ruler
establishes good order,
he closely investigates right and
wrong
and finds out about *the crucial*
underlying principles of a matter,
using procedures and measures to
judge people.

Note the instructive contrast of *qíng* 情 “crucial determining factors/facts” versus *shì fēi* 是非 “what is right and wrong”. This is not a pleonastic or loose way of talking. GUAN keeps the dimensions of the merely factual or judgmental and the dimension of the explanatory apart.

Especially in mystical poetry, the metaphysical force of *qíng* 情 comes out very clearly:

- (16) GUAN 49.04.03.01; ed. Dai Wang 2.100; tr. Rickett 1998:42
- | | |
|-------|--|
| 彼道之情， | Those basic dynamic constitutive features of the Way, |
| 惡音與聲。 | are averse to articulation in sound and to fame. |
| 修心靜音， | Only after cultivating one's mind and quieting one's urge to articulate in sound |
| 道乃可得。 | may the Way be comprehended. |

In an interesting rhetorical act of personification this *qíng* 情 is credited with hatred for external expression. And then comes that crucial element of metaphysical cultivation, the human precondition for an appreciation of that realm: cultivation of the mind itself, the quieting down of the predominant urge to articulate (or, according to a widely accepted emendation of the text: the quieting down of the urge to plan things, *yì* 意).

What defines “metaphysical” *qíng* 情 is its opposition to *mào* 貌 “outer appearance”, even *yán* 言 “outer verbalisation”. These are mere *huá* 華 “outward flourishes” of what is inward, essential, and all-important:

- (17) GY, jinyu:
- | | |
|----------|---|
| 吾見其貌而欲之， | When I see his shape I want him, |
| 聞其言而惡之。 | when I hear his speeches I dislike him. |
| 夫貌，情之華也： | External manifestation is the outward veneer of an inner reality; |
| 言，貌之機也。 | speeches are a function of external shape. |
| 身為情， | The person is the inner reality and it forms within. |
| 成於中。 | Speech is an outward adornment of the person. |
| 言身之文也。 | |

However we take this passage, it neither invites nor allows an interpretation of human *qíng* 情 in terms of emotions or passions.

3. Political: Basic Popular Sentiments/Responses

The earliest passage from the old parts of SHU involves neither facts, nor any form of underlying metaphysical factors, but basic ways of responding to the world, basic dispositions and attitudes. I quote the passage with Karlgren's translation:

(18) SHU, Kanggao 6, tr. Karlgren

王曰	The king said:
嗚呼小子封	Oh, youngster Fēng,
恫瘝乃身敬哉	(pain your body=) exert yourself intensely and be careful.
天畏棗忱	Heaven's majesty is not to be relied on (i.e. you cannot be sure of its favour).
民情大可見	The people's <i>feelings</i> are greatly visible (i.e. beware of signs of unrest).

Traditional commentators tend to agree (though they may all be wrong) that this refers to public sentiment and not to the objective real situation among the people. Whatever we end up saying about this famous passage, this conception "people's basic feelings" is important because it relates to the topology of "public space" in ancient China:

(19) ZHOULI Dasitu 大司徒, SSJJZJY p. 402

以六樂防萬民之情	Through the six kinds of music he keeps the basic instinctive responses of the people under control
而教之和。	and teaches them to be harmonious.

And in this context, there certainly is no question of reading any "objective real situation". Given this passage from ZHOULI, one is then less inclined to go against the unanimous old tradition. *Mín qíng*

民情 are basic inclinations, fundamental propensities, essential tendencies of the people. The term does not refer to emotions in general, but neither does it, in a psychologising way, refer to their subjective opinions. Let us turn to the discourse about *qíng* 情 in historical prose.

There is, in any case, also an explicitly psychological variant to *mín qíng* 民情: ZUO Zhao 7.14 民心不壹 “People’s minds are not one.”

Sometimes, *qíng* 情 alone can refer to *mín qíng* 民情. In a political context, the fundamental responses of the people, their basic instinctive feelings about things are important:

(20) GUAN 53.01.56; ed. Dai Wang 3.10; tr. Rickett 1998:224

凡有天下者，	It is always so that in controlling the empire,
以情伐者帝，	those who rely on <i>people’s basic attitudes</i> become emperors, those who
以事伐者王，	rely on various undertakings become kings,
以政伐者霸，	those who rely on political power become lord protectors.

The basic attitudes are not here general instincts but current feelings.

In ZUO, there is frequent reference to the opposition between the real fundamental instincts of the people and pretense, and the pair *qíng wěi* 情偽 is current in Warring States Chinese:

(21) ZUO Xi 28.3 (632 B.C.); Yáng Bójùn 456; Wáng Shǒuqiān et al. 333; tr. Watson 1989:56; compare also ZUO Xi 28.3.

險阻艱難，	He has tasted every kind of
備嘗之矣；	hardship, trouble and danger,
民之情偽，	and the <i>fundamental instinctive reactions and the (superficial) pretenses of the people</i>
盡知之矣。	he knows all about.

In *Chūnqiū fánlù* 6, ed. Peking 1996 p. 103 we read that under the sage kings of antiquity in particular 民情至樸而不文 “the basic senti-

ments of the people were extremely plain and straightforward, and they were unpolished". Gassmann 1988: 68 translates plausibly: "*die Gefühle der Menschen*". In any case, there is no doubt that this passage refers to a certain historical stage and not to basic sentiments in general.

For *mín zhī qíng* 民之情 we occasionally get *tiān xià zhī qíng* 天下之情:

- (22) MO 16, ed. Wú Yùjiāng 1993: 177; tr. Watson 1963: 42f
 是故別君之言曰： The partial ruler says,
 「吾惡能為吾萬民之身若為 “How could I possibly regard my
 吾身， countless subjects the same as I
 regard myself?
 此泰非天下之情也。」 That would be too much at variance
 with the fundamental natural
 instinctive reactions of the world.”

Moreover, even the current *rén qíng* 人情 “fundamental human sensibilities”, which we shall discuss in detail below, deserves to be considered here. This essential dynamic nature must be properly tuned:

- (23) GUAN 41.01.07; ed. Dai Wang 2.82; tr. Rickett 1998: 122
 審合其聲， Pay attention to placing yourself in
 harmony with the five notes
 修十二鍾。 And cultivate the twelve bells
 以律人情， so that they may become the pitch
 pipes for people's basic instincts.

This refers to the people's instincts at a given time. It does not refer to these instincts in general.

4. Anthropological: General Basic Instincts

For the theory of ritual, *qíng* 情 is again a keyword. The legitimisation of ritual is through the notion of *qíng* 情 “fundamental human sensibilities”.

- (24) LIJI 7; Couvreur 1.444f; Sūn Xīdàn 5.85; tr. Legge 1.331
 君子禮以飾情。 With a superior man the use of
 ceremonies is to embellish basic
 instinctive sentiments.

Whatever *qíng* 情 is, it is in some sense raw or instinctual and needs *shì* 飾 “beautification” through what in modern terms we would describe as “culture”. The process by which instinct gets informed by *wén* 文 “dignified patterning” is at the very core of Confucius’ educational project.

LIJI keeps insisting on that link with *wén* 文:

- (25) LIJI 30; Couvreur 2.400f; Sūn Xīdàn 13.2; tr. Legge 2.284
 禮者， The rules of propriety
 因人之情 keep in accordance with the *basic*
human instincts,
 而為之節文， and moderate and pattern them,
 以為民坊者也。 so they serve as dykes for the
 people.

Echoing Confucian thinking on ritual, HANFEI varies the point significantly:

- (26) HANFEI 20.05:01; Chen Qiyou 331; Zhou Xunchu 184; Zhu Shouliang 603
 禮者， Ritual
 所以貌情也... is that through which one gives
 outward expression to *inner basic*
sensibilities...

In this connection HANFEI is not speaking of beatification, only of *mào* 貌 “giving expression to”: to him, *lǐ* 禮 is not the solution but part of the problem. A problem that must be solved not through moralising, but through political/social Machiavellian manipulation.

For LIJI ritual is a traditional expression of true inner feelings, but on the other hand, it is regularly construed as controlling, ordering and governing these feelings:

(27) LIJI 9; Couvreur 1.500f; Sūn Xīdàn 6.32; tr. Legge 1.367

「夫禮，
先王以承天之道，

以治人之情。

It was by those rules
that the ancient kings sought to
continue the ways of Heaven (on
earth),
and to regulate *the basic human
instincts*.

The use of the word *zhi* 治 does imply that the *qíng* 情 are not by their nature orderly or in good order: they need to be reduced to order.

Significantly, ZHUANG replaces the more assertive and aggressive *zhi* 治 “reduce to order, govern properly” with the much milder *lǐ* 理 “get into a proper pattern, sort out in a principled way”. According to ZHUANG one may and indeed should “sort out in a principled way” one’s natural appetitive drives associated with likes and dislikes:

(28) ZHUANG 31.1239

子審仁義之間，

察同異之際，

觀動靜之變，

適受與之度，

理好惡之情，

和喜怒之節，

而幾於不免矣。

You, sir, inquire into the sphere of
humaneness and rectitude,
examine the boundary between
sameness and difference,
observe the transformations of
movement and stillness,
comply with measures for giving
and receiving,
adjust the *basic instincts* of liking
and disliking,
harmonize the rhythm of joy and
anger,
and yet you have barely been able
to escape all these troubles.

The essential appetitive features could, according to ZHUANG, not only be adjusted in a principled way, they should also be contained, and *qíng* 情 can naturally be used in conjunction with *yù* 欲 “desire”:

(29) ZHUANG 33.13120

以禁攻寢兵為外，

They took the prohibition of aggression and the halting of troops as their external strategy, *reducing and moderating their fundamental instinctive desires as their internal strategy.*

以情欲寡淺為內。

Here one begins to get close to a notion of *qíng* 情 as “passion for” which certainly comes to play an important part in later Chinese intellectual history.

GUAN insists on *qíng* 情 as something common:

(30) GUAN 3.8; ed. Dai Wang 1.9; tr. Rickett 1985, p. 95.

人情不二，

Human nature is all the same.

故民情可得而御也。

That is why it is possible to control the people.²

審其所好惡，

By examining their likes and dislikes,

則其長短可知也；

their strengths and weaknesses may be known.

觀其交游，

By observing their associates,

則其賢不肖可察也。

their worthiness or unworthiness may be learned.

Like HANFEI, GUAN notices that it is the very predictability of *qíng* 情 which gives the ruler a handle by which to control his subjects. Without such predictability of basic responses his many subjects could not be made to submit to one unified regulative regime.

In an almost modern spirit, Wáng Chōng reports that instincts are also constant over time:

LUNHENG, ed. Liú Pànsuì p. 163

世好奇怪，

That the world is fond of outstanding and strange things

² Deleting 情 as a mistaken repetition of the same character in the preceding line [Chen, Yasui, and Tao].

古今同情。

is an instinct that is common to antiquity and modernity.

Our Warring States texts are not slow to describe what it is that all these constant instinctual responses *qíng* 情 have in common:

(31) GUAN 53.01.31; ed. Dai Wang 3.8; tr. Rickett 1998:219f

夫凡人之情，

Indeed, it is *the basic instinct of men*

見利莫能勿就，

that whenever they see profit, they cannot help chasing after it,

見害莫能勿避。

and whenever they see harm, they cannot help running away.

The ruler's task, then, is to use these natural instincts as his steering mechanisms in such a way that the people, steered by their instincts, come to do exactly what the ruler wants them to do. That is the essence of Warring States statecraft as expounded with exemplary clarity in HANFEI. On *qíng* 情 we read, entirely in line with GUAN:

(32) HANFEI 14.02:02; Chen Qitian 214; Chen Qiyou 245; Zhou Xunchu 127; Zhu Shouliang 474

夫安利者就之，

As for security and gain, one will go for these,

危害者去之，

as for danger and harm, one will avoid these.

此人之情也。

This is part of the *basic instinct of man*.

For political reasons HANFEI is interested in the natural basic human propensities or instincts, the appetitive base structure in human behaviour. A large number of passages discuss "human nature" in terms of *qíng* 情, and in every case it is important to note the crucial distinction with *xìng* 性 in being always appetitive in focus (*xìng* 性 can be appetitive, but does not have to be):

(33) HANFEI 38.02:03 [2]; Chen Qitian 347; Chen Qiyou 844; Zhou Xunchu 537; Zhu Shouliang 1418

人情皆喜貴

It is in the *basic instinct* of man that

而惡賤。
they take open pleasure in high status
and dislike low status.

Xìng 性 are the endowments, the natural qualities, the stative natural disposition. *Qíng* 情 is the set of dynamic tendencies. No wonder we have much talk of "human nature being basically good" in terms of *xìng* 性 and not *qíng* 情.

(34) HANFEI 10.09:10; Chen Qitian 676; Chen Qiyou 194; Zhou Xunchu 95; Zhu Shouliang 400

人之情莫不愛其子，
It is in the *essential instinct* of men that they all take good care of their children,
今蒸其子以為膳於君，
but now he broiled his son in order to make a delicacy for his ruler:
其子弗愛，
his own son he would not take good care of,
又安能愛君乎？
how can he go on to take good care of his ruler?

(35) HANFEI 10.09:06; Chen Qitian 676; Chen Qiyou 194; Zhou Xunchu 95; Zhu Shouliang 400

管仲曰：
Guǎn Zhòng said:
“不可。
“He is not acceptable.
夫人之情莫不愛其身。
It is in the *natural instinct of man* that they all take good care of their own bodies.
公妒而好內，
You being a jealous man, and fond of women
豎刁自豨以為治內。
Shù Diāo castrated himself in order to administer the harem.
其身不愛，
Even his own body he does not take good care of,
又安能愛君？”
how is he going to go on to take good care of his ruler?”

In all these cases, what is discussed is anthropology, the basic human instinctive reactions or responses to things.

ROLE-SPECIFIC INSTINCTS

In particular, the underlying appetitive base structure of ministers' and rulers' behaviour, their basic natural structurally motivated instincts are of great concern in HANFEI, since they form the very basis of his Machiavellian theory:

(36) HANFEI 19.06:07; Chen Qitian 211; Chen Qiyou 311; Zhou Xunchu 178; Zhu Shouliang 589

害身而利國，	Harming his personal interests to profit the state
臣弗為也；	is something the ministers will refuse to do;
害國而利臣，	harming the state to profit his ministers
君不行也。	is something the ruler will not do.
臣之情，	The minister's basic feeling is
害身無利；	that to harm one's person is not profitable;
君之情，	the ruler's <i>basic instinct</i> is
害國無親。	that if he harms the state he will take no good care of anyone.

Like one's inborn nature *xìng* 性, *qíng* 情 cannot be learnt, but unlike *xìng* 性 it can be individuated and counted:

(37) LIJI 9; Couvreur 1.516f; Sūn Xīdàn 6.52f; tr. Legge 1.379; cf. also JIAYU 32 ed. Xuē Ānqín 1993: 203

何謂人情？	What are <i>the fundamental responses of men</i> ?
喜怒哀懼愛惡欲，	They are joy, anger, sadness, fear, love, disliking, and liking.
七者，	These seven feelings
弗學而能。	belong to men without their learning them.
...	
故聖人所以治人七情，	Hence, when a sage (ruler) would regulate <i>the seven fundamental responses of men</i> ,

修十義… cultivate the ten virtues that are right...

What is counted here is not individual events, individual bouts of anger etc, but *kinds* of feelings.

ZHUANG, like many other texts, links instincts to organs:

(38) ZHUANG 29.1187

今吾告子以人之情，

目欲視色，
耳欲聽聲，
口欲察味，
志氣欲盈。

Now, sir, I shall tell you *about the fundamental instincts of man*.

The eyes desire to see colours;
the ears desire to hear sounds;
the mouth desires to taste flavours;
the aspirations and vital breath
desire fulfilment.

In HSWZ the dimensions of man's appetitive essential drives are countable *kinds* of *qíng* 情:

(39) HSWZ 05.16:01; tr. Hightower 1951, p. 175

人有六情，
目欲視好色，

耳欲聽宮商，

鼻欲嗅芬香，

口欲嗜甘旨，

其身體四肢欲安而不作，

衣欲被文繡而輕暖。

此六者，
民之六情也。

失之則亂，
從之則穆。

Man has *six fundamental instincts*.

His eyes desire to see good-looking colors,

his ears desire to hear [the notes] *kung* and *shang*,

his nose desires to smell fragrant odors;

his mouth desires to taste fine flavors,

his four limbs desire repose and inactivity;

of clothing he likes the elegant and embroidered, the light and warm.

These six are
the *six fundamental instincts* of the people.

Neglecting them results in trouble;
acting in accord with them, in harmony.

<p>故聖王之教其民也， 必因其情而節之以禮， 必從其欲而制之以義。</p> <p>義簡而備， 禮易而法， 去情不遠， 故民之從命也速。</p>	<p>Hence the Saintly King, in instructing the people, always makes a point of following their <i>instincts</i>, employing ritual to restrain them; he accords always with their wishes, using rectitude to control them. Rectitude being simple and complete, ritual being easy and regulated, and not departing far from <i>fundamental instincts</i>, the people as a result obey orders quickly.</p>
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Again, we are dealing with six *kinds* of desire, not six events or instances of desiring something.

(40) LIE 2, Xiāo Dēngfú 1990: 108ff

<p>五情爽惑。</p>	<p>His five appetitive drives were all in confusion.</p>
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This refers to the affective relationship with the outer world of ears, eyes, nose, mouth and touch. The matter is taken up again in

(41) LIE 7

<p>五情好惡， 古猶今也。</p>	<p>The five fundamental instincts, likes and dislikes, are the same in antiquity and in present times.</p>
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Public opinion may change through time as a result of good or bad government. General basic instincts do not change so easily in this way, but still, they are something that government and education can set to work on and cultivate. What is basic in man as instincts and fundamental propensities is amenable to cultivation, cultural formation, like a field of cultural action:

- (42) LIJI 9; Couvreur 1.522; Sūn Xīdàn 6.57; tr. Legge 1.383
- | | |
|---------|--|
| 故聖人作則， | Thus when the sages would
make rules (for men), |
| 必以天地為本， | they felt it necessary to find the
origin (of all things) in heaven and
earth; |
| 以陰陽為端， | to make the two forces (of nature)
the commencement (of all); |
| 以四時為柄， | to use the four seasons as the
handle (of their arrangements); |
| 以日星為紀， | to adopt the sun and stars as the
recorders (of time), |
| 月以為量， | the moon as the measurer (of work
to be done), |
| 鬼神以為徒， | the spirits breathing (in nature) as
associates, |
| 五行以為質， | the five elements as giving
substance (to things), |
| 禮義以為器， | rules of propriety and righteousness
as (their) instruments, |
| 人情以為田， | <i>the basic sensibilities of men</i> as a
field to cultivate, |
| 四靈以為畜。 | and the four intelligent creatures as
domestic animals to be reared. |

The thought is not only eagerly repeated in other texts like JIAYU, it is also eagerly elaborated upon in LIJI itself:

- (43) LIJI 9; Couvreur 1.529f; Sūn Xīdàn 6.61f; tr. Legge 1.388
- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| 故人情者，
聖王之田也。 | <i>Those basic sensibilities of men</i>
were the field to be cultivated by
the sage kings. |
| 修禮以耕之， | They fashioned the rules of
ceremony to plough it. |
| 陳義以種之， | They set forth the principles of
righteousness with which to plant
it. |

講學以耨之，	They instituted the lessons of the school to weed it.
本仁以聚之，	They made love the fundamental subject by which to gather all its fruits,
播樂以安之。	and they employed the training in music to give repose (to the minds of learners).

Emotions can otherwise come to be something one can become an unworthy servant of:

(44) HSWZ 02.24:04; tr. Hightower 1951, p. 64

巫馬期則不然。 弊性事情，	Wū Mǎqī however did not do this. He misused his own <i>nature</i> and was a slave of his <i>basic sentiments</i> , putting his effort into instructions and orders.
勞力教詔，	Although there was order, there was not perfection.
雖治猶未至也。	

5. Positive:

Essential Sensibilities and Sentiments, Viewed as Commendable

At times there is a specific humanistic tinge to ZHUANG's use of the word that has reverberated through the millennia of Chinese civilisation:

(45) ZHUANG 1.24

吾聞言於接輿， 大而无當，	“I have heard Jiē Yú speak. His words are impressive but not to the point.
往而不返。	Once he goes off on a tangent, he never comes back.
吾驚怖其言， 猶河漢而无極也；	I was astounded by his words that were limitless as the Milky Way.

大有逕庭，
不近人情焉。

They were extravagant
and remote from *basic human*
sensibilities."

Xìcí 繫辭, the appended explanations in YI also provide an intellectual context where the abstract consideration of *qíng* 情 in a more individuated, more psychologising different sense comes to the fore, and this meaning is not represented in the older parts of the book:

(46) YI, *Xìcí* 繫辭 ed. Lóu Yǔliè 1980 p. 557; tr. Lynn 1994 p. 76f; cf. Shaughnessy 203

爻象動乎內，

As the lines and the images move
within the hexagrams,

吉凶見乎外，

so do good fortune and misfortune
appear outside them,

功業見乎變，

meritorious undertakings are
revealed in change,

聖人之情見乎辭。

and the *basic meanings* of the sages
are revealed in the attached
phrases.

What is referred to in this context is not, I think, some innate fundamental instinct of the sages, but a personal and creative profound and fundamental response based on the superior sensibility of a sage. It is as if *qíng* 情 begins to be individuated: your *qíng* 情 is not quite like my *qíng* 情. The sage has a special *qíng* 情 characterised by a higher perceptiveness regarding what is fundamental. One is getting generically close to the *qíng* 情 celebrated in *Chǔ* 楚 poetry, and of which I shall give a detailed account below. However, there is a difference: the deeply-felt feelings of the sage are, surely, irrelevant here. The attached phrases are not an expression of individual sensibilities of this sage or that. They are not an expression of emotional responses at all. What YI argues, if I understand this correctly, is that these formulations bring out the very essence of the wisdom that makes a sage into a sage. Unlike the *Chǔ* poetry, the attached phrases in the YI are not acts of individual communication. They are a general formulation of what is essential.

What exactly is referred to in the following, is a matter of understandable dispute:

(47) ZHUANG 5.197

既受食於天，

又惡用人！

有人之形，

无人之情。

Since he (i.e. the sage) receives
sustenance from heaven,

what use has he for man?

He has a human form,

but is without *the basic human
instincts*.

Like Heaven, the sage is non-human, non-humane, lacks the essential sensibilities that make man human. This is Nietzsche speaking to us, through ZHUANG.

The art of living even of the Confucian gentleman is that of identifying with that innermost constitutive and basically positively valued psychological sensibility that defines one's identity:

(48) LIJI 19; Couvreur 2.75f; Sūn Xīdàn 10.42f; tr. Legge 2.110

是故，

君子反情

以和其志…

Hence

*the gentleman reverts to his basic
instincts*in order to bring his will into
harmony with them...

This example belongs here because the heavy focus is on the positive valuation of the sensibilities in question, and not, as in the category I call "anthropological", to a neutrally viewed general biological and instinctual feature.

It turns out that *qíng* 情 is crucial in defining one's basic moral personal identity. In poetry, we shall see, it is through *qíng* 情 that the poet celebrates the discovery of his emotional identity.

Compare:

(49) CHUCI QIJIAN 05:03; SBBY 422; Huang 217; Fu 198; tr. Hawkes 253

夫人孰能不反其真情？

And all men, in the end, revert to
their true natures.

It does seem, here, that Hawkes' translation hits the mark in this context.

The comparison is between the external things and the internal dynamic essence of a person is current:

- (50) GUAN 52.01.23; ed. Dai Wang 3.3; tr. Rickett 1998:206f
 遇周武王， When he met King Wu of the
 遂為周氏之禽， he subsequently became a captive
 of the Zhou house.
 此營於物而失其情者也， This is to be preoccupied with
 material things and to lose *one's*
true nature,
 愉於淫樂而忘後患者也。 to find happiness in licentious
 pleasure and forget the disasters to
 follow.

Moreover, one's basic sound instincts are constitutive and basic to the concept of the person, they are, as it were, the essence of a person:

- (51) GUAN 38.12.03; ed. Dai Wang 2.73; tr. Rickett 1998: 96
 故曰： Therefore I say:
 欲愛吾身， If one wishes to care for one's
 body,
 先知吾情。 one must first come to understand
one's basic instincts.

The opposition between one's *qíng* 情 "inner essence, basic inner feelings" and *shén* 神 "spirit" is important:

- (52) HANFEI 20.37:5; Chen Qiyou 384; Zhu Shouliang 669; Zhou Xunchu 209; m189
 一於其情， He is all concentrated on his *inner*
instinctual essence,
 雖有可欲之類， even if there is something of the
 kind he is fond of,
 神不為動。 his spirit is not moved by it.

The realisation of these quintessentially human inner feelings is the consummation of the true Confucian life, and here LIJI employs *qíng*

情 as a commendatory term, not as a neutral term along the lines we have noted above:

- (53) LIJI 35; Couvreur 2.555f; Sūn Xīdàn 13.65; tr. Legge 2.377
 故哭泣無時，
 服勤三年，
 思慕之心，
 孝子之志也，
 人情之實也。
 禮義之經也，
 非從天降也，
 非從地出也，
 人情而已矣。
- Therefore he wailed and wept,
 without regard to time;
 he endured the toil and grief for
 three years.
 His heart of loving thoughts
 showed the aspirations of the filial
 son,
 and was the real expression of his
true human instincts.
 the proper method of propriety and
 rectitude.
 It does not come from heaven,
 it does not come from the earth;
 it is simply the expression of the
true human instincts.

That Confucian ideal involves the establishment of what is elegant and proper in deep accord with the constitutive inner sensibilities:

- (54) LIJI 38; Couvreur 2.580; Sūn Xīdàn 13.84; tr. Legge 2.391
 三年之喪何也？
 曰：
 稱情而立文，
- What purpose do the mourning
 rites for three years serve?
 The different rules for the
 mourning rites were established in
 harmony with *true human instincts*.

Even in the most cosmological of contexts, the relation of ritual to human sensibilities is stressed:

- (55) LIJI 49; Couvreur 2.697f; Sūn Xīdàn 14.63; tr. Legge 2.465
 凡禮之大體，
 體天地，
- All ceremonial usages looked at
 in their great characteristics
 are the embodiment of (the ideas
 suggested by) heaven and earth;

法四時，	take their laws from the (changes of the) four seasons;
則陰陽，	imitate the (operations of the) contracting and developing movements in nature;
順人情，	and are in conformity with the <i>true instincts of man</i> .
故謂之禮。	That is why this is called propriety.

6. Personal: Basic Motivation/Attitude

Under the heading I have labelled POLITICAL, I have collected examples where the reference is to collective attitudes. Under the heading PERSONAL, I will discuss individual personal attitudes and motivations of all kind, where the focus is on individual difference rather than on the shared political attitude. There are occasions where *qíng* 情 come to be fundamental or crucial sentiments, or innermost defining attitudes that are constitutive of one's personal identity:

(56) ZUO Wen15.4 (612 B.C.); Yáng Bójùn 611; Wáng Shǒuqiān et al. 449; tr. Legge 271

情雖不同，	Although they may <i>have different basic sentiments</i> ,
毋絕其愛，	they do not abandon the relative affection
親之道也。	which should subsist between them.

Here we are clearly dealing with the individuated *qíng* 情 which differs from one person to another, as we saw in the case of the *qíng* 情 of the sages in YI. The difference between these two men is one neither of metaphysical essence, nor of biological/physical constitution, it is a difference in the fundamental psychological reaction or response to the world. The term *qíng* 情 has clearly moved into the psychological sphere, though it is still not *gǎnqíng* 感情 "feeling" in an ephemeral and purely emotional sense.

Nothing is more disastrous than the perversion of true basic inner attitude into something that itself is not in good faith, inwardly and essentially false:

- (57) LIJI 32; Couvreur 2.510; Sūn Xīdàn 13.36; tr. Legge 2.349
 子曰： The Master said,
 「情欲信， “What is required in *fundamental*
 辭欲巧。」 in words, that they be susceptible
 of proof.”

The collocation of *yì* 意 “intentions” with *qíng* 情 is not incidental in ZGC:

- (58) ZGC, Zhao 2 ed. Shànghǎigǔjí p. 651
 是故不敢匿意隱情， Therefore I dare not hide my
 thoughts or the *truth*.

In HANFEI the word currently refers to the real propensities or basic convictions of the ruler which one might try to spy out, and which the ruler should take care not to disclose:

- (59) HANFEI 34.23:06 [31]; Chen Qitian 576; Chen Qiyou 737; Zhu Shouliang 1275; Zhou Xunchu 457
 夫大臣為猛狗 Now if the powerful ministers are
 fierce dogs
 而齧有道之士矣， and bite freemen who have a Way
 to offer,
 左右又為社鼠而間主之情， and if one’s aides again are rats in
 the altar of the land and spy on the
 ruler’s *real feelings*,
 人主不覺。 without the ruler being aware of
 what is happening,
 如此， if things get to this stage,
 主焉得無壅， then how can the ruler avoid being
 blocked
 國焉得無亡乎？ and how can the state fail to be
 ruined?

In contexts like these *qíng* 情 comes close to meaning “ultimate real motives, underlying motives”.

(60) HANFEI 30.50:01; Chen Qiyou 566; Zhou Xunchu 332; Zhu Shouliang 982

卜皮為縣令，

Diviner Pí was the commander of a province.

其御史污穢而有愛妾，

His chief surveillance officer was very vulgar and was fond of a concubine.

卜皮乃使少庶子佯愛之，

Diviner Pí then ordered a young boy to pretend to fall in love with her

以知御史陰情。

to find out about the chief surveillance officer's *secret feelings*.

Note that he is not interested in the man's erotic inclinations but in secret underlying and operative feelings.

7. Emotional: Individual Deep Convictions, Responses, Feelings

Finally, we must turn to those cases where the semantic focus is not just on sentiment and attitude, but where the emotional charge becomes the semantic core of the word. Attitudes may be construed as dispositions to act, sensibilities as dispositions to feel, whereas emotions are not dispositions but certain heightened states of psychological excitement, often transitory, sometimes lasting. The relevant examples to be discussed here, though never unrelated to other categories, constitute a highly distinct set by themselves. It is tempting to call this category "lyric", but this would confuse the issue by conflating genre theory with semantics.

There is a profusion of examples in this section for two reasons: one is that it seems to me these passages illustrate a crucial link with later conceptual developments, and the other is that in these examples the reader will find a wealth of semantic resonances with the other categories we have discussed. This illustrates a self-evident but nonetheless important point: My classification of clusters of meaning very obviously cannot and must not be taken to exclude semantic resonance between the categories I set up. There are not only the obvious overlapping borderline cases, and the cases of probably intended suspended

ambiguity between categories, there are also the cases where several categories of meaning are contemporaneously focussed, but to clearly different degrees. These are the semantic resonances that are so crucial not only for poetry, but also for artistic prose.

The ultimate source music is true inner feeling, according to LIJI:

(61) LIJI 19; Couvreur 2.47f; Sūn Xīdàn 10.20; tr. Legge 2.93	
凡音者，	All modulations of the voice
生人心者也。	spring from the minds of men.
情動於中，	when <i>emotions</i> are moved within,
故形於聲。	they are manifested in the sounds
	of the voice;
聲成文，	and when those sounds are
	combined so as to form
	compositions,
謂之音。	we have what are called airs.

What moves or is perturbed, here, is not instincts, certainly not what some might want to call “the emotional hard-wiring”. The reference is to a heightened state of emotion. At the same time we know that this heightened state of emotion may very well be presented as endemic in a population and as ultimately political in nature. The word is often overdetermined.

The emotional state may be one of emotional sensibility, and one might even be tempted think of *qíng* 情 as referring to the organ of such emotional sensibility, in analogy with the organ of taste, *kǒu* 口 “the mouth”. The opposition with *jīng* 精 “subtle spirits” is not common, and certainly the idea of “gratifying one’s instincts” is unusual in pre-Buddhist literature. The passage is worth dwelling on:

(62) HANFEI 08.01:01; Chen Qitian 696; Chen Qiyong 121; Zhou Xunchu 61; Zhu Shouliang 322	
天有大命，	Heaven and Nature have their
	mandated fixed rule system,
人有大命。	and man has his mandated fixed
	rule system.
夫香美脆味，	Aromatic delicacies and crisp
	tidbits,
厚酒肥肉，	thick undiluted wine and fat meat,

甘口而疾形；
曼理皓齒，
說情而損精。

these are sweet to the mouth but
harmful to the body;
delicate features and white teeth,
these will gratify one's *basic*
sensibilities but impair one's
subtle spirits.

The reference, here, is to erotic sensibilities. That much is clear. And there is no doubt that these erotic sensibilities are referred to by *qíng* 情. But at the same time the reference to these sensibilities is generic, certainly prosaic, and not lyrical in any sense of the word.

SHUOYUAN singles out the expressive function as defining language:

(63) SHUOYUAN 8.10

夫言者
所以抒其胸
而發其情者也。

As for words,
they are means whereby to dredge
out what is in one's breast
and to bring out one's *inner*
feelings.

What is brought out here is important emotionally charged content, an emotional response to things, something one is emotionally committed to. That is what one *huái* 懷 "bears" in one's chest. And note again that this is not a lyrical text. This is a prosaic reference to emotional content.

Prose passages like these are not so many. But also in philosophical texts, the specific emotionally charged convictions of certain outstanding individuals can be focussed on, in an entirely unpoetic manner:

(64) HANFEI 26.03:11; Chen Qitian 798; Chen Qiyou 492; Zhou Xunchu 284; Zhu Shouliang 860

通賁、育之情，
不以死易生；
惑於盜跖之貪，

They thoroughly understand the
basic convictions of Bēn and Yù,
but they will not barter away their
lives for death.
They may be confused by the same
greed as Robber Zhí,

不以財易身：	but they will not barter away their lives for the sake of property.
則守國之道畢備矣。	And then the way of safeguarding of the state is perfectly complete.

The reference here is to a strongly emotionally charged commitment, not just to instinct or attitude. Again, the reference is to something stable and general. This is not an episodic noun, a reference to a tensed transitory emotional state.

In poetry, the world of innermost feelings articulated by the poet is a paradigmatic subject defining the poet's enterprise in CHUCI. They are kept in one's breast, but will out:

(65) CHUCI LISAQ 01:63; SBBY 57; Jin 98; Huang 20; Fu 41; tr. Hawkes 75; You 342; tr. CH

闈中既以邃遠兮，	Deep in the palace, unapproachable,
哲王又不寤。	The wise king slumbers and will not be awakened;
懷朕情而不發兮，	I keep <i>my innermost concerns</i> in my breast and do not let them out -
余焉能忍而與此終古？	how can I endure this to the end of my days?

The reference, here as typically, is generically to one's deepest current emotionally charged moral commitments. What signals the emotional charge involved is the word *fā* 發 "let out": The emotional charge needs an outlet.

And yet, there is a need to dredge out this emotionally charged content, to *shū* 抒 (sometimes written 杼) scrape the bottom of what there is *zhōng* 中 "deep inside, innermost", and it is important to realise that this word is in no way limited to lyrical contexts. In fact it is also used by the Mohist logicians.

(66) CHUCI AISHIMING 01:01; SBBY 442; Huang 229; Fu 209; tr. Hawkes 263

志憾恨而不逞兮，	My mind is full of resentment that finds no outlet.
----------	--

杼中情而屬詩。

Only in these verses can I express
my *feelings*.

The epexegetic *zhōng* 中 “inner” must be read as “innermost” here, because *qíng* 情 are “inner” to start with.

That image of “dredging out” what is most basic and constitutive of one’s emotional and moral personality recurs many times, to the point where it appears to be routine cliché. Moreover, note the association of *qíng* 情 with *fèn* 憤 “pent-up anger”:

(67) CHUCI AISHIMING 01:18; SBBY 454; Huang 236; Fu 211; tr. Hawkes

獨便愒而煩毒兮，

Alone and ill at ease and full of
bitterness:

焉發憤而抒情。

How can I vent my anger and
dredge out *my innermost feelings*.

By exposing his innermost feelings, the poet hopes that it will arouse the special interest of the person for whom he writes:

(68) CHUCI LISAO 01:10; SBBY 17; Jin 16; Huang 04; Fu 30; tr. Hawkes 69; You 65; tr. CH

荃不察余之中情兮，

But the Fragrant One refused to
examine my *innermost feelings*,

反信讒以齟怒。

He lent ear instead to slander, and
raged against me.

One’s innermost feelings invite *chá* 察 “scrutiny”, make a claim to veracity which deserves to be investigated, and when exposed, these innermost feelings, honestly expressed, are opposed to the slander of others. While one is inclined to take the focus to be on these innermost, highly charged emotions, there is a strong link in this case, as indeed in many others, to a secondary focus on earnest political conviction and motivation. Quite often it is as if the emotional load and the intense commitment is superimposed on what is basically our category 5: PERSONAL.

To the poets of CHUCI that innermost constitutive sensibility and these essential defining sentiments are at the core of their poetic self-choreography or stance as poets, it defines their poetic persona:

(69) CHUCI LISAO 01:29; SBBY 30; Jin 48; Huang 10; Fu 35; tr. Hawkes 71; You 164

不吾知其亦已兮，

I will not longer care that no one understands me,

苟余情其信芳。

As long as I can keep the sweet fragrance of *my mind*.

Again and again the poets revert to that theme of fragrancy attaching to one's innermost emotions. And in one sense the poet can live on this fragrance alone:

(70) CHUCI LISAO 01:72; SBBY 62; Jin 131; Huang 24; Fu 44; tr. Hawkes 76; You 392

苟中情其好脩兮，

As long as *your soul within* is beautiful

又何必用夫行媒

What need have you of a matchmaker?

Setting forth in proper poetic order what is constitutive of one's poetic personal identity becomes a routine:

(71) CHUCI JIUZHANG 07:10; SBBY 249; Jin 600; Huang 109; Fu 117; tr. Hawkes 177

願陳情以白行兮，

I wished to set forth *my thoughts* and explain my actions:

得罪過之不意。

I little dreamed that this would be held a crime.

Expectorating on such feelings can be a long-drawn-out and intensive affair:

(72) CHUCI JIUZHANG 06:01; SBBY 238; Jin 561; Huang 104; Fu 113; tr. Hawkes 173

申旦以舒中情兮，

Until the dawn I pour out *my inner heart*;

志沉菀而莫達。

But my will is thwarted and cannot reach its object.

The hyperbole of the poet spending all night expectorating strikes one as epigonic, exhibitionist. The expectoration has become a standard poetic pose.

A typical way in which the emotional charge of the feelings, as dredged out, comes out in the imagery of fragrance:

(73) CHUCI AISHIMING 01:05; SBBY 445; Huang 231; Fu 209; tr. Hawkes 264; mod. CH

誰可與玩斯遺芳兮？

With whom could I enjoy the
fragrance that was left me?

晨向風而舒情。

Long I stood against the wind,
unburdening my heart.

It is clear that these innermost sensibilities are not only to be expectorated: they exude a fragrance that is to be shared.

In the poem *Grieving I Make My Complaint*, the theme has become the opening fanfare:

(74) CHUCI JIUZHANG 01:01; SBBY 197; Jin 438; Huang 82; Fu 95; tr. Hawkes 156

惜誦以致愍兮，

Grieving I make my plaint, to give
my sorrows rein,

發憤以抒情。

To vent my wrath and *tell my*
pent-up thoughts.

The innermost feelings, like the habitually present pent-up wrath, and the general sorrows sung will out: through poetry or in interaction with friends.

The result of poetic expectoration is a form of *miǎn* 免 “release”:

(75) CHUCI, JIUTAN, YUANSI, ed. SBBY p. 508; Huang 269; Fu 236; tr. Hawkes 291

長吟永歎涕究究兮，

Long I sigh and moan and my tears
fall unconstrained.

舒情隲詩冀以自免兮…

By unburdening my heart in verse,
I hoped I might escape…

The artistic articulation of these sentiments through language, their formulation into words, becomes something of an emotional obsession later in the same poem:

(76) CHUCI JIUZHANG 04:07; SBBY 225; Jin 512; Huang 95; Fu 106; tr. Hawkes 167

茲歷情以陳辭兮，

And when I unlocked *these thoughts of mine* and put them into words,

搵詳聾而不聞。

The Fragrant One feigned deafness and would not listen to them.

What David Hawkes translates as “thoughts” are clearly heavily charged, emotionally.

Typically, *qíng* 情 refers to intense worries, and they can be *xiě* 寫 “written out”:

(77) CHUCI JIUSI 08:06; SBBY 568; Huang 307; Fu 262; tr. Hawkes 317

憂紆兮鬱鬱，
惡所兮寫情。

Obsessed with smothering griefs,
I have no way of venting my
feelings.

In another poem of the same series these innermost emotional and moral responses are celebrated as *wēi* 微 “subtle”:

(78) CHUCI JIUZHANG 04:03; SBBY 223; Jin 508; Huang 95; Fu 105; tr. Hawkes 167

願搖起而橫奔兮，

I would like to rise up and fly to him unbidden,

覽民尤以自鎮。

But seeing how others have fared, I restrain myself,

結微情以陳詞兮，

And instead I have set out *my secret thoughts* and put them into verse,

矯以遺夫美人。

And offer them up to lay before the Fair One.

Setting forth in sound poetic order what is constitutive of one's poetic personal identity becomes a routine:

(79) CHUCI JIUZHANG 07:10; SBBY 249; Jin 600; Huang 109; Fu 117; tr. Hawkes 177

願陳情以白行兮，

I wished to set forth *my thoughts*
and explain my actions:

得罪過之不意。

I little dreamed that this would be
held a crime.

But even without successful publication of one's deepest sentiments, these retain an absolute value that is "more eternal than bronze":

(80) CHUCI JIUZHANG 06:09; SBBY 242; Jin 570; Huang 105; Fu 114; tr. Hawkes 174; tr. CH

情與質信可保兮，

If *my innermost convictions* and
inner substance keep their integrity,

羌居蔽而聞章。

Though I dwell unseen and
obscure, my fame can yet be bright.

I believe *qíng* 情 is being epexegetically explained by *zhì* 質 "inner substance". The poet's inner sensibilities and moral convictions define his very material substance.

Along with this fragrance, the poet thrives on the purity of his basic emotional responses:

(81) CHUCI QIJIAN 06:01; SBBY 426; Huang 220; Fu 200; tr. Hawkes 254

哀時命之不合兮，

I mourn that my lot was cast in an
unfit time;

傷楚國之多憂。

I grieve for the many woes of the
land of Chǔ.

內懷情之潔白兮，

My *nature* was one of spotless
purity,

遭亂世而離尤。

But I fell on a time of disorder and
met with disgrace.

The *jié bái* 潔白 "pristine purity" of this inner emotional response contrasts naturally with the dirty outside world.

In this kind of poetry, the feelings become even proper grammatical subjects, almost agents in the same poem:

(82) CHUCI JIUZHANG 01:06; SBBY 201; Jin 446; Huang 83; Fu 95; tr. Hawkes 157

情沈抑而不達兮，

又蔽而莫之白也。

My feelings were stifled and could not find expression,

For they screened me from my lord, that I might not explain myself.

In this way, the heart and the emotions become a natural pair in parallelism:

(83) CHUCI JIUTAN 05:07; SBBY 513; Huang 272; Fu 238; tr. Hawkes 293

心憤悵以冤結兮，

情舛錯以曼憂。

My mind is distracted and in a turmoil;

My feelings disordered and full of bitter grief.

So far, I have discussed what I consider some main strains of meanings of the word *qíng* 情 as I understand them. It will be obvious to everyone that one could easily have doubled the categories established. I have not found it natural to do this.

Similarly, one could have used the manifest overlap between the categories I established to collapse several groups into subgroups. I have considered this, but I have come to the conclusion that it would not add anything new to the analysis.

However, all these meanings will get into proper focus when one considers the relations of contrast and of antonymy into which the word can be seen to enter. In the appendix that follows I shall consider these contrasting relationships.

At first sight, one may object that the antonyms I introduce get unreasonably cursory treatment. But there are two reasons for this brevity which will be obvious enough to those who have worked with synonym dictionaries:

1. The relations of antonymy and of semantic adjacency obtain not between words as such, but between meanings of words only.

Thus, in principle, there is no need to lay out the meanings of the words compared in all their detail.

2. There is, of course, not the space to present a detailed analysis along the lines I have presented for *qíng* 情 for all the words below. (On the other hand there is space for this in the *Thesaurus Linguae Sericae (TLS): An Historical and Critical Encyclopaedia of Chinese Conceptual Schemes* [under construction], parts of which are about to be made available on the Internet.)

Appendix: Synonyms and Antonyms

Among the semantically adjacent concepts relevant to a proper delineation of the contrasts which define the meaning of *qíng* 情 I find it useful to list the following. Needless to say each and every one of the terms I here refer to need and deserve much more detailed treatment than they can get here.

I deal with these terms only in so far as they seem to me to throw direct light on the problems of *qíng* 情 discussed in this paper.

ài 愛 “loving care for, love” is one of the profound basic responses designated by *qíng* 情, and there are times when *qíng* 情 seems — in context— genuine deep-seated affection. None the less it remains to be emphasised that while *qíng* 情 may occasionally so discreetly refer to genuine feelings (for someone), the word never refers concretely to any of the other emotions like anger and so on. Thus there does seem to be a special semantic affinity between *qíng* 情 and love. If there were more examples like the following very puzzling passage, we should have to introduce a new semantic category for it in our above account:

(84) SHI 136; tr. Karlgren

洵有情兮，
而無望兮。

I certainly have love (for you),
but no admiration.

Here it seems all commentators simply take it for granted that *qíng* 情 means something like “affection”. Xiàng Xī 1997 (new expanded edition) provides no alternative glosses to this. There are no textual

variants. Whatever we say about *qíng* 情: the earliest occurrence of the word involves emotion and comes in a love poem.

chéng 誠 “*earnestness*” is not an innate or instinctive matter, and it does not typically involve a reaction to the outside world, but comes close to *qíng* 情 “fundamental and instinctively based deep commitment”. The two words concur in their emphasis on the genuineness of the commitment, but *qíng* 情 is more outward-directed in its meaning, whereas *chéng* 誠 belongs rather with *xìng* 性 in referring to a primarily internal quality as such rather than to a relation to outward things. Used adjectivally, *qíng* 情 is very close to *chéng* 誠 “*genuine*” in meaning:

(85) HANFEI 33.27:02 [35]; Chen Qitian 540; Chen Qiyou 697; Zhu Shouliang 1209; Zhou Xunchu 424

主不審其情實，	If you, my lord, do not carefully examine the <i>essential facts of the</i> <i>matter</i>
坐而患之，	but sit around and worry about them,
馬猶不肥也。	then the horses will still not get any fatter for it.

duān 端 “*basic impulse*” is subtly and autogenously psychological and describes the very source from which developed the more responsive and appetitive *qíng* 情 “basic attitudes, fundamental responses; basic motives”. *Duān* 端 in MENG are incipient sensibilities rather than full-fledged instincts like *qíng* 情. None the less, like *qíng* 情 they are typically hidden, as in HF 5.2.15 匿其端 “hide one’s motives”. Thus in two of its meanings *duān* 端 competes with *qíng* 情.

(86) HANFEI 07.03:06; Chen Qitian 183; Chen Qiyou 112; Zhou Xunchu 56; Zhu Shouliang 314

人臣之情非必	As for the minister’s <i>real attitudes</i> ,
	he is by no means
	necessarily
能愛其君也，	able to show loving care for the ruler,

為重利之故也，	and the reason is he acts to maximise his advantage.
今人主不揜其情，	Now if the ruler does not cover up his <i>real attitudes</i>
不匿其端，	and does not hide his <i>basic motives</i> ,
而使人臣有緣	if he brings it about that the ministers have something to go on and thus to encroach on the ruler's authority,
以侵其主，	then for the various ministers to become Zǐzhī and Tián Cháng is not a hard thing to accomplish.
則群臣為子之、田常	
不難矣。	

lǐ 理 “*principle*” is an individualised and specified constitutive feature of things of any kind, and the word does not normally, like *qíng* 情, relate to a dynamic response or to the appetitive or emotional features of living creatures; moreover *lǐ* 理 is not typically conceived as something potentially hidden by a person, although the *lǐ* 理 of something may be hard to find out. One's principles are, typically, a matter of one's own choice, and keeping to them is a matter of pertinacity:

(87) GUAN 36.01.57; ed. Dai Wang 2.65; tr. Rickett 1998:80	
惡不失其理，	In dislikes one does not lose sight of <i>principles</i> ,
欲不過其情，	in <i>desiring</i> one does not exceed <i>fundamental instincts</i> .

But music does not appeal to the ephemeral or occasional. It is concerned with what is quintessential in man's inner sensitivities:

(88) LIJI 19; Couvreur 2.83f; Sūn Xīdàn 10.48f; tr. Legge 2.114	
樂也者，	Music
情之不可變者也。	is an expression of <i>basic invariable sensibilities</i> .
禮也者，	Ritual

理之不可易者也。 is an expression of *unchanging principles*.

It is clear that there is less emotional content in *lǐ* 理 and it is therefore not at all interchangeable with *qíng* 情.

Basic, constant and unwarped sound human instincts are *qíng* 情 and naturally contrast with the *lǐ* 理 “principle” of things:

(89) GUAN 36.01.39; ed. Dai Wang 2.64; tr. Rickett 1998:77	
義者，	“Duty”
謂各處其宜也。	refers to doing what is appropriate in each situation.
禮者，	“Propriety”
因人之情，	relies on man’s inner feelings.
緣義之理，	It is connected with the inherent order underlying duties and provides the restraints
而為之節文者也。	and means of expression for them.

The opposition here with that other metaphysical term *lǐ* 理 “principles” is significant here: for the principles are just those specified dynamic essential features of things that make them into what they are.

móu 謀 “plan” is articulated and typically even explicitly verbalised; it differs neatly from *qíng* 情 “basic attitude, disposition to act” as well as from *qíng* 情 “basic instinctive response, instinctive urge” where there is no focus on articulation. Thus a *qíng* 情 may be the basis for a *móu* 謀 but not vice versa. Thus although these two words do not belong to the same synonym group, they are in this specific sense semantically adjacent. A single example suffices to illustrate the point:

(90) HF 31.21:01; Chen Qiyou 585; Zhou Xunchu 346; Zhu Shouliang 1015	
司馬喜，	Sīmǎ Xǐ
中山君之臣也，	was a minister to the ruler of Zhōngshān,
而善於趙，	and he had good relations to Zhào.

嘗以中山之謀微告趙王。 On one occasion he secretly told
the King of Zhào about
Zhōngshān's plans.

In this connection, *qíng* 情 would have meant: “real basic intentions” or “basic situation”.

qīn 親 “*feeling of closeness*” is again one of the basic instinctive responses that may—in context—be referred to by the more general word *qíng* 情. While *qíng* 情 does sometimes mean something like “affection”, it seems never to refer more generally to “closeness of relations”.

(91) HF 34.26:03 [37]; Chen Qitian 581; Chen Qiyou 745; Zhu Shouliang 1285; Zhou Xunchu 461; trm 390

論其親，	When one assesses the closeness of our relation
則子母之間也；	then it was that between a son and a mother.
然猶不免議之於蔡嫗也。	And yet, she would be sure to discuss matters with Mummy Càì.
今疑之於人主也，	Now as for my relation to the rulers of states
非子母之親也，	it is not as close as that between a son and a mother,
而人主皆有蔡嫗。	and rulers all have their Mummy Càìs.

qì 氣 “*vital spirits, vital energies, energies, force*” are typically part of a physical aetiology of symptoms or appearances, or of purely physical development, unlike *qíng* 情 “fundamental instincts”, which is nowhere conceived as distinctly predicated on some physical base. There is an interesting collocation of these *qíng* 情 “instincts” with *qì* 氣 “vital spirits”:

(92) GUAN 53.01.24; ed. Dai Wang 3.8; tr. Rickett 1998:219; mod CH.

不作無補之功，	One does not use less effort
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不為無益之事，	one does not engage in pointless activity,
故意定	therefore one's thoughts become settled
而不營氣情，	and one does not meddle with one's <i>vital force and basic instincts</i> .
氣情不營，	If one does not meddle with one's <i>vital force and basic instincts</i>
則耳目毅。	then one's ears and eyes will be sharp and clear
衣食足。	and one's clothes and food will be sufficient.

The reference here is to the basic material and physical endowments linked to *qi* 氣 but differing from it by being conceived in a non-material—we might say metaphysical—way.

(93) HSWZ 01.20:04; tr. Hightower 1951, p. 28; cf. SHUOYUAN 18.12

故不肖者精化始具，	Now when in an unworthy person sexual change is first complete
而生氣感動，	the <i>generative vital force</i> is stimulated;
觸情縱欲…	then his libidinous instincts are excited and he gives free rein to his desires...

shén 神 “*spirit*” is primarily physical, more cosmological and mystical than emotional, as I hope to document in a detailed study elsewhere. At this point I will just briefly summarise what is immediately relevant to interpretation of *qíng* 情. Meanwhile, the reader is referred to Michael Puett's stimulating account of the evolution of the word *shén* 神 in his recent book *To Become a God. Cosmology, Sacrifice, and Self-Divinisation in Early China* (Cambridge (Mass): Harvard University Press, 2002).

One passage in ZHUANG forces us to address three adjacent terms:

(94) ZHUANG 25.1018

遁其天，	They hide from <i>Heaven</i> ,
離其性，	they deviate from their <i>inborn nature</i>
滅其情，	they destroy their <i>fundamental instincts</i> ,
亡其神，	they annihilate their <i>spirit</i> ,
以眾為。	for their multifarious activities.

Heaven covers all and determines all, but as for people nowadays, they hide from it. Heaven is the source of *xìng* 性, hence the common formula 天性 “inborn nature from Heaven”. One’s inborn nature is inalienable, but they deviate from it. *Xìng* 性 refers to the state in which one is born into this world and refers primarily to static properties rather than dynamic tendencies. One’s fundamental instincts constitute the dynamic aspect of one’s very identity. *Shén* 神 “spirit” refers to the substantially conceived fine substance that one expends, wastes, or even annihilates.

(95) CHUCI JIUTAN 02:08; SBBY 495; Huang 262; Fu 232; tr. Hawkes 287

情慌忽以忘歸兮，	<i>My mind</i> is distraught; I forget where I am going;
神浮遊以高厲。	<i>My soul</i> goes wandering off, high into the air;
心蚤蚤而懷顧兮，	<i>The heart</i> within me yearns in sadness;
魂眷眷而獨逝。	<i>My longing spirit</i> speeds on its way alone.

There is some very good reason why David Hawkes was tempted to use “mind” for *qíng* 情 here insofar as the mind is what can change and be upset, unlike “fundamental instincts”. In this passage we have four mental terms: the *qíng* 情 “basic emotional state” (see our category 2) is disorientated; the *shén* 神 “spirits”, like a subtle physical substance, have left the body and risen high; the *xīn* 心 “heart” is contrite with nostalgia; and the *hún* 魂 “heavenly soul” is about to gain its own independent existence and speeds off all on its own.

shí 實 “*reality*” is non-dynamic and refers to the facts as they are in themselves rather than, like *qíng* 情 to the facts as basic factors shaping the appearance of things or their development.

(96) XINYU 3, ed. Wáng Lìqì. 55

惟堯知其實，

仲尼見其情。

The point is Yáo understood the
facts,

but Confucius saw the *crucial*
underlying factors.

shì fēi 是非 “*right or wrong, truth of a matter*” is abstract and theoretical, describing what might or might not be truthfully said about something, and it differs from *qíng* 情 “*fundamental dynamic factors*” which refers to what it is in things that might make statements true.

(97) HF 47.09:02; Chen Qitian 147; Chen Qiyou 976; Zhou Xunchu 640; Zhu Shouliang 1632

治國是非，

不以術斷

而決於寵人，
則臣下輕君

而重於寵人矣。

If the rights and wrongs in
governing the state

are not judged according to
professional skill

but are determined by favourites
then ministers and subordinates
will take the ruler lightly

and they will regard the favourites
as important.

shì 事 “*undertaking, matter*” is primarily a human undertaking (which is never ever *qíng* 情), but can by extension refer to any external macrocosmic manifestly real event, and in that meaning it differs clearly from *qíng* 情 “*crucial or determining dynamic factors of a situation, the basic facts*”.

shì 嗜 “*craving, desire*” is always negative and specific, not innate or generally instinctive like *qíng* 情.

(98) HF 20.31.05; Chen Qiyou 371; Zhu Shouliang 654; Zhou Xunchu 203

嗜慾無限，	If in one's predilections and desires one knows no limits,
動靜不節，	if in one's demeanour one shows no restraint,
則瘞疽之爪角害之。	then the claws of boils and ulcers will harm one.

Typically, it is the very arbitrariness of the craving that is focussed by *shì* 嗜:

(99) HF 39.12[12]; Chen Qitian 373; Chen Qiyou 882; Zhu Shouliang 1465; Zhou Xunchu 567; Liao 2.197

屈到嗜芰，	Qū Dào was addicted to water chestnuts.
文王嗜菖蒲菹，	King Wén was addicted to calamus minced meats.
非正味也。	It is not as if these things had the correct taste,
而二賢尚之，	but the two men of talent prized them highly.
所味不必美。	What one has a taste for is not necessarily objectively beautiful.

shì 勢 “constellation of power” refers to the overall external and manifest distribution of power, and it differs from *qíng* 情 which firstly does not particularly concentrate on the distribution of power, and which secondly is about a variety of basic underlying factors rather than specifically manifest position of power.

(100) HF 30.31:03; Chen Qiyou 550; Zhou Xunchu 322; Zhu Shouliang 953

此知必勝之勢也。	In this way he made sure <i>the</i> <i>constellation</i> was one bound to lead to victory.
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sī 私 “private matters, personal feelings and personal affairs” can be used as an adjective for *qíng 情* in Han prose, but such combinations I have not found in pre-Han literature:

(101) SHIJI 126/3199 tr. Dolby/Scott 1974, p. 161

若朋友交遊，	If I meet friends and companions
久不相見，	whom I haven't seen for a long
	while,
卒然相睹，	or I suddenly meet up with
	someone,
歡然道故，	we merrily recall old times
私情相語，	and talk about private affairs and
	personal feelings.

Perhaps *sī 私* is here not an adjective but a noun.

tǐ 體 “system” the organised whole of various *qíng 情*, hence the current *dà tǐ 大體* “overall system”, as in SUWEN 12 得病之情知治之大體也 “get the underlying factors of the disease and understand the overall system of medical cure of disease”. But the semantics of *tǐ 體* are more complex than we can take up here.

xīn 心 “heart” is, of course, far too complicated to take up in any detail here, but the meaning “attitude” is much more general than the highly specific *qíng 情* “basic response to a situation, fundamental dynamic disposition to react”.

xìng 性 “inborn nature” is the most important one of the synonyms and needs to be dealt with in some detail. It shares with *qíng 情* the feature of innateness and of basic disposition. However, *xìng 性* is primarily not a response to outside things but an autogenous disposition to behave in a certain way. Thus we do say that *xìng shàn 性善* “nature is good”, but we do not say that *qíng shàn 情善* “that one's basic instinctive reactions/responses to things are good”. In adverbial position *xìng 性* means “by nature” and emphasises the congenital nature of the condition, whereas *qíng 情* emphasises the hardly changeable deeply engrained nature of that condition.

Here is a case where *qíng 情* and *xìng 性* are explicitly contrasted:

(102) ZHUANG 8.313

故性長非所斷，

性短非所續，

無所去憂也。

意仁義其

非人情乎！

Therefore, if what *by nature* is long is not cut short, and if what *by nature* is short is not extended, there will be no grief to dispense with.

One suspects that humaneness and righteousness are not *basic human instincts*!

And in case one has not got the point, the crucial phrase is repeated a little further down:

(103) ZHUANG 8.313

故意仁義其

非人情乎！

Therefore, one suspects that humaneness and righteousness are not *basic human instincts*.

In the large majority of cases, *xìng* 性 is not replaceable with *qíng* 情, and it is important to analyse why this is so in order to get the precise semantic nuances of *qíng* 情. One thing is that the innateness in *qíng* 情 is not so prominent a feature and is not commonly played upon:

(104) MENG 6A03; tr. D. C. Lau 2.223

告子曰：
「生之謂性。」

Gàozi said,
“The inborn is called ‘inborn nature’.”

The *xìng* 性 “nature” includes propensities and instincts *qíng* 情 but typically with a special focus on their congenital nature:

(105) XUN 23.02.01; 23:1a, Knoblock 3:150, tr. CH

今人之性，
生而有好利焉，

Now human nature is such that from birth he is prone to seek his own advantage.

When such word-play is involved we rarely find *qíng* 情.

(106) MENG 7A38; tr. D. C. Lau 2.281

孟子曰：
「形色，
天性也。」

Mencius said,
“One’s body and complexion
are one’s inborn nature from
Heaven.”

Our innate endowment includes the particular physical shape and complexion that we have. *Xìng* 性 can refer to the specific innate endowments of a person of other kinds:

(107) ZHUANG 12.426

齧缺之為人也，
聰明叡知，
給數以敏，
其性過人，

As a person,
Gnaw Gap is intelligent, shrewd,
quick-witted, and clever.
His natural talents surpass those of
other men.

Thus one *xìng* 性 can differ from another in ways that *qíng* 情 are not said to differ:

(108) ZHUANG 17.600

鴞鵂夜撮蚤，
察毫末，

晝出瞋目

而不見丘山，

言殊性也。

An owl can catch fleas at night
and can discern the tip of a downy
hair,
but when it comes out during the
day it stares blankly
and can’t even spy a hill or a
mountain,
and this means creatures have
different natures.

(109) NJ 3

陰陽殊性，

男女異行。

Yīn and Yáng are different in
nature,
men and women have different
standards of behaviour.

SHENDAO does, however, say that it is a basic feature of people they differ:

(110) SHENDAO, ed. Thompson 1979, fragment no. 03.33; tr. Paul Thompson

民雜處而各有所能：

The people live in diverse conditions and circumstances, but each person has his own abilities.

所能者不同。

Their abilities are not the same.

此民之情也。

This is an *essential characteristic of the people*.

Paul Thompson's translation is illuminating in many ways, and it illustrates the plausibility of A.C. Graham's way of reading the word in many contexts.

The fact that one has instincts is not itself an instinct *qíng* 情 but part of one's stable innate human nature *xìng* 性:

(111) ZHUANG 29.1205

夫欲惡避就，

Desires, dislikes, aversions, and predilections,

固不待師，

indeed, do not require a teacher—

此人之性（也）。

this is the nature of man.

I do not believe that *qíng* 情 would have been possible here.

Also inanimate non-living creatures have *xìng* 性 “natural properties” just as they have *qíng* 情 “essential features”:

(112) ZHUANG 15.560

水之性，

The nature of water

不雜則清，

is to be clear when unadulterated,

莫動則平；

to be level when undisturbed.

鬱閉而不流，

But if it is blocked and not allowed to flow,

亦不能清。

it cannot retain its clearness.

Here *qíng* 情 would be possible, but since no desires are involved, it is not particularly preferred.

The famous swimmer in ZHUANG refers to his own specific nature as it is shaped by his childhood:

(113) ZHUANG 19.702

長於水
而安於水，
性也。

Having grown up in the river
one feels comfortable in it.
That is [my] inborn nature.

Very clearly, *qíng* 情 would be impossible here, and understanding *qíng* 情 is to understand these kinds of impossibilities, also in the cases that follow:

(114) ZHUANG 8.308

駢拇枝指，
出乎性哉！

Webbed toes and extra fingers
may issue from one's nature.

(115) ZHUANG 9.329

馬，蹄可以踐霜雪，

毛可以禦風寒，

齧草飲水，
翹足而陸，
此馬之真性也。

A horse's hooves can tread upon
frost and snow,
its hair can withstand the wind and
the cold.

It eats grass and drinks water;
it prances about briskly.
This is a horse's true nature.

The desire to eat is primarily *qíng* 情 but the tendency to weave in order to make clothes and to till the fields in order to grow food, is part of one's *xìng* 性:

(116) ZHUANG 9.329f

彼民有常性，

織而衣，
耕而食，

Their people, having a constant
nature,
would weave cloth to wear
and plow the land in order to eat.

I very much doubt that we could have had *qíng* 情 in this context.

(117) MENG 6A04; tr. D. C. Lau 2.225

告子曰：
「食色，
性也…」

Kao tzu said,
“Eating food and having sex
is part of inborn nature. ...”

Properly speaking it is the desire to do these things that is part of one's inborn nature. So this usage comes close in meaning to one of the core meanings of *qíng* 情, but still, without an explicit mention of this desire, one might argue that *xìng* 性 "inborn nature" here is different from *qíng* 情 "basic instinct".

The question whether *qíng* 情 "fundamental instincts" are good never arises in ancient Chinese literature. The issue is about the *xìng* 性 "inborn nature" of the individual person or of persons in general:

(118) XUN 23.01.01; 23:1a, Knoblock 3:150

人之性惡，	Man's nature is evil,
其善者偽也。	and what is good in him is man-made.

(119) XUN 23.04.02; xinzhu 391; 23:1c, Knoblock 3:152

凡性者，	In general, when it comes to human nature
天之就也，	it is what Nature tends towards,
不可學，	and it is not something that one can try to learn,
不可事。	or something one can work at.

(120) XUN 23.04.03; xinzhu 391; 23:1c, Knoblock 3:152

不可學、不可事而在人者，	That in man which can be studied but cannot be worked for
謂之性；	is called human nature;
可學而能可事而成之在人者，	that in man which one can apply oneself to and learn, which one can work on and perfect,
謂之偽，	that is called artifice.
是性、偽之分也。	This is the distinction between nature and artifice.

And when *xìng* 性 is described in terms of the use of the senses, a typical description is in terms not of appetitive desire but cognitive potential:

(121) XUN 23.04.04; xinzhu 391; 23:1c, Knoblock 3:152

今人之性，	Now it is part of human nature
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目可以見，	that the eye can see,
耳可以聽。	and that the ear can hear.
夫可以見之明不離目，	The visual faculty of seeing is
	inseparable from the eye,
可以聽之聰不離耳；	and the acoustic faculty of hearing
	is inseparable from the ear.
目明而耳聰，	The visual faculty of the eye and
	the acoustic faculty of the ear,
不可學明矣。	one cannot apply oneself to these
	and develop these intelligent
	faculties.

What is objectively likely to happen because of one's inborn nature is typically *xìng* 性 and what is bound to happen primarily for external reasons is *mìng* 命 "fate".

(122) HF 50.09:01; Chen Qitian 18; Chen Qiyong 1099; Zhou Xunchu 692; Zhu Shouliang 1790; Watson 126

今或謂人曰：	Suppose someone were to tell
	people:
“使子必智而壽”，	“I will make sure you will be wise
	and that you will live long lives!”
則世必以為狂。	then the world would be bound to
	consider him mad.
夫智，	Wisdom
性也；	is a matter of inborn nature;
壽，	a long life
命也。	is a matter of fate.

Xìng 性 here is the inborn nature not of man in general, but of a certain imagined person. This *xìng* 性 will differ very much from one person to another.

Note that in *xìng* 性 there generally tends to be no element of desire:

(123) HF 19.02:03; Chen Qitian 204; Chen Qiyou 307; Zhou Xunchu 170; Zhu Shouliang 574

亂弱者亡，

That those who are unruly and weak will fail

人之性也；

is in accordance with the human condition;

治強者王，

that those who are orderly and strong become kings

古之道也。

is an ancient pattern.

Moreover, the word refers specifically to the natural character of individuals:

(124) HF 23.22:02; Chen Qiyou 464; Zhou Xunchu 261; Zhu Shouliang 807

民性有恆！

The people will be predictable in their disposition.

曲為曲，

Then crookedness will count as crookedness

直為直。

and straightness will count as straightness.

(125) HF 24.01:03; Chen Qiyou 479; Zhou Xunchu 273; Zhu Shouliang 834

西門豹之性急，

Ximén Bào was hot-tempered by nature

故佩韋以緩己。

so he wore a soft leather belt to soften himself down.

This remained a popular usage throughout Han times:

(126) CHUCI JIUBIAN 06:02; SBBY 317; Huang 147; Fu 148; tr. Hawkes 213

性愚陋以褊淺兮，

And though dull and stupid by nature and poor in talents,

信未達乎從容。

I restrain myself and learn to mourn in verses.

(127) NJ Preface

鄙人愚暗，

受性不敏。

蒙先君之餘寵，

賴母師之典訓。

Unworthy as I am, stupid and
benighted,

I am by nature unintelligent.

[However,] I have received not a
little favour from my now-deceased
father,and I could rely on my mother's,
my teacher's, regulation and
instruction.

The innate nature of *xìng* 性 is emphasised by the addition of the word *tiān* 天 “from Heaven/Nature”:

(128) HF 25.05:03; Chen Qiyou 484; Chen Qitian 811; Zhou Xunchu 279; Zhu Shouliang 849

以詐偽為是，

天性為非，

Deceit he considered right
natural features of people he
considered wrong.

Apart from one passage in XUN, we do not find the combination *tiān qíng* 天情 in the literature I have surveyed.

(129) HF 33.07:05 [8]; Chen Qitian 525; Chen Qiyou 677; Zhu Shouliang 1176; Zhou Xunchu 409

非私臣而然也，

夫天性仁

心固然也。

此臣之所以悅
而德公也。”It is not that you were partial to me
and therefore reacted like this.It was that your *Heaven-given*
nature is kindlyand your heart is inherently like
that.This is why I felt pleased
and felt grateful to you.”

Against this nature from Heaven one may inflict harm or injury:

(130) HF 40.03:04; Chen Qitian 65; Chen Qiyou 687; Zhu Shouliang 1475; Zhou Xunchu 572; m476; Liao 2.200f

桀、紂為高臺深池

Jié and Zhòu built high terraces and deep ponds

以盡民力，

and in that way they exhausted the strength of the people.

為炮烙

They roasted people alive

以傷民性，

and in that way they offended against the *human nature of the people*.

At times, though, the distinction between *xìng* 性 and *qíng* 情 does come close to being neutralised:

(131) HF 47.06:02; Chen Qitian 144; Chen Qiyou 975; Zhou Xunchu 638; Zhu Shouliang 1628

子母之性，

The inborn *natural relation between a child and a mother*

愛也；

is one of love;

臣主之權，

the power relations between ministers and rulers

策也。

is a matter of strategy.

Xìng 性 does refer to basic instincts here, and we should not be surprised at all to find *qíng* 情 in its place.

Moreover, in the following two examples there would have been no problem with *mín zhī qíng* 民之情:

(132) HF 54.01:02; Chen Qitian 813; Chen Qiyou 1134; Zhou Xunchu 713; Zhu Shouliang 1848

夫民之性，

It is in the *inborn nature of people*

喜其亂而不親其法。

that they delight in chaos and do not keep to the law.

(133) HF 54.02:01; Chen Qitian 814; Chen Qiyou 1135; Zhou Xunchu 715; Zhu Shouliang 1851

夫民之性，

It is in the *inborn nature of people*

惡勞而樂佚。

that they dislike toil and enjoy
leisure.

But in these two examples, the reference is not to current sentiment but to general disposition. We can say that in such examples the difference between *qíng* 情 and *xìng* 性 is neutralised, and thus they give very important evidence in connection with our study of *qíng* 情.

However, even when the two terms are used together, their force is perhaps still distinct:

(134) XUN 23.02.02; 23:1a, Knoblock 3:150, tr. CH

生而有耳目之欲，

From birth he has desires of the ear
and of the eye,

有好聲色焉，

he is fond of sounds and of female
beauty.

順是，

When he acts in accordance with
such tendencies,

故淫亂生

then profligacy and political unrest
will arise,

而禮義文理亡焉。

and ritual propriety, rectitude,
decorousness and principle will
disappear.

然則從人之性，

Thus if one follows *the nature of
man*

順人之情，

and acts in accordance with *man's
basic sentiments*,

必出於爭奪，

then this is bound to result in
competitive struggle for things

合於犯分亂理，

combined with the flaunting of
social divisions and the confusing
of principles,

而歸於暴。

so that all naturally ends up in
violence.

(135) NJ 7

雖以賢女之行，

Even if she has the moral behaviour
of a worthy woman,

聰哲之性，	even if she has the endowments of
其能備乎？	a clever and wise woman,
	can a woman be perfect?

(136) LUNHENG 13, ed Liú Pànsuì 1990, p. 141 reports the crucial distinction between *xìng* 性 and *qíng* 情:

性，	Nature
生而然者也，	is that which is so by birth;
在於身而不發。	it is present in the person, and it
	does not emerge.
情，	The passions
接於物而然者也，	are something that arises from
	contact with things,
出形於外。	and they manifest themselves on the
	outside.

This shows how *qíng* 情 was conceived as interactive with things, related to responses. Wáng Chōng explicitly distances himself from earlier, ambiguous usages.

yì 意 “*intention*” which is not innate, instinctive or reactive to the outside world, but which comes close to *qíng* 情 “fundamental response to a situation, basic reaction to a situation” where that response or reaction can take the form of a plan or a determination to do something, where *qíng* 情 always involves heart-felt commitment whereas *yì* 意 only denotes an idea, a decision or a plan of any kind.

yù 欲 “*desire; actual desires*” contrasts as negative and reprehensible with the neutral and sometimes even positive *qíng* 情 “basic sentiments, basic inclinations”. *Yù* 欲 can very often refer to ephemeral, changeable, superficial urges or even temporary intentions and is always a positive urge for—not against—something, whereas *qíng* 情 can refer to both positive and negative, but typically basic, constitutive, or instinctive reactions of all kinds to things. ZGC 2.1; tr. Crump 1979 no. 7, p. 28, ed. Shangaiguji p. 45 君之情 “your real basic intentions/inclinations” is glossed by the old commentary (footnote 21) as: 心所欲也 “what the heart desires”, and in this context the word does come close to *yù* 欲 in meaning. However, such usages are very rare.

LAO 61 oxymoronically recommends 聖人欲不欲 “the sage’s desire is not to desire”, and the least one must do is reduce the number of one’s *yù* 欲 “desires”, and there never is any question of reducing the number of *qíng* 情:

(137) MENG 7B35; tr. D. C. Lau 2.301

孟子曰：

「養心莫善於寡欲。」

Mencius said,

“There is nothing better for the nurturing of the heart than to reduce the number of desires.”

(138) HF 20.24:01; Chen Qiyou 361; Zhu Shouliang 641; Zhou Xunchu 198;

人有欲，
則計會亂：

When men have strong desires
then their calculations and
plannings are confused.

yù 慾 “lusts” seem always to be negatively loaded and reprehensible, often linked to the equally reprehensible *shì* 嗜 “cravings” for objects of desire, as we have seen above. In any case, giving rein to them is tantamount to immorality:

(139) HF 44.10:02; Chen Qitian 245; Chen Qiyou 931; Zhu Shouliang 1546; Zhou Xunchu 607; Liao 2.226

趙之先君敬侯，

不修德行，
而好縱慾，

The former ruler of Zhào, Lord
Jing,

did not cultivate virtuous behaviour
and he was fond of giving free rein
to his *desires*.

In any case, one is in no doubt about the implications when Confucius pronounces his judgment:

(140) LY 5.11; tr. CH

子曰：

「吾未見剛者。」

或對曰：

「申枨。」

The Master said:

“I have never met anyone who has
firm convictions.”

Someone responded to this:

“How about Shēn Chéng?”

子曰： 「棖也慾， 焉得剛？」	The Master said: “That man Chéng is full of lusts. How can he get to count as firm?”
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The lusts condemn Chéng as a softling.

zhēn 真 “true, genuine” specifies that something is non-fake, unwarped, pristine, and it comes close to some usages of *qíng* 情 “essential, basic, real, inalienable”. However, the distinction becomes clear when one considers combinations such as *zhēn rén* 真人 “True Man” which has no classical pendant *qíng rén* 情人 “modern Chinese: lover”. *Zhēn* 真 is current as a main verb and may take intensitive adverbs:

(141) ZHUANG 7.275

其知情信， 其德甚真，	His knowledge was truly reliable, his integrity very genuine.
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Qíng 情 in the related sense is metaphysical and absolute, and in fact often adverbial, although it is not clear whether the word really needs to be taken adverbially in this particular context.

zhì 志 “aspirations” is something waiting to be realised in action, and the word is current in essentially related verbal usages, as in the idiomatic *zhì yú* 志於 “aspire to; be bent on” which naturally takes the object *rén* 仁 “benevolence”. By contrast, *qíng* 情 is something waiting to be disclosed, expressed. The result of a failure to expectorate is *jì mò* 寂寞 “loneliness” and bitter discontent:

(142) CHUCI, qijian, miujian, ed. SBBY p. 430; tr. David Hawkes

願承閒而效志兮， 恐犯忌而干諱。 卒撫情以寂寞兮， 然怊悵而自悲。	I wanted to wait on his leisure, to show him my intent; But I feared to infringe on some ban or prohibition. In the end I restrained <i>my feelings</i> and kept silent; And so I grieve still in bitter discontent.
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zhi 質 “*substance*” refers to an inert basic substratum quite unlike the dynamic fundamental disposition of things to respond to other things that is called *qíng* 情, although in poetry, the difference can occasionally be neutralised.

It is my claim that we properly understand the meaning of the word *qíng* 情 in the texts we investigate to the extent that we understand what motivates the choice of that word versus the possible choice of other words that might appear to be plausible candidates in certain specific contexts. Thus my primary aim is not to find any one plausible English “equivalent” for *qíng* 情. The aim is to define the parameters of semantic contrasts in the ancient language which define the place of that word in the relevant ancient Chinese conceptual schemes.

ANTONYMS

The meanings of a word are often best understood when one considers its antonyms. In what follows I give a brief survey of selected antonyms, and I discuss only such details as seem relevant to the proper understanding of *qíng* 情.

cí 辭 “*verbal formulations*” contrast with unarticulated basic *qíng* 情 “real feelings” that need expression.

mào 貌 “*appearance*” is in frequent contrast with *qíng* 情. What defines “metaphysical” *qíng* 情 is its opposition to 貌 “outer appearance”, even *yán* 言 “outer verbalisation”. These are mere *huá* 華 “acoutrements, outward flourishes” of what is inward, essential, and all-important:

(143) GY 11.2, ed. Shanghaiguji p. 394

吾見其貌而欲之，
聞其言而惡之。

When I see his shape I want him,
when I hear his speeches I dislike
him.

夫貌，情之華也；

*External manifestation is the
outward veneer of an inner
reality,*

言，貌之機也。

speeches are a function of external
shape.

身為情，	The person is <i>the essential inner feature</i>
成於中。	and it forms within.
言身之文也。	Speech is an outward adornment of the person.

However we take this passage, it neither invites nor allows an interpretation of human *qíng* 情 in terms of emotions or passions.

In LIJI there is no question but that *qíng* 情 are essential to man, and inward, opposed to *mào* 貌 “outward appearance”:

(144) LIJI 32; Couvreur 2.510; Sūn Xīdàn 13.35; tr. Legge 2.349	
子曰：	The Master said,
「君子不以色親人；	“The superior man is not affectionate to others with his countenance
情疏而貌親。」	(merely) as if, while <i>distant in fundamental attitude</i> , he was close in appearance.”

The obvious function of music is to bring these innermost sensibilities into a kind of harmony:

(145) LIJI 19; Couvreur 2.55f; Sūn Xīdàn 10.28; tr. Legge 2.98	
樂者為同，	Similarity and union are the aim of music;
禮者為異。	difference and distinction, that of ceremony.
同則相親，	From union comes mutual affection;
異則相敬，	from difference, mutual respect.
樂勝則流，	Where music prevails, we find weak coalescence;
禮勝則離。	where ceremony prevails, a tendency to separation.
合情飾貌者	To align <i>the basic instincts</i> and to beautify <i>external appearances</i>
禮樂之事也。	that is the task of propriety and of music.

Instinctual reactions can jar with each other in an emotional cacophony. The purpose of music is construed as being the standard instrument of harmonisation.

In poetry as in prose, these innermost quintessentially real feelings are customarily opposed to mere outer appearance:

(146) CHUCI JIUZHANG 01:02; SBBY 198; Jin 438; Huang 82; Fu 95; tr. Hawkes 156

言與行其可跡兮，

情與貌其不變。

For my words and my deeds
followed one in the steps of the
other,

And *that which I felt* and that
which I showed, between them
there was no change.

míng 名 “names”, being only ways of talking, contrast naturally with those *qíng* 情 which are the real factors that shape reality. Compare ZUO Ai 8.02 魯有名而無情 “Lǔ has the name (of being a great state), but not the essential dynamic features (that would make it into a great state)”. It seems clear that *qíng* 情 is more dynamic in force here than *shí* 實 “the objective features required to qualify” would have been. It is as if *qíng* 情 comes close to “inner driving force, inner momentum”.

shēn 身 “the body”, being outwardly manifest, standardly contrasts with the inner dynamic instincts *qíng* 情 that govern one’s conduct of the body.

wén 文 “elegant form” often naturally contrasts as an antonym with *qíng* 情 “unpolished fundamental instinctive responses”.

wù 物 “things” contrast with the fundamental factors *qíng* 情 that shape these things.

xíng 行 “overt behaviour” contrasts with *qíng* 情 “basic propensity” as well as *xìng* 性 “inborn nature”.

xíng 形 “outer form” and *mào* 貌 “appearance” are both frequent antonyms to the inner and at least potentially hidden *qíng* 情 “fundamental factors; basic inner responses and attitudes to things”.

Throughout the texts I have investigated one cannot “feel” a *qíng* 情, one cannot be anything like “overwhelmed” by *qíng* 情. Thus the relations into which one can enter with *qíng* 情 differ widely from those one might expect as a comparative student of Latin or Greek. There are severe restrictions on the way in which the concept of *qíng* 情 enters classical Chinese discourse and syntax. It is for this reason that a satisfactory account of *qíng* 情 must involve a rich selection of representative examples of how the word is actually used. It is not good enough just to specify the semantic nuances the word has, and the other words which it contrasts with. We also need to know the pragmatic and syntactic contexts in which the word enters classical Chinese linguistic practice.

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THE SEMANTICS OF *QÍNG* 情
IN CHÁN BUDDHIST CHINESE

CHRISTOPH ANDERL

This article¹ is a case study on the use of the Chinese character *qíng* 情 in Chán Buddhist texts as exemplified in the 10th-century historical Chán text *Zūtáng jí* 祖堂集.

The term *qíng* in Buddhist texts is most frequently used in the compound *yǒuqíng* 有情 'have/be endowed with *qíng*' > 'those who have *qíng*' > 'sentient beings' and in its antonym *wúqíng* 無情 'not have *qíng*' > 'those who do not have *qíng*' > 'non-sentient (objects)'.

In part one of this paper, the meanings and usages of the term *qíng* are investigated.

In Buddhist texts, *qíng* does not usually mean 'real state of affairs', 'real feeling' or 'emotion'. On the contrary *qíng* refers to the activities of the "unenlightened mind" and thus has a rather negative connotation. *Qíng* refers to *secondary mental processes* which are generated through contact with the external world. The sense data which are received through contact with external objects and thought-objects are interpreted in a deluded way and diverted into *mind tendencies*. The failure to recognize the true nature of things can result in attachment to the object (passion, desire) or mental processes of conceptualizing, evaluating, discriminating, etc. which, by Buddhist standards, all give a deluded perspective of the world.

Very rarely *qíng* is modified in a way that makes it into a positive concept.

¹ I am deeply indebted to Prof. Jiǎng Shàoyú 蔣紹愚 (Peking University) for his helpful suggestions concerning the translation of some Chinese passages of Huìzhōng's entry in ZTJ.

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Occasionally *qíng* can also refer to the six senses (*liùqíng* 六情).²

In addition, beginning in the late Táng dynasty *qíng* is quite often used in colloquial expressions to mean 'mood' or 'interest'.

Part two of the paper focuses on the term *wúqíng shuōfǎ* 無情說法, 'non-sentients expound the dharma', its rhetorical context in the *Zútáng jí* (ZTJ), and its development into a standard phrase in Chán-Buddhist texts. The development of this phrase is a case study in how originally obscure terms and phrases achieved an important role in the rhetoric structure of Chán-Buddhist texts.

The ZTJ, 'Collection from the Patriarchs' Hall' is used as the major source on *qíng*, firstly because it is a very important text which so far has not received much attention in Western studies on Chán-Buddhism, and secondly because *qíng* is used with a variety of meanings in it. In addition, earlier Chán-texts from Dūnhuáng and later ones from the Sòng-period will be used occasionally.³

The ZTJ was compiled in 952 by the two monks Jìng 靜 and Jūn 筠 at the Zhāoqìng 招慶 monastery in Quánzhōu 泉州, a town in South-China which was until 945 A.D. part of the kingdom of Mǐn 閩 and afterwards became part of the Southern Táng. The ZTJ eventually disappeared from China, but was preserved in Korea where it was carved on wooden blocks between 1236 and 1251 as an appendix to the new Korean Buddhist canon. Presumably because of its supplementary status, the text was not printed along with the canon. Not

² Nakamura lists in his *Bukkyō go daijiten* 佛教語大辭典 five interpretations of the term *qíng* 情 (Nakamura, p. 758d):

- (1) being endowed with feelings > sentient being (skr. *sattva*);
- (2) organ of perception (skr. *indriya*);
- (3) heart/mind;
- (4) thoughts of the common state of consciousness; grasping thoughts;
- (5) mental tendencies; desires.

Other major dictionaries like Oda's *Bukkyō daijiten* 佛教大辭典 do not even list a separate entry on *qíng*!

³ The Chinese text passages from the ZTJ are based on the electronic version which was inputted by Lín Yǒngzé 林永澤 (Peking University), who also generously supplied the text for the *Synonyma Serica Comparata* project at the University of Oslo. The passages cited here were compared with the original, revised and occasionally the punctuation was altered. Variant forms of a character are occasionally inserted into the text. The standard form is then added in brackets.

before the twentieth century did the existence of the ZTJ become known, when the wooden printing-blocks were discovered at the Korean Hae'in 海印 monastery. The ZTJ consists of 386 print-blocks, each containing 28 lines, which adds up to around 200 000 Chinese characters. The great value of the ZTJ lies in the fact that it is written largely in the vernacular language of the late Táng and Five Dynasties periods, and thus it is a major source in the studies of the development of spoken Chinese.

Moreover, the ZTJ makes for the first time abundant use of a new literary genre, today usually designated as *yǔlù* 語錄 ('Recorded Sayings'), which was to become one of the trademarks of Chán Buddhism. The main stress is often not on long doctrinal discussions, but on the dialogues and interactions between masters and disciples or a master and a rival. Arguments in dialogues are sometimes taken to the extreme or the absurd—a fact which makes the ZTJ very entertaining to read. In contrast to many sophisticated Chán works of the Sòng dynasty, due to its unofficial status the ZTJ preserved a sense of originality and spontaneity.

In addition, the ZTJ is the oldest comprehensive historiographical work of the Chán school concerned with the 'right' successors to the sixth Chinese patriarch Huìnéng 惠能. The sections on the seven past Buddhas and the Indian and Chinese patriarchs prior to Huìnéng are drawn from another text, the *Bǎolín zhuàn* 寶林傳, dating from 801. The main emphasis of the ZTJ lies in the establishment of masters after Huìnéng, especially the members of the Mǎzǔ 馬祖 (709-788) and Xuěfēng 雪峰 (822-908) lineages.⁴

Part One: Qíng 情 in Chán Buddhist Texts

'SENTIENT BEING'

As noted above the most frequent usage of *qíng* is in the compound *yǒuqíng* 有情 'being endowed with *qíng* > sentient beings', and its antonym *wúqíng* 無情 'non-sentient (objects)' (see table 1).

The earliest translation for Sanskrit *sattva* ('sentient being') in Indian Buddhist texts was the term *zhòngshēng* 眾生. *Yǒuqíng* 有情

⁴ On ZTJ see especially Yanagida 1953, Yanagida 1964, Yanagida 1980-1982, pp. 1567-1606 and Yanagida 1990, pp. 463-485.

was introduced by the famous translator Xuánzàng 玄奘 (600-664), but the former term continued to be widely used. In the ZTJ, *zhòngshēng* is used 97 times, whereas *yǒuqíng* is used 22 times. Originally, both of them being a translation for skr. *sattva*, *yǒuqíng* turned out to be used more specifically for beings with mental activities, whereas *zhòngshēng* can be used more generally in the sense of 'living beings', including plant life.

Sometimes *qíng* itself is used for sentient beings as for example in *míqíng* 迷情 'deluded mental activities > those with deluded mental activities > deluded/confused beings':

ZTJ 3.063,11:

“吾本來此土，
傳教救迷情。”

“I originally came to this country
to transmit the teaching and save
deluded beings.”

The antonyms of *yǒuqíng* are *wúqíng* 無情 and *fēiqíng* 非情 'not having *qíng* > non-sentient (objects)'. *Wúqíng* will be thoroughly dealt with in the second part of this paper, since discussions on the nature of non-sentient (objects) are a recurring topic in Chán Buddhist writings and often imbedded in a polemic and pedagogic context. The idea that non-sentient objects achieve Buddhahood is expressed earlier in some Mahāyāna-sūtras and later especially in Chinese treatises of the Tiāntái 天台 and Chán-schools. Some commonly used phrases are:

cǎo mù chéng fó 草木成佛 'grasses and trees become Buddha' or
cǎo mù guótǔ xī chéng fó 草木國土悉成佛 'vegetation and territories all become Buddha'.

What is this *qíng* which characterizes sentient beings?

'MENTAL ACTIVITIES/(DELUDED) THOUGHTS/(DELUDED) FEELINGS'

Qíng in Buddhist texts does not mean 'real feeling', a meaning often found in classical texts.⁵ *Qíng* rather refers to the mental processes which arise when sentient beings relate to the external world, and

⁵ For a thorough discussion of the meanings of *qíng* in pre-Buddhist Chinese see Christoph Harbsmeier's article in this volume.

when they process data which they have received through contact with objects. Those mental activities in the common person's mind are, by Buddhist standards, basically deluded and create a distorted view of the world reinforcing attachment to objects.

• *wàngqíng* 妄情: 'deluded mental activities; deluded thoughts'

ZTJ 4.069,01-02:

瞥爾生情，

The moment you produce *deluded mental activities*

萬劫羈鎖去。

you will be bound for 10.000 kalpas.

ZTJ 4.069,01-02:

取境界，

When you grasp for the realm of objects

妄情生，

then *deluded thoughts* will arise,

只如水面一波成。

comparable to waves arising on the surface of water.

但能當境無情計，

But if one were to face the realm of objects without *making [false] assumptions,*

還同水面本來平。

one returns to the original levelness of the surface of water.

In this example, the notion of attachment and grasping in the term *qíng* is illustrated. *Qíng* arises (*shēng* 生) through contact with the realm of (sense-) objects. The mental activity referred to here is *qíngjì* 情計 'qíng-like jì'. *Jì* has rather negative connotations in Buddhist texts (*jì* originally means 'to plan'): "...unenlightened assumptions regarding the nature of reality" (Muller)⁶, "thinking; deluded thinking; attachment; conceptualize; etc." (Nakamura, p. 295b).

ZTJ 2.044,05:

“真理即悟而頓圓，

“Once enlightenment with regard to the True Principle is gained and sudden perfection achieved,

⁶ “Muller” refers to entries in the Internet ‘Dictionary of East Asian Buddhist Terms’ by Charles Muller (see bibliography).

妄情息之而漸盡。

頓圓如初生孩子，

一日而肢體已全；

漸修如長養成人，

多年而志氣方立。”

deluded mental activities are brought to rest and will gradually peter out.”⁷

The sudden perfection is like a newly born child— from the first day his limbs and body are already complete; gradual cultivation is like growing up and becoming adult; only after many years is a high ambition and a lofty spirit⁸ achieved.”

Wàngqíng is contrasted with enlightenment (*wù* 悟). Note the statement in this passage, that even sudden perfection requires gradual cultivation to cease producing *qíng*-like thought processes. Here gradual cultivation presupposes sudden awakening.

• *Qíng jìn* 情盡: ‘(deluded) mental activities are exhausted/used up/have come to an end’

This expression is quite frequently used in Chán-Buddhist literature and denotes the ceasing of the mind’s deluded activities, usually at the time of an awakening-experience:

ZTJ 4.040,04-06:

“某甲一生功夫，
將謂無人過得，

今日之下，
被馬大師呵嘖，

直得情盡。”

“My whole life’s attainments,
I thought there was nobody who
could surpass them.⁹
[But] today
when I was scolded by Great Master
Mǎ[zǔ]
that truly caused my deluded
thoughts to come to an end.”

⁷ The object pronoun *zhī* seems to refer to the topic *wàngqíng* here.

⁸ *zhìqì* 志氣: *Hànyǔ dàcídiǎn* 漢語大詞典 (HYDCD): 志向和氣概 ‘high aspiration and lofty spirit’.

⁹ *jiāngwèi* 將謂/將為 corresponds to modern *yǐwéi* 以為 ‘think; assume’ (Jiang/Cao, p. 184).

Chanlin, ZZ. 137, p. 475a14:¹⁰

凡聖兩忘，

“The profane and the holy, if both
are forgotten,

情盡體露。

then the *mind's activity is exhausted*
and the substance is revealed.”

• *dòng qíng* 動情: ‘to activate (deluded) thoughts; to activate the
mind’

The following example is from an early eighth century Chán text,
the *Dàshèng xīnxíng lùn* 大乘心行論, Pelliot no. 3559, plate 28, line
17-20:

若眾生自識時，

If sentient beings realize their true
nature,

情動亦是涅槃，

then, even if *thinking is activated*,
they are still in a state of nirvāṇa,
and if [thinking] is not activated,
they are still in a state of bodhi;

不動時，

if [sentient beings] do not under-
stand [their true nature],

亦是菩提，

then, if [thinking] is activated, they
are still not in a state of bodhi,

不解時，

and if [thinking] is not activated,
they are still not in a state of

動亦非菩提，

nirvāṇa.

不動亦非涅槃

According to this passage, a fundamental awareness or understanding
‘overrules’ deluded thought processes.

ZTJ 5.052,14 -053,01:

‘凡聖情盡體露，

“When *mental activities* concerning
[the difference between] profane
and holy have ceased and the
substance is revealed,

真心常住，

the True Mind exists permanently;

(Jiang/Cao, p. 184).

¹⁰ The *Chánlín sēngbǎo zhuàn* 禪林僧寶傳 is a collection of biographic materials
and *Recorded Sayings* of Chán masters, compiled by Juéfàn Huìhóng 覺範慧洪
(1071-1128).

理事不二，
即是如如佛矣’

principle and phenomena are not
two,
and that is the Buddha of Suchness.”

Qíng is contrasted with ‘substance’ (*tǐ* 體) and ‘True Mind’ (*zhēnxīn* 真心). The *qíng*-activity here refers to vain assumptions and differentiating (between profane/holy).

ZTJ 1.097,06:

心地含諸種，
普雨悉皆生。

頓悟花情已，

菩提果自成。

The *mind-ground* contains all seeds,
when it rains evenly they all grow;
/ʃa:ɲ/

sudden enlightenment is blossom-
ing, [deluded] mental activities
come to an end
and the bodhi-fruit is naturally
completed.¹¹ /ʃfiaɲ/¹²

Qíng can refer to any mental activity—there is no clearcut distinction between intellectual or emotional responses of the mind. Which aspect is meant is often only clarified by the context or by using *qíng* in a compound:

qíngyù 情欲 ‘*qíng*-like desire> passion; craving’; *qíngniàn* 情念 ‘*qíng*-like thinking; conceptualizing’. For the Western reader, the conceptual gap between ‘to desire’ and ‘to conceptualize’ might seem great, but we have to remember that in Buddhist psychology the mind is often described as one of the sense organs (*yì* 意 skr. *manas* ‘mind-sense’) in line with eyes, ears, etc. The ear takes sound as its object. The mind processes sensations and takes mental images as its object. When thinking of a beautiful person or a precious object, *passion* or *desire* might be generated. Through contact with objects, the *concepts* of ‘I’ and ‘other’ might be generated; both are deluded activities of the mind. Note that sensations and thought processes *per se* are not regarded as deluded. According to (Chán) Buddhist-

¹¹ For a comparison of enlightenment with the growing of a seed see also ZTJ 1.63, 1-3.

¹² This stanza was rhyming in late Middle Chinese (reconstructions of last syllables follow Pulleyblank 1991).

psychology delusions arise rather from secondary mental processes like concept formation, evaluations, discriminating or judgemental thinking, desire, passion, hate towards objects, etc.—all activities which further attachment to the world or which result in a distorted view of the world (i.e. things are not perceived as they really are). Those *secondary mental processes* are exactly what *qíng* often refers to.

In early Chán-texts of the seventh and eighth century, there are many terms describing the mind's deluded activities. At that time, most of the Chán-texts were still written in the form of treatises, and the mind and its functioning was the main topic in many of those texts. Since the appearance of the genre of Recorded Sayings, and the predominance of the dialogue-form, the use of specialized terms became reduced to a certain degree. The exception is the term *xīn* 心 and its compounds (especially *wúxīn* 無心 'no-mind') which achieved a position of prominence.¹³ In early Chán-texts, terminology referring to mind and mental states is by no means coherent but often differs from one text to another. The *Xiū xīn yào lùn* 修心要論,¹⁴ for example, prefers *wàngniàn* 妄念 ('deluded thinking; false conceptualizing'), while the *Yuánmíng lùn* 圓明論¹⁵ favours the term *wàngxiǎng* 妄想 ('deluded thoughts; deluded thinking'). Both terms are used frequently throughout many Chán-texts, and there does not seem to be any significant difference in the meaning of those two terms. *Niàn* 念, when used as noun 'thought', is the only term of this kind which is countable like in *niànniàn bù zhù* 念念不住 'succeeding thoughts do not stop (were uninterrupted)' or *yīniàn* 一念 'one thought; a single thought'.¹⁶ Most similar terms cannot be modified in this way. *Yīxīn* 一心 is 'the One Mind' and not one mind in contrast to others, and if *xīn* is numbered, then it refers to several *kinds* of *xīn* (i.e. it is basically generic in nature).

¹³ In the ZTJ, for example, *xīn* is used more than 700 times (including compounds).

¹⁴ This is an early Chán treatise discovered among the Dūnhuáng manuscripts, attributed to Hóngrěn 弘忍 (601-674) or one of his disciples.

¹⁵ The *Yuán míng lùn* 圓明論 [*Treatise on Perfect Illumination*], a Dūnhuáng text, is attributed to Shénxiù 神秀 (606?-706) or his circle.

¹⁶ In translations from Sanskrit *niàn* was often used for *kṣaṇa* 'a moment. *Niàn* in the (positive) meaning of skr. *smṛti* 'to recite (the name of the Buddha)' is abundant throughout Chinese Buddhist literature.

'(SEXUAL) DESIRE/PASSION'

There is only one example in ZTJ where *qíng* refers to sexual desire

• *yùqíng* 欲情 'desire; passion'

ZTJ 1.027,07-08:

雖為貴偶，

乃無欲情。

欲求出家，

澤志聽許。

Although he [i.e. Kāśyapa] had such an honoured spouse

he was without sexual desires.

He wanted to become a monk,

[His parents] Zé and Zhì gave their permission.

'FEELING/SENSATION'

• *yíqíng* 疑情 'feeling of doubt'¹⁷

ZTJ 1.131,12-13:

皇聞此說，

未息疑情，

遂震錫南行，

直往曹溪禮見六祖。

When Huáng heard these words, his *feelings of doubt* had not yet been resolved;

consequently he hastened south,¹⁸

directly travelling to Cáoxī where he showed his reverence to the Sixth Patriarch.

'SENSE FACULTY'

• *liùqíng* 六情

Occasionally *qíng* is used in the compound *liùqíng* 六情 'the six sense-faculties; the six sense-organs': *yǎn* 眼 'eye-faculty (sense of seeing)'; *ěr* 耳 'ear-faculty (sense of hearing)'; *bí* 鼻 'nose-faculty (sense of smelling)'; *shé* 舌 'tongue-faculty (sense of tasting)'; *shēn*

¹⁷ This term is thoroughly dealt with in Robert Buswell's article. Buswell focuses on Sòng dynasty Chán texts in which *yíqíng* had become a positive concept essential for the practitioner's spiritual progress. In ZTJ the term is only used in the negative sense of doubt as hindrance to reach enlightenment.

¹⁸ *zhènxí* 震錫 lit. 'shake the monk's staff'.

身 'body-faculty (sense of touching)' and yì 意 'mind-faculty (sense of thinking)'. If those faculties are stimulated by the corresponding sense-objects, the six kinds of consciousnesses (*shí* 識) are generated. 'Sense faculty' (skr. *indriya*) seems to be the oldest Buddhist meaning of *qíng* already appearing in the *Rén běn yù shéng jīng* 仁本欲生經 (Mahānidānā-sūtra, T.1, no.14) which was translated by Ān Shìgāo (2nd cent. A.D.).

ZTJ 2.074,10 B:

一念不生全體現，

六情纔動被雲遮。

If not a single thought arises the complete substance is manifest; as soon as the *six sense-organs* are aroused, [the substantial] will be clouded over (lit. cloud-like covered).

'Substance' (*tǐ* 體) points to the true state of being/truth which is beclouded by the activity of the senses.

The standard term for the six sense faculties in Buddhist texts is the term *liù gēn* 六根 'the six roots'.¹⁹ Rarely the term *liù yī* 六依 'the six dependables' is used.

• *dāng qíng* 當情 'correspond to the sense-faculties' [?]

ZTJ 5.055,10-13:

師問：

“兄近日作摩生？”

雙峰云：

“某甲所見，
無有一法可當情。”

The master [Yǎngshān] asked:

“How have you been the past days?”

Shuāngfēng said:

“What I see,
is that *there is not a single dharma which can correspond to the sense faculties.*”

師云：

“你所見不出心境。”

The master said:

“What you see does not go beyond the realm of the mind.”

¹⁹ *liù gēn* appears four times in ZTJ.

進曰：	[Shuāngfēng] said further: ²⁰
“某甲所見，	“What I see
不出心境，	does not go beyond the realm of the
	mind.
和尚所見如何？”	How about what you see?”
師云：	The master said:
“豈無能知寔無一法可當	“How could I possibly not know
情乎？”	that there really <i>is not a single</i>
	<i>dharma which can correspond to</i>
	<i>the sense faculties!”</i>

The point here seems to be that there is no object which can be directly perceived (i.e. its true nature seen) by the sense faculties. In this and the following passage dharma (*fǎ* 法) refers not to ‘teaching’ but to ‘constituents of existence’.

ZTJ 2.079,09-11:

師有時曰：	The master at one point said:
“夫有佛、有法、有祖已來，	Ever since there was the Buddha,
	the dharma and the patriarchs,
時人錯會，	average people (lit. contemporaries)
	have misunderstood [them].
謂言佛邊、祖邊、法邊	They think that the Buddha, the
	patriarchs and the dharma
遞代相承，	have been continuously transmitted
至於今日，	until the present day.
須依佛祖法句意與汝為師言	[They assume that one] should
	depend on the teachings of the
	Buddha, the dharma and the
	patriarchs and the words of your
	teachers,
方是。	and only then you get it right.

²⁰ I translate *jìn* 進 in this context with ‘further’. The original meaning is ‘to advance; to step forward’ and it perhaps refers to the situation where master and student are engaged in a discussion and the student politely takes a step forward when putting forth a question.

因此天下出無眼狂人，	Because of this the world brings forth eyeless [blind] lunatics (i.e. people who just depend on others), who definitely become ignorants.
卻成無智。	It is not like that.
不然，	Only if it is as if there is no dharma [whatever][?];
他只如無法，	this is in reality the Way [i.e. the truth].
本來是道。	<i>There is not a single dharma which corresponds to the sense faculties –</i>
無一法當情，	no Buddhahood which can be achieved,
沒佛可成，	no Way which can be practiced and no dharma which can be rejected.
沒道可修，	Therefore, in front of one's eyes there is no dharma, ²¹
沒法可捨。	the mind-sense is in front of the eyes.
故目前無法，	They are not dharmas in front of one's eyes
意在目前。	and they cannot be reached [i.e. perceived] by the ear or eye.
他不是目前法，	
非耳目之所到。	

Similar to the previous passage, it is stated that there is nothing which can be perceived *directly*. On the contrary, constituents of existence are filtered (and distorted) by the mind-sense (*yì* 意, skr. *manas*). At any given moment of perception (indicated here by *mù-qíán* 目前), no constituent of existence (*fǎ* 法) enters consciousness 'as it is' but only in the way it was processed by the mind-sense. Consequently a highly artificial and subjective image of the world and its objects is created in the mind.

²¹ *mùqíán* 目前: lit. 'in front of one's eyes', i.e. at the moment (of perception).

• *qíngshí* 情識

The compound *qíngshí* 情識 is a rare expression. According to *Hànyǔ dàcídiǎn* 漢語大詞典 it can mean 'feeling and knowledge', 'desire, passion' (like *qíngyù* 情欲) or 'talent and experience'. None of those meanings is suitable for the following passage. *Qíngshí* is interpreted here as referring to the process of perception (*qíng* indicating the sense faculty and *shí* indicating the resulting consciousness).

ZTJ 2.144,12-14:

師初見洞山時問：

“見則見，
爭奈情識雲偽何？”

洞山云：

“汝還見也無？”

對云：

“見。”

洞山云：

“既見為什摩情識雲偽？”

對云：

“爭奈情識雲偽何？”

洞山云：

“若與摩則萬里無寸草

處立。”

When master [Huáyán 華嚴] saw
Dòngshān for the first time he
asked:

“Although I see [you],
isn't that a fake perception?”²²

Dòngshān said:

“Do you see [me] or not?”²³

He answered:

“I see you.”

Dòngshān said:

“Now, seeing me, why do you call it
a fake perception?”²⁴

He answered:

“*Isn't that a fake perception?*”

Dòngshān said:

“If that is so, then within 10.000
miles there is not as much as an inch
of grass
to stand on.”

Here again the nature of perception is discussed. Huáyán raises the topic discussed above, that any process of perception is necessarily distorted. However, in this passage Dòngshān avoids any theoretical

²² *yún* 雲 'cloud' in this passage is obviously a mistake for *yún* 云 'to say'. *Zhēng-nai* 爭奈...*hé* 何 is a current pattern for rhetorical questions in ZTJ.

²³ *hái* 還 is a structural particle, which frequently appears in questions in the ZTJ.

²⁴ *jì* 既 is used logically and indicates that the proposition of the opponent has been accepted and serves as basis for further discussions on the subject.

discussion, but confronts Huáyán with the simple question whether he can see him or not. If one were to doubt any perceived sense-data, there would not be an 'inch of grass to stand on', i.e. one would lose all contact with the external world. The central topic addressed here is the subtle line between the two extremes of substantialism (i.e. regarding the perceived sense-data as absolute reality) and nihilism (i.e. the conclusion that ultimately nothing really exists).

'MIND/STATE OF MIND/INNER FEELINGS'

Qíng is occasionally used as synonym or near-synonym for *xīn* 心 'mind'.

ZTJ 2.008,13-14:

僖宗皇帝詔入內，

Emperor Xīzōng ordered him [i.e. master Cùiwēi 翠微] to enter the Imperial court.

大敷玄教，

[There] he spread the subtle teaching on a great scale

帝情大悅，

and *the mind of the emperor* was highly delighted;

賜紫法號廣照大師。

He bestowed the purple [ribbon]²⁵ on him and gave him the dharma name 'Great Master Guǎngzhào'.

ZTJ 4.064, 08-09:

“如何得自由？”

“How can one obtain liberation?”

師答曰：

The master answered:

“如今對五欲八風，

“Now, if towards the five desires (arising from the objects of the five senses) and the eight winds (which fan the passions),

情無取捨。

the mind does not grasp or reject,

垢淨俱亡，

then defilement and purity both disappear,

如日月在空，

like the sun and the moon in the sky

²⁵ As part of the ceremonial monk's robe.

不緣而照。

which shine unconditionally [on everything].

In the example below *wàngqíng* 妄情 and *wàngxīn* 妄心 are strictly parallel:

ZTJ 1.103,9-11:

“境緣無好惡，

“Objects and conditions have neither ‘liking’ nor ‘disliking’ (i.e. objects are neither good nor bad *per se*),

好惡起於心。

[the concepts of] ‘liking’ and ‘disliking’ arise in the *mind*.

心若不強名，

If the *mind* does not artificially form false concepts,

妄情從何起？

where could the *deluded mind/deluded thoughts* arise from?

妄心既不起，

If the *deluded mind* does not arise,

真心任遍知。

then the *true mind* employs permeating wisdom.”

Xīn is *the* cardinal term in Chán Buddhist texts and has by far the highest frequency and range of usage of any terms related to mental processes.

In early translations from Sanskrit, *xīn* had quite negative connotations, usually referring to the organ of thinking and conceptualization (synonymous to *yì* 意, the sixth sense-faculty). From the sixth century onwards, Chinese Buddhist philosophers engaged in ardent debates about the nature of mind (pure vs. impure), the classification of consciousnesses and related problems.²⁶ With the appearance of the apocryphal *Dàshèng qǐxìn lùn* 大乘起信論 (‘Treatise on the Awakening of Faith in the Mahāyāna’, 6th cent.?) - a text which significantly influenced the understanding of ‘mind’ among all Buddhist schools established in the early Táng, *xīn* became established as the definite term for ‘mind’. The *Dàshèng qǐxìn lùn* postulates the ‘One Mind’ (*yīxīn* 一心) which is the root of all existence and permeates everything. The One Mind has two aspects: the true and perfected mind (*zhēnxīn*

²⁶ See especially Paul 1984 and Buswell 1989, pp. 74-115.

真心) and the deluded mind (*wàngxīn* 妄心).²⁷ The latter creates a distorted view of the world by wrong thinking, conceptualizing, differentiation, attachment, etc.

In contrast to *xīn*, *qíng* usually cannot refer to 'the true and perfected mind' but only the mind in its deluded state. In addition *qíng* can never refer to an inner entity which can be *trained* and *developed*. In this meaning only *xīn* can be used. For example: *zuò xīn* 作心 'to apply the mind (in practice)'; *xīnxíng* 心行 'practice of the mind' or 'the mind's functional realm'; etc.

• *rénqíng* 人情, 'people's mind; the ordinary person's mind; the ordinary person's way of thinking/feeling'

ZTJ 5.068,05:

“諮和尚：
和尚今時，
若記人見解，

即得。
若記人行解，
即屬人情，

不是佛法。”

“I tell you, monks:

Nowadays,

if you remember a person's [i.e. a
master's] [transmitted] views
(teachings), [?]

then you attain [the truth].

If you recall a person's practice, [?]
then you still belong to the [realm
of] the ordinary person's mind.²⁸

That is not the Buddha-dharma.”

²⁷ For example, in the short treatise *Dàshèng xīnxíng lùn* 大乘心行論 ('Treatise on the practice of the mind in Mahāyāna'; probably early eighth century) the perfected aspect of the mind is referred to by expressions like *xīn* 心 'mind', *wúxīn* 無心 'no-mind', *zhēnxīn* 真心 'the true mind', *jiě xīn* 解心 'the understanding mind', *běnxīn* 本心 'the original mind', *xīnxìng* 心性 'mind nature'. The deluded mind is referred to by *xīn* 心 'mind', *pānyuán xīn* 攀緣心 'mind of attachment', *wàngxīn* 妄心 'the deluded mind'. The mind which is the foundation for everything and comprises all existence is referred to as *yīxīn* 一心 'the One Mind'.

²⁸ The difficult terms *jiànjiě* 見解 "understand by seeing/reading" and *xíngjiě* 行解 "understand by practicing" are translated very tentatively here. In ZTJ 5.65, 10 the terms are described as follows: "見解屬口密，行解屬意密。" : "Jiànjiě belongs to the oral [transmitted?] secrets, xíngjiě belongs to the secrets of the mind." [?]. Those terms maybe refer to written down and transmitted teachings in contrast to actual practice.

- *fánqíng* 凡情, similar to *rén qíng*, refers to the 'ordinary person's way of thinking; ordinary person's mind > ordinary person'.

ZTJ 4.035,06:

汝將生死不淨之心，

口頭取辦，

錯傳佛教，

誑誑凡情。

When you express yourself in speech by means of the mind which is impure and subject to birth and death (i.e. the ordinary mind), then you transmit the dharma in a wrong way and cheat and insult the *ordinary people*.

- *zhōngqíng* 衷情 'state of mind; inner feelings'

ZTJ 3.066,13:

大師自起來開門，

執手問衷情。

師說衷情偈曰：

也大差，

也不差，

卷上簾來滿天下。

The Grand Master rose and opened the door himself, grasped his hand and asked him about his *inner feelings* (state of mind).

The master paraphrased his *inner feelings* in a stanza:

'It is completely different, /tʂ^ha/ yet it is not different, /tʂ^ha/
Rolling up the screen it fills the whole world. /xɸja/

'PERFECTED MIND'

Very rarely *qíng* is modified in such a way that it assumes a *positive connotation* indicating the perfected state of mind:

- *dàoqíng* 道情 'mind of the Way; mind of truth': There does not seem to be any reference to this term in dictionaries. It is possibly synonymous to *dàoxīn* 道心 which denotes the mind which is determined to attain enlightenment (in translations sometimes used for skr. bodhi-citta). *Dàoxīn* is occasionally also used for translating skr.

bodhisattva. *Dàoqíng* could be interpreted as well as 'truth-like sentient being > bodhisattva'. This interpretation actually fits the examples below quite well. In both cases *qíng* is obviously chosen instead of *xīn* because of the rhyme-pattern.

ZTJ 2.155,08-10:

人若無心稱道情

If a person [manifests] 'no-mind'²⁹
then he is called a *bodhisattva*;³⁰
/tsfiajŋ/

識得無明道已明。

if he is able to understand igno-
rance, then the Way [i.e. truth] is
already clear [to him]; /miajŋ/

人能弘道道能現，

if a person spreads the Way, then
the Way can become manifest;

道在人中人自寧。

if the Way is inside a person then he
himself will be at ease. /niajŋ/

ZTJ 1.107,12:

形羸骨瘦久修行，

One's body emaciated, one contin-
uously practices, /xfija:jŋ/

一納麻衣稱道情。

one [in] hempen monks-robe is
called a *bodhisattva*. [?] /tsfiajŋ/

• *běnnqíng* 本情 'original intention; original tendencies of the mind; original mind'

ZTJ 3.127,05-06:

妄慮俱銷，

Deluded thinking has all melted
away,

如豁虛空。

like open space.

悠然無寄，

Freely, not relying on anything,

始得功成德立，

only then is merit achieved and
virtue established;

²⁹ *wúxīn* 無心 'no-mind' is presumably the most important single term in Chán-Buddhist texts and denotes the perfected state of mind corresponding to terms like *zhēnxīn* 真心 'true mind', etc.

³⁰ Another possible reading is: "...then he is equal to a Bodhisattva."

位稱本情。

this position [i.e. state] is called the *original mind*.

COLLOQUIAL EXPRESSIONS

• *xīnqíng* 心情 'mood; state of mind; interest' is a colloquial term used since Táng times:

Chánlín, ZZ. 137, p. 490a9:

什麼心情，

In what *kind of mood* are you (or: what interest do you have)? – studying the teaching of Buddhism and seeking earnestly after knowledge.

學佛法，
廣求知解。

Chánlín, ZZ. 137, p. 491b16-17:

請師直指西來意。

"[...] I beg you to point out to me the meaning of [Bodhidharma's] coming to the west!"

答曰：
我今日無心情，
但問取智藏。
僧問藏。
藏曰：
我今日頭痛、
問取海兄。

[The master] answered:

"*I'm not in the mood today, just go and ask Zhizāng.*"

The monk asked Zhizāng who said:

"I've got a headache today, go and ask elder brother (i.e. senior fellow apprentice) Hǎi."

ZTJ 4.021,08-11:

師問僧：

“古人借(惜)君臣父子，

The master asked a monk:

"People of old were careful of [the relationship between] ruler and subject, father and son, Do you have faith in this?"

汝還信也無？”

對云：

“今日勞倦，
勿心情。”

The monk answered:

"I am tired today, *and I am not in the mood* [to answer]."

師云：

“待明朝，

The master said:

"I'll wait till tomorrow,

還祇對也無？”

will you answer then?”

對云：

The monk said:

“入叢(叢)林久矣。”

“It has been a long time since [you
?] entered the monastery.”

• *yěhú qíng* 野狐情 (精) This expression (alone and in combinations with other words) is a term of abuse frequently used in Chán-texts of the Sòng-period. The compound with *qíng*, as in the following example, is quite unusual. Common is *yěhú jīng* 野狐精. *Yěhú qíng* is used three times in ZTJ and is probably an alternative expression for *yěhú jīng*.

ZTJ 4.052,07-09:

石門拈問明真：

Shímén took up a problem and
asked Míngzhēn:

“作摩生道即得免被喚作半
個聖人？”

“How should one talk so as
to avoid being called ‘half a sage’?”

明真便喝云：

Míngzhēn screamed:

“這野狐情！”

“This *wild-fox spirit!*”

• *Qíng huái* 情懷 ‘mood; state of mind’ is also a colloquial term used since Táng times.

ZTJ 1.159,06:

師放曠情懷，
濤遠順境，
樂乎雲水，
去住逍遙。

The master *relaxed his mind*,
[?]

delighted with clouds and water.³¹
he wandered around at ease.

• *Qíng qiè* 情切 ‘feelings are clear-cut > be very eager to; readily; be enthusiastic about; care about’

ZTJ 2.085,07-10:

“彼中和尚問當頭因緣，

“That monk there asked me about a
case,

³¹ *yúnshuǐ* 雲水 lit. ‘cloud and water’ is a metaphor for a homeless and roaming monk.

某甲情切舉似彼中和尚。” and I was very eager to cite one for him.”

ZTJ 3.047,12-14:

“此是和尚為物情切。” “This monk is very enthusiastic about living beings!”

Part Two: The Doctrine of

Wú Qíng Shuō Fǎ 無情說法 ‘Non-Sentients Expound the Dharma’

In the second part of this paper I will focus on the obscure phrase *wúqíng shuō fǎ* 無情說法.

The idea that inanimate objects also possess Buddha-nature can be found already in some early Mahāyāna-scriptures and was elaborated on in treatises of the Chán and Tiāntái 天台 schools. We find the idea expressed in (standard) phrases like ‘Grasses and trees become Buddha’ (草木成佛 *cǎo mù chéng fó*)³² and ‘Vegetation and territories, all become Buddha 草木國土悉成佛’³³. The basic idea behind this concept is probably the assumption that the self and its perceived objects form a unity which cannot be separated from each other (Huìzhōng 惠忠 uses this argument in the dialogue below). Thus if the agent (a human or an animal) possesses Buddha-nature then also the objects of perception participate in their Buddha-nature. Another reason might be the tendency to create a unified concept of Buddha-nature, comprising all aspects of existence.

³² Chapter Yào cǎo yù 藥草喻 in the *Miào fǎ liánhuā jīng* 妙法蓮華經 (Saddharmapuṇḍaṅka); T. 9, no. 262: 19a-22a; see also Nakamura, p. 871a-b.

³³ See Nakamura, p. 871a.

TABLE 1: A QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE OCCURENCE OF 情 IN ZTJ
The entries on *qíng* are arranged according to the sequence of their occurrence in Yanagida's concordance. The translations of the terms are tentative.

TERM	FREQUENCY	TRANSLATION	INDEX-PAGE
<i>qíng</i> 情	14	'deluded activity of mind; thinking; etc.'	721a
<i>qíngqiè</i> 情切	3	'eagerly; be eager to (coll.)'	721b
<i>qíng huái</i> 情懷	1	'mood; mental state'	721b
<i>qíng jìn</i> 情盡	5	'mental activities have come to and end'	721b
<i>qíngshén</i> 情神	1	'mind'	721b
<i>qíngjì</i> 情計	1	'making [false] assumptions'	721b
<i>qíngshí</i> 情識	3	'sense organ and consciousness>perception'	721b
<i>qíngliàng</i> 情量	1	'thinking; evaluating'	721b
<i>shìqíng</i> 世情	2	'ordinary state of mind'	82b
<i>fánqíng</i> 凡情	2	'way of thinking of the commoner; the ordinary person'	318c
<i>rénqíng</i> 人情	2	'(common) people's way of thinking'	193b
<i>lái qíng</i> 來情	1	[?]	257b
<i>liùqíng</i> 六情	1	'the six sense-faculties'	308a
<i>dòng qíng</i> 動情	1	'to activate thoughts/to activate the mind'	351c
<i>wàngqíng</i> 妄情	4	'deluded mental activities'	544b
<i>xīnqíng</i> 心情	2	'mood interest (coll.)'	707b
<i>lǚqíng</i> 慮情	1	'reckoning; pondering'	730a
<i>yùqíng</i> 欲情	1	'[sexual] desire; passion'	935a
<i>yǒuqíng</i> 有情	22	' <i>sentient beings</i> '	899c
<i>běnnqíng</i> 本情	1	'fundamental/original mind'	913c
<i>wúqíng</i> 無情	23	' <i>non-sentient objects</i> '	1017a
<i>wúqíng shuō fǎ</i> 無情說法	14	' <i>non-sentient objects expound the dharma</i> '	1017a ³⁴
<i>huáng qíng</i> 皇情	1	'feelings of the emperor'	1080c
<i>yíqíng</i> 疑情	3	'feelings of doubt'	1071b
<i>shénqíng</i> 神情	1	'mind' [?]	1120a
<i>shèngqíng</i> 聖情	1	'state of mind of the sage/ sage's way of thinking'	1180c
<i>zhōngqíng</i> 衷情	4	'mind; state of mind; feelings' [?]	1262a
<i>míqíng</i> 迷情	5	'confused beings'	1348a
<i>dàoqíng</i> 道情	2	'[truth-mind ;] bodhisattava' [=道心?]	1379b
<i>yěqíng</i> 野情	1	'wild spirit (coll.)' [=野精?]	1398c
<i>yěhú qíng</i> 野狐情	3	'wild-fox spirit (coll.)' [=野狐精?]	1398c

³⁴ These are counted separately from *wú qíng*.

Wúqíng shuō fǎ, the assumption that non-sentient objects actually expound the dharma, takes the doctrine of an all-comprising Buddha-nature even further. The ZTJ seems to be the oldest source for this phrase.³⁵

The doctrine of 'non-sentient objects expound the dharma' is most thoroughly treated in the entry on the monk Huìzhōng in a dialogue with a 'Southern Chán monk'. This dialogue is perhaps one of the most interesting and entertaining pieces of rhetoric in the ZTJ. It is highly dialectical in nature, trying to refute and ridicule the teaching of the Southern Chán faction of Shénhuì.

The fascination with *wúqíng shuō fǎ* continued long after the ZTJ was written, and developed into a frequently used phrase in Chán scriptures. The very obscurity of the phrase made it suitable for the rhetorical and pedagogical purposes of Chán dialogues. The question "What about non-sentients expounding the dharma" gave room for a variety of answers.

THE ENTRY ON CHÁN MASTER HUÌZHŌNG

Chán master Huìzhōng 惠忠 (d. 775) was a renowned meditation master of the 8th century. We know very little about his life and

³⁵ In the compounds with *qíng* the terms *yǒuqíng* and *wúqíng* have by far the highest frequency in the ZTJ. *Yǒuqíng* is used 22 times, *wúqíng* 37 times (14 times in the phrase *wúqíng shuō fǎ*).

As Robert Sharf has pointed out, the question whether inanimate objects possessed Buddha-nature was a source of controversy in the medieval period and especially in the debates between the northern and southern factions of Chán. The theory that also inanimate objects possess Buddha-nature is possibly based on the writings of Jingying Huìyuǎn 淨影慧遠 (523-592) who "[...] distinguished between the buddha-nature that abides at all times in all places and the buddha-nature that is actualized in enlightened sentient beings. But Huìyuǎn stopped short of explicitly claiming that inanimate objects possess buddha-nature. The first person to do so appears to have been the Sānlún 三輪 exegete Jízāng 吉藏 (549-623), who argued that the very distinction between sentient and insentient is illegitimate, and thus, if buddha-nature can be said to exist at all, then it must be possessed by both the sentient and the insentient." (Sharf 2002: 247) The doctrine was also taken up by members of the Tiāntái school, especially Zhànrán 湛然 (711-782). Many adherents of the early Chán school seem to have supported the doctrine, e.g. the Fourth Patriarch Dào-xìn 道信 (580-651), the Fifth Patriarch Hóng-rěn 弘忍 (601-674), possibly also Shén-xiù 神秀 (605?-706); see *ibid.*: 247-248. References on secondary works on this doctrine see in *ibid.*: 335, fn. 55.

teachings. Like most of the other entries in the ZTJ his entry is divided into a biographical part and a record of dialogues.³⁶ The biographical part in the ZTJ is worth translating in full length since it is one of the earliest materials on this master. Moreover it beautifully illustrates the hagiographic style of the ZTJ, mixing some historical information with legendary accounts.³⁷ Note especially the description of his 'key-experience' and his first encounter with the Sixth Patriarch.³⁸

ZTJ 1.113,06 - 1.115,13; Yanagida, pp. 57-58; Foguang, pp. 137-139; Wu/Gu, pp. 71-72:

慧忠國師嗣(嗣)六祖，	The national teacher Huìzhōng succeeded the Sixth Patriarch.
姓冉，	His family name was Rǎn
越州諸暨縣人也。	and he was a person from Yuè-province, Zhūjì- district.
其兒子在家時，	At the time when the boy was living at home,
並不曾語，	he never uttered a word
又不曾過門前橋。	nor did he ever cross the bridge in front of the gate.

³⁶ Typically narrative parts of the biographical entries are mostly written in literary Chinese while the language of the dialogues is to a great degree vernacular.

³⁷ The biographic entry is also translated by Arthur Waley 1968, edited as posthumous article by David Hawkes. Waley thinks that this passage was inserted into the ZTJ during the early Sòng because of the geographical name Guǎngnán 廣南 which was not current before 990 (however one could also interpret it as Guǎng nán 'in the south of Guǎng province). There also appears the following phrase 廣八百眾. Waley thinks *guǎng* 廣 should be *kuāng* 匡 ('to correct > instruct') but was avoided as taboo since it appeared in the personal name of the first Sòng emperor (however, the regular substitute for 匡 would be 光). I think Waley's arguments are slightly insufficient as proof that the passage was inserted at a later period. However, in China the ZTJ only circulated as a hand-written manuscript and was never printed. As such it is possible (and even likely) that materials might have been inserted at a later date (some materials on Korean monks might even have been added in the 13th century when the ZTJ was carved on wooden blocks).

³⁸ For a translation into modern Japanese see Yanagida 1990, pp. 150ff. The language of the ZTJ is often very colloquial and sometimes poses great difficulties. In some cases this translation is only tentative. Occasional notes on the vernacular grammar and usage of words are provided in the footnotes.

直到十六，	At the time when he reached the age of sixteen,
有一个(個)禪師來(來)，	a Chán master came
纔望見，	and as soon as he saw him from afar, ³⁹
走出過門前橋，	he ran out and crossed the bridge in front of the gate,
迎接禮(禮)拜，	welcomed him, made prostrations
通寒宣(=暄?)。	and exchanged greetings.
父、阿孃、眷屬、遠近鄰舍	His father, mother ⁴⁰ , [other] family members and neighbours from far and near
惣(總)來，	all came
驚訝曰：	and said with surprise:
“不可思議。	‘This is unbelievable!’ ⁴¹
這個(個)兒子，	This boy,
養來到十六，	from the time when he was born until he reached the age of sixteen,
並不曾見他語話，	has never been seen talking,
又不曾見他過門前橋。	nor has he ever been seen crossing the bridge in front of the gate.
今日纔見和尚，	But today, as soon as he lay eyes on the monk,
有如是次第。	he did all this! ⁴²
恐是此兒子異於(於)常人也。”	This boy is surely different from ordinary people!”
兒子便問禪師：	The boy thereupon addressed the Chán master:

³⁹ *cái* 纔(才): ‘as soon as’.

⁴⁰ Note the colloquial term for ‘mother’: *āniáng* 阿孃(娘).

⁴¹ This is a good example of an originally specialist Buddhist term having become part of the colloquial language: *bùkěsīyì* 不可思議 (skr. *acintya*) ‘inconceivable; unexpressable [qualities of the dharma, truth, etc.]’ > coll. ‘incredible! [expressing astonishment]’.

⁴² *yǒu rúshì cìdì* 有如是次第 (exist/like/this/sequence-sequence;) ‘be in such a situation; act in such a way’ (see: Jiang/Cao, p. 69).

<p>“乞師慈悲攝受， 度得一个(個)眾生。 某甲切要投禪出家。”</p>	<p>“I beg you, master, be merciful, accept me [as your student], and save [this] one living being.⁴³ I definitely want to entrust myself to [the] Chán [teaching] and become a monk.”⁴⁴</p>
<p>禪師曰： “是我宗門中 銀輪王嫡子， 金輪王孫子方始得繼續， 不墜此門風。 是你三家村裏男女， 牛背上將養底兒子， 作摩生投這個(個)宗門？”</p>	<p>The Chán master said: “In this [Chán-] school of ours,⁴⁵ only legal heirs of a Silver-Wheel King and grandsons of the Golden-Wheel King are entitled for the succes- sion,⁴⁶ so that this teaching will not decline. But you are the child of a man and woman from a small hamlet, raised [or: begotten?] on the back of an ox. How could you entrust yourself to this school?”⁴⁷</p>

⁴³ Here *zhòngshēng* 眾生 ‘living beings’ specifically refers to the ‘common persons’ who are subjected to the sufferings of existence and dwells in a state of ignorance (in contrast to *zhūshèng* 諸聖 ‘sages’ who have transcended those afflictions).

⁴⁴ 禪 should probably read 禪師: “I definitely want to entrust myself to you to become a monk.”

⁴⁵ 是我 is contrasted with 是你 further down.

⁴⁶ The two most powerful of the four cakravartin. *Fāngshǐ dé* 方始得 corresponds to modern Chinese *cái néng* 才能 ‘only then can’.

⁴⁷ *zuòmóshēng* 作摩生 corresponds to modern *zěnmeyàng* 怎麼樣 ‘how’. *Shēng* 生 is some kind of colloquial suffix which is attached to question words like *zěn* 怎 and *zěnmó* 怎麼 in Táng and Sòng times. So far no convincing explanation of its origin and its function has been provided. It has been suggested that it was originally used phonetically for a colloquial expression of a Southern dialect (today suffix *shēng* is still used in the Wú 吳 dialect, for example). One of its earliest examples appears in *Shénhuì yǔlù* 神會語錄, a work dating from the 8th century, probably written in South-China and containing many colloquial expressions, among them many characters used phonetically. Ota cites the cryptic sentence 異沒時作勿生 (corresponding to modern Chinese 那樣時怎麼樣) which would be completely ob-

不是你分上事。”

That's not a matter allotted to you by fate.”

兒子曰：
“啟禪師：
‘是法平等，
無有高下。’

The boy said:
“I tell you, master:
‘This teaching is without partiality
and makes no difference between
high and low.’

那得有這個(個)言詞
障於某甲善心？
再乞禪師垂慈容納。”

How can you use these words
to impede my good intentions?
I beg you again, master, to bestow
your compassion on me and accept
me [as your student]!”

禪師見兒子有如是次第，

When the Chán master saw the boy
acting like this

便向兒子說：
“你若如此，
投某出家則不得。”

he said to him:
“If you are [so determined] as this,
then you should not entrust yourself
to me to become a monk.”

子曰：
“投什麼人出家？”

The boy said:
“Whom shall I entrust myself to
become a monk?
Please point out a teacher for me.”

禪師与(與)某甲指示宗師。”

禪師曰：
“汝還聞曹(曹)溪摩？”

The Chán master said:
“Have you heard about [a place
called] Cáoxī?”

子曰：
“不知漕(=曹)溪
是什麼州界。”

The child answered:
“I do not know where Cáoxī
is situated.”

禪師曰：
“廣南漕(=曹)溪山，
有一善知識，

The Chán master said:
“In Guǎngnán, on Mt. Cáoxī,
there lives a teacher (spiritual
mentor, lit. good friend)

喚作六祖，
廣六百眾，
你去那(那)裏出家。
某甲未曾游天台，

你自但去。”

who is called the 'Sixth Patriarch'.
He has as many as 600 disciples.⁴⁸
Go there to become a monk.
I have never travelled to [Mt.]
Tiāntái,
so you have to go there on your
own.”

其兒子便入草隱遁，
回避爺孃便行。

三日程(程)二日行，
兩日程(程)一日行。

到曹溪，
恰遇祖師正當說法時，

便禮拜祖師。

The boy then hid away in the [high]
grass,
avoided his father and mother and
then went his way.
A three-days journey he would walk
in two days
and a two-days journey he would
walk in one day.
When he arrived in Cáoxī
he met the patriarch just at the time
of teaching.
He proceeded to show his reverence
to him.

祖師問：
“從什麼處來？”

The patriarch asked:
“Where to you come from?”

對曰：
“只近。”

He answered:
“From just close by.”

祖曰：
“生緣在阿那裏？”

The patriarch said:
“Where is your place of birth?”

子曰：

The boy said:

時 were used phonetically (on this example see Ota 1988, pp. 140-141). On *shēng* see also Yú 1995, p. 72.

⁴⁸ *guǎng* 廣 seems to be used here transitively similar to *duō* 多 or *zhòng* 眾 + object: 'be as many as; comprising as many as'.

- “自得五陰後忘卻也。” “Since I obtained this physical body⁴⁹, I have completely forgotten it.”
- 祖師招手云： The patriarch waved with his hand and said:
 “近前來！” “Come closer!”
 子便近前。 The boy came closer.
- 祖師曰： The patriarch said:
 “實說你是什麼處人。” “Honestly speaking, where are you from?”
- 子曰： The boy said:
 “浙中人。” “I am from *Zhè*.”⁵⁰
- 祖曰： The patriarch said:
 “遠來到這裏為什麼事？” “For what purpose did you travel so far to come here?”
- 子曰： The boy said:
 “一則明師難遇， “Firstly, it is hard to find an enlightened master
 正法難聞， and the right teaching is hard to come by;
 特來禮觀祖師。 I came especially to pay my homage to the patriarch [you].

⁴⁹ Lit. *wūyīn* 五陰 (*wūyùn* 五蘊; *wūzhòng* 五眾) the ‘Five Aggregates’ or components of a sentient being (*sè* 色 ‘form’; *shòu* 受 ‘sensation’; *xiǎng* 想 ‘conception’; *xíng* 行 ‘mind tendencies and functions’; *shì* 識 ‘consciousness’); here it is used as metaphor for the physical existence. Note the verb complement *què* 卻 and the sentence final particle *yě* 也 indicating completed action.

⁵⁰ This situation has a comical flavour to it: In Chán-dialogues, being asked about one’s place of birth or where one comes from, the master usually expects some kind of philosophical answer which shows the student’s level of understanding rather than a concrete answer. Here it is just the other way round: asked about his place of birth Huìzhōng answers metaphorically but the master really wants to know where he comes from and – calming the young boy down by asking him to come closer – repeats his question.

乞師垂慈攝受。”

and beg you to bestow your mercy on me and accept me [as your student].”

祖曰：
“我向你道莫出家。”

The patriarch said:
“I tell you: Do not become a monk!”

子曰：
“因什摩有此言？”

The boy said:
“Why do you talk like this?”

祖曰：
“你是聖明不動干戈六十年天子，
是你但造天子佛法為主。”

The master said:
“You will become a holy emperor [who shall rule] for sixty years without the use of weapons, or you will just have as your purpose to establish the Emperor’s Buddha-dharma [i.e. become the emperor’s personal teacher].”[?]

子曰：
“啟師：
非但六十年，
百年天子也不要。”

The boy said:
“I tell you, master!
Not only a period of sixty years nor even a period of one hundred years as emperor do I want. I beg the master to be merciful and allow me to become a monk.”

乞師慈悲，
容許某甲出家。”

師便摩頂授記曰：

The master then rubbed the boy’s forehead and gave him the following prediction:

“你若出家，
天下獨立佛。”

“If you become a monk then you alone will establish the Buddha in the world.” [?]

便攝受。

And he proceeded to take him on [as his disciple].

師曾在南陽白崖山修行四十餘年，

After he had practiced for a period of over 40 years at Mt. Báiyá [White

上元二年正月十六日
奉勅(敕)，

肅宗皇帝徵詔赴上都，

千福寺西禪院安置，
後歸光宅寺。

肅宗、代宗前後兩朝，

並親受菩薩戒，

禮號國師焉。

[...]

'NON-SENTIENTS EXPOUND THE DHARMA'

In the following passage in the entry on Huìzhōng, the concept of *wú qíng shuō fǎ* is introduced for the first time.

ZTJ 1.117,05-12; Yanagida, p. 59; Foguang, p. 142; Wu/Gu, p. 73:

南陽張漬問:

“某甲聞有無情說法，

未諦其事，

乞師指示。”

師曰:

“無情說法，

Cliff] in Nányáng,

he received an imperial order on the sixteenth day of the first month of the second year of the *shàngyuán*-era [762 A.D.):

Emperor Sùzōng ordered him to move to Chángān

and reside at the Qiānfù-temple; afterwards he returned to the Guāngzhái-temple.

The succeeding emperors Sùzōng and Dàizōng⁵¹

personally received the Bodhisattva-precepts from him

and they gave him the honorary name 'National Master'.

Nányáng Zhāngfén asked:

“I have heard that there is [the doctrine according to which] ‘non-sentients’ expound the dharma’

but I have not yet understood this matter.

I beg you to explain it to me.”

The master [Huìzhōng] said:

“As for ‘Non-sentients expounding the dharma’:

⁵¹ *cháo* 朝 seems to be used here as *classifier* for emperors.

<p>汝若聞時方聞無情說法，</p> <p>緣他無情始得聞我說法，</p> <p>汝但問取無情說法去。”</p> <p>張漬曰：</p> <p>“只如今約有情方便之中，</p> <p>如何是無情因緣？”</p> <p>師曰：</p> <p>“但如今於一切</p> <p>動用之中施為。</p>	<p>only if you listen [to them], you hear non-sentients expounding the dharma;</p> <p>[but] only because they [i.e. non-sentient objects] are non-sentient, you can hear my teaching; just go ahead and ask non-sentients to expound the dharma!”</p> <p>Zhāngfén said:</p> <p>“Now, being restrained within [the world of] sentient beings and expedient means,⁵² [?] how is the case with non-sentients?”⁵³</p> <p>The master said:</p> <p>“With regard to their behaviour (actions) in all processes of existence,⁵⁴</p>
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⁵² *zhīrú* 只如 (祇如) often indicates the topic: ‘as for; concerning’. The passage could be also interpreted in the following way: “...Now, being restricted to expedient means [fitting] for sentient beings,...”. Expedient means (skr. *upāya*) is usually referring to teaching methods which are adapted to the needs and the capacity of the individual person enabling him/her to reach enlightenment.

⁵³ *yīnyuán* 因緣 is a term which has an extremely wide range of meanings and was used in translations for a variety of Sanskrit terms. The basic meaning is ‘cause; original cause and conditions; etc.’. In Chán texts it is often used in a quite particular way. Perhaps ‘method’ or ‘case’ is a suitable translation. According to Nakamura (p. 73b; meaning #20) its meaning is related to the later expression *gōng’àn* 公案 (jap. *kōan*). It shows that already at the time of the ZTJ ‘cases’ of former masters were taken up for pedagogic purposes.

⁵⁴ I could not find any relevant explanation of the term *dòngyòng* 動用. In HYDCD 漢語大詞典 *dòngyòng* is glossed as *shīyòng* 使用 ‘make use of; apply; application’, a meaning which does not really fit here. The term seems to have a rather metaphysical meaning here. *Yiqiè dòngyòng* probably refers to the process of existence in general. Or one could interpret it as referring to activities of daily life and get roughly the following translation: “...Now, [non-sentients] are operating within the world of hustle-bustle...”.

但凡聖兩流都無小分起滅， 便是出識， 不屬有情。 熾然見覺只是無其繫執。 所以六根對色分別非識。”	they do not make the slightest ⁵⁵ differentiation between commoner and sage. ⁵⁶ then they have transcended [regular] consciousness and do not belong to [the realm of] 'sentient beings' [any more]. Clearly they can see and are aware [of things] but they do not get attached and grasp [after the objects]; That is why there is no conscious- ness of differentiation [arising] when the six sense organs encounter form [and in this respect they are not sentient]. [?] ⁵⁷
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In terms of language this passage is by far the most difficult in the entry on Huìzhōng, and the translation is tentative.

The basic question, which reappears again and again in discussions on this topic, is about the difference between a sentient being and a non-sentient. Huìzhōng states that if someone could hear the teaching of non-sentients then he could not hear the teaching of a sentient being.

It is striking that Huìzhōng introduces a second kind of 'non-sentient'. He is obviously not so much concerned with stones, trees, etc. here, but is rather talking about sentient beings turning into non-sentients through altering the perception of things and the mental activities related to this. Unlike regular persons, non-sentients do not make false assumptions about perceived sense data and thus do not get attached and fettered by things.

⁵⁵ *xiǎofèn* 小分: according to HYDCD like *shǎoliàng* 少量 'small amount'.

⁵⁶ Or, more literally, 'no differentiating thought regarding the distinction between commoner and sage arises or vanishes'. Such thoughts arising and vanishing is seen as a characteristic of sentient beings.

⁵⁷ That last sentence is translated quite freely, lit.: therefore-six sense organs-towards-form-differentiation-be not-consciousness.

This idea of a *second kind of non-sentient* is explicitly expressed in the recorded sayings of master Báizhàng:

Gǔzūn sù yǔlù 古尊宿語錄 (Báizhàng Huáihǎi chánshī 白丈懷海禪師),

ZZ., vol. 118, p. 171a17-171b8:

問如何是有情無佛性，

“How about sentient beings not having Buddha-nature and non-sentients having Buddha-nature?”

無情有佛性？

The master said:

師云：

「從人至佛，
是聖情執。

“[The path] from man to Buddha consists of holding on to the mental tendencies of the sage.

從人至地獄，
是凡情執。

[The path] from man to hell is the holding on to the mental tendencies of the commoner.

祇如今但於凡聖二境，

Now, if in respect to those two realms, the realm of the ordinary person and the realm of the sage, there is the mind of impurity and attachment,

有染愛心，

this is called ‘sentient beings not having Buddha-nature’.

是名有情無佛性，

Now, if in respect to those two realms, the realm of the ordinary person and the realm of the sage,

祇如今但於凡聖二境，

and in respect to all dharmas, conditioned and unconditioned, one has a mind which does not grasp or reject,

及一切有無諸法。

and in addition has the understanding of being without [the notion of] ‘non-grasping and non-rejecting’,⁵⁸

都無取捨心，

that is called *non-sentients* having Buddha-nature.

亦無無取捨知解，

是名無情有佛性。

⁵⁸ An alternative translation of this line: ‘...and in addition has no consciousness of non-grasping and non-rejecting’.

祇是無其情繫，

故名無情。

不同木石太虛黃華翠竹之無情

將為有佛性。

若言有者，

何故經中不見受記

而得成佛者？

祇如今鑑覺，

但不被有情改變。

喻如翠竹，

無不應機無不知時，

喻如黃華。」

又云：

「若踏佛階梯，

無情有佛性。

It is simply that they have no mental attachments,

therefore they are called *non-sentients*.

This is different from the assumption that non-sentient [objects] like trees, stones, air, the chrysanthemum and the green bamboo, had Buddha-nature.

If you say they have [Buddha-nature],

how is it that in the scriptures there is nothing written about that [non-sentient objects] receive the prediction

and can become Buddhas?

Now [non-sentient objects] have perception

but they are not changed by sentient beings. [?]⁵⁹

It is like the green bamboo, which definitely responds to outer stimuli and certainly knows the season;

it is also like the chrysanthemum.⁶⁰

He also said:

“If one steps on the ladder of Buddhism [i.e. follows the teaching of Buddhism],

then *non-sentients have Buddha-nature*.

⁵⁹ Or: “...but they do not undergo the changes which are typical of sentient beings.” Maybe the meaning of this line is that objects—including plants—respond to natural stimuli like light, weather conditions, etc., but they are different from sentient beings in not being subjected to afflictions and thus not having to go through a process of liberation from these afflictions.

⁶⁰ On the green bamboo, etc., see the quotation from the *Shénhui yǔlù* 神會語錄 further down.

若未踏佛階梯，
有情無佛性。」

If one does not follow the teaching
of Buddhism,
then *sentient beings do not have
Buddha-nature.*"

In this passage it is stated that a non-sentient person neither holds on to the mental tendencies of the commoner nor to those of a sage. He does not grasp and reject and even does not have the notion of 'not grasping and not rejecting'. He does so in regard to all constituents of existence, conditioned or unconditioned.⁶¹ Being free of any kind of attachment, a sentient being turns into a 'non-sentient'. This 'non-sentient' (person) is different from non-sentient objects like stones etc.

THE DIALOGUE WITH THE SOUTHERN CHÁN GUEST

The following is a dialogue between Huìzhōng and a so-called 'Chán guest from the South' (*nánfāng Chán kè* 南方禪客). It is quite obvious that this 'Chán guest' is none other than the famous monk Hézé Shénhuì 荷澤神會 (684-758).⁶² This monk is known in Chán history for having caused a serious crisis in the early Chán movement by his vigorous polemic attacks (initiated in 730 A.D.) on members of the (retrospectively) so-called Northern school⁶³ and by claiming to be the

⁶¹ In traditional Buddhism 'unconditioned dharmas' usually refer to space and nirvāna

⁶² See Yanagida 1990, p. 390, fn. 253.

⁶³ See McRae 1986, p. 240. Shénhuì was indeed the one who seems to have used the expressions 'Southern School' and 'Northern School' for the first time. Shénhuì was an extremely gifted rhetorician who used to gather large audiences for his sermons. This was possibly seen as potential political threat, and this may have been one of the reasons that he was banished from Cháng'ān in 753. During the An Lùshān 安魯山-rebellion Shénhuì was rehabilitated mostly through his efforts to collect money for the Táng army by selling ordination certificates (see McRae 1987, p. 235 f.). According to McRae, Shénhuì contributed to the development of the Chán school mainly through his negative impact by splitting the Chán movement and the subsequent creative attempts to overcome the factionalism. Part of this creative impact is the appearance of the Recorded Sayings *yǔlù* 語錄 literature (like the ZTJ) in the Hóngzhōu school 洪州宗 of Mǎzǔ Dào'yī 馬祖道一. On Shénhuì and Huìzhōng see Yanagida 1989. Yanagida concludes that both monks were crucial to the development of the Chán-school, but since they belonged to a transitional period from early to 'classical' Chán, they never became part of the orthodox Chán-lineages.

proper successor to the Sixth Patriarch Huìnéng 惠能. As already mentioned the ZTJ advocates Mǎzǔ and his successors as orthodox lineage. Even if Shénhuì and Huìzhōng possibly met during their life times, the following dialogue is clearly constructed in nature, obviously aiming at refuting and ridiculing Shénhuì and his teaching.

The dialogue is the central part in Huìzhōng's entry and the most detailed exposition of the concept of *wúqíng shuō fǎ*. In the translation below, occasional remarks on its rhetoric are inserted.⁶⁴

ZTJ 1.121,10-1.128.4; Yanagida, pp. 61-64.; Foguang, pp. 148-154; Wu/Gu, pp. 75-78:

[section 1]

有南方禪客問：

“如何是古佛心？”

A visiting Chán-monk from the South raised the following question: “What about the mind of the ancient Buddha?”

師曰：

“牆壁瓦礫，
無情之物，
並是古佛心。”

The master said:
“Walls and tiles,
non-sentient objects [like these]
are all the mind of the ancient
Buddha.”

禪客曰：

“與經太相違。”

故《涅槃經》曰：

‘離牆壁瓦礫，
無情之物，
故名佛性。’

The visiting Chán-monk said:
“This is entirely contradictory to the scriptures!
This is why the Mahāpariṇirvāna-sūtra says:
‘It is different from non-sentient objects like walls and tiles, therefore it is called Buddha-nature.’⁶⁵

⁶⁴ For convenience I have divided the dialogue into several sections.

⁶⁵ Mahāpariṇirvāna-sūtra (*Dàbān nièpán jīng* 大般涅槃經. [Northern Edition], T. 12, no. 374, ch. 37, pp. 581a22-23): “非佛性者，所謂一切牆壁瓦石無情之物，離如是等無情之物，是名佛性。”

今云一切無情皆是佛心。	Now you state that all non-sentient objects are [part of the] Buddha mind.
未審心與性為別不別。”	Can you tell me whether [Buddha-] mind and [Buddha-] nature are different or not?” ⁶⁶
師曰：	The master said:
“迷人即別，	“For a deluded person they are different,
悟人即不別。”	for an enlightened one they are one and the same.”

[NON-SENTIENT OBJECTS HAVE BUDDHA-NATURE

The dialogue starts out with the Chán guest's raising of a question about the Buddha-mind. The master gives an unexpected answer which aims to surprise the audience/reader and gives an initial impetus to the dialogue. The Chán guest objects with a citation from the scriptures, according to which only sentient beings can be regarded as endowed with Buddha-nature. This follows loosely the traditional Buddhist style of argumentation by citing positive and negative examples.⁶⁷ Note that Huìzhōng in his last statement bases truth on the subjective state of the individual—he indicates that the way of perception changes according to one's state of mind.]

禪客曰：	The visiting Chán-monk said:
“又与(與)經相違， ⁶⁸	“Again you are contradicting the sūtras,
故經曰：	therefore a sūtra says:
‘善男子，心非佛性。’	‘Men of good families! The [ordinary] mind is not Buddha-nature,

⁶⁶ *wèishěn* 未審 means lit. “not yet investigated; do not know”; here it is rather used as a structural word in questions (similar to *bù zhī* ‘do not know...’), quite emptied of its original meaning and similar to English ‘I wonder...’ introducing a question.

⁶⁷ On Chinese Buddhist logic see Harbsmeier 1998, pp. 358-408.

⁶⁸ Note that 與 suddenly appears in the variant form 与.

佛性是常，	because Buddha-nature is permanent,
心是無常。’	[whereas] the mind is not permanent. ⁶⁹
今日不別， 未審此義如何？”	Now you say, they are not different. What do you mean by this?”
師曰： “汝依語而不依義。	The master said: “You base yourself on words and not on the meaning.
譬如寒月，	Let us compare it to when during cold winter months
結水為水(=冰?)，	water solidifies into ice
及至暖時，	and when the warm season arrives
釋冰為水。	ice dissolves into water.
眾生迷時，	When living beings are in a state of delusion,
結性成心，	their [perfect] nature solidifies into mind;
眾生悟時，	when living beings become enlightened,
釋心成性。	their minds dissolve into [Buddha-] nature.
汝若定(定)執無情無佛性者，	If you insist that non-sentient objects do not have Buddha-nature,
經不應言	then the sūtras should not state:
‘三界唯心，	‘The Triple-World ⁷⁰ is mind-only,
萬法唯識’。	all dharmas are consciousness-only.’
故《華嚴經》曰：	Therefore the Avatamsaka-sūtra states:
‘三界所有法， ⁷¹	‘All dharmas in the Triple-world

⁶⁹ Mahāpariṇirvāna-sūtra (*Dàbān niépán jīng* 大般涅槃經 [Southern Edition], T. 12, no. 375, ch. 36, pp. 533a16-17): “善男子，心非佛性，何以故，心是無常，佛性常故。”

⁷⁰ *Sānjiè* 三界: The Triple-World consists of the world of desire (*yù jiè* 欲界), the world of form (*sèjiè* 色界), and the world of formlessness (*wúse jiè* 無色界). These three worlds include all possible forms of existence.

⁷¹ 所 is often written with variant graphs in ZTJ: 所, 𠵼, 𠵾, 𠵿, etc.

一切唯心造。⁷²
 今且問汝，
 無情之物，
 為在三界內，
 為在三界外？
 為復是心，
 為復不是心？
 若非心者，
 經不應言
 ‘三界唯心’；
 若是心者，
 不應言
 ‘無情無佛性’。
 汝自違經，
 吾不違也。”

are only produced by the mind.⁷²
 Now I ask you further:
 Are non-sentient objects
 included in the Triple-world
 or apart from the Triple-world?
 Are they mind
 or are they not mind?⁷³
 If they are not mind,
 then the sūtra should not claim:
 ‘the Triple-world is mind-only’.⁷⁴
 If they are mind
 then one should not state:
 ‘non-sentient objects do not have
 Buddha-nature’.
 You yourself are contradicting the
 scriptures,
 not me!”

[Note that Huìzhōng devalues the scripture-citation by his opponent and reverts to *bù lì wénzì* 不立文字 ‘not basing oneself on the written word’, a common strategy among contending Chán-Buddhists (often employed when the opponent’s reference to the scriptures is in opposition to one’s own thesis). This does not prevent Huìzhōng from

⁷² Avatamsaka-sūtra (*Dà fāngguǎng fó huāyǎn jīng* 大方廣佛華嚴經), T. 9, no. 278, p. 558c: “又作是念，三界虛忘，但是心作”；compare also the *Dàshèng qǐxìn lùn* 大乘起信論 (T. 32, no. 1666, p. 577b16-17) which was very influential for Chán thought: “三界虛偽唯心所作” (“The Triple-world is false and only created by the mind”).

The question of non-sentient objects and their relationship to the mind is dealt with in an entertaining way already in an early Dūnhuáng 敦煌 Chán-text, the *Yuánmíng lùn* 圓明論 (probably written in the late 7th or early 8th century). See McRae 1986, pp. 169-170.

⁷³ These are the typical forms of building alternative questions (is it A or is it B) in the ZTJ: *wéi* 為... *wéi* 為...; *wéifù* 為復.. *wéifù* 為復...; *wéidāng* 為當... *wéidāng* 為當... (see Ota 1991, p. 142).

⁷⁴ Avatamsaka-sūtra (*Dà fāngguǎng fó huāyǎn jīng* 大方廣佛華嚴經), T. 9, no. 278, p.288c5-6: “知三界唯心，三世唯心，而了知其心無量無邊。” (“...[you should] know that the Triple-world is mind only, the three periods of time are mind only; and [you should] understand that this mind is unmeasurable and limitless.”)

using *scripture citations* in his turn already in the immediately following lines. In addition he makes use of a *poetic analogy* to illustrate his concept about 'mind'. Huìzhōng proceeds to 'prove' his claim by a *semi-logical chain of argumentation* based on the philosophy of mind-only:

- the world is (produced by) the mind
- all non-sentient objects are part of the world
- since they are part of the world they are (produced by) mind
- *ergo*: if they are mind they also have Buddha-nature]

[section 2.1]

禪客曰：

“無情既有心，

還解說法也無？”

The Chán-guest said:

“Since non-sentient objects have mind,

are they also able to expound the dharma?”

師曰：

“他熾然說，

恆說常說，

無有間歇。”

The master said:

“Obviously they teach, they teach constantly, eternally, uninterruptedly!”

[NON-SENTIENT OBJECTS EXPOUND THE DHARMA

At this point the central thesis in the discussion is introduced to the audience/reader aiming at being even more surprising than the previous one. That objects have Buddha-nature is unconventional, but not unheard of in sūtras and Chinese texts. But the claim that they proclaim the teaching of the Buddha is really quite a bold statement. Note that the opponent himself picks up the topic and *invites* this statement of Huìzhōng]

禪客曰：

“某甲為什摩不聞？”

The Chán-guest remarked:

“Why can't I hear [their teaching]?⁷⁵

師曰：

The master answered:

⁷⁵ *mǒujiǎ* 某甲 is the most common pronoun for “I” (humble) in the dialogues of the ZTJ. Note the colloquial *wèishénmó* 為甚摩 ‘why’; *mó* 摩 developed in the Sòng period into *mó* 麼.

“汝自不聞，
不可妨他有聞者。”

“That you don't hear it
doesn't mean that there aren't others
who do.”⁷⁶

進曰：
“誰人得聞？”

He further said:
“Who is able to hear [the teach-
ing]?”

師曰：
“諸聖得聞。”

The master said:
“The sages can hear it.”

禪客曰：
“与(與)摩
即眾生應無分也。”

The visiting Chán monk said:
“If that is so,
then it is not in the living being's
destiny [to hear their teaching].”⁷⁷

師曰：
“我為眾生說，
不可為他諸聖說。”

The master said:
“I am teaching for the sake of living
beings,
by no means for the sages.”

禪客曰：
“某甲愚昧聾瞽，
不聞無情說法。

The Chán guest said:
“I am ignorant⁷⁸
and do not hear the non-sentient
object's teaching of the dharma.
But you are a teacher of men and
gods,
expounding the *Perfection of
Wisdom*.⁷⁹

和尚是為人天師，
說般若波羅蜜多，
得聞無情說法不？”

Can you hear non-sentient [objects]
expounding the dharma?”

⁷⁶ *bùfáng* 不妨, lit. 'do not hinder' gives an affirmative note to the phrase: 'certainly'.

⁷⁷ *yùmó* 與摩 corresponds to modern *zhème* 這麼: '(if it is) like this'. The function of *yīng* 應 in this sentence is logical ('it follows that...').

⁷⁸ *yú mèi lóng gǔ* 愚昧聾瞽, lit. 'foolish (dark in mind), deaf and blind'.

⁷⁹ *bōrě bōluómìduō* 般若波羅蜜多: *prajñāparamitā*; the teaching of the Perfection of Wisdom-sūtras played an important role in Chinese Chán circles.

- 師曰：
“我亦不聞。”
- 進曰：
“和尚為什摩不聞？”
- 師曰：
“賴我不聞無情說法。
我若聞無情說法，
我則同於諸聖，⁸⁰
汝若為得見我，
及聞我說法乎？”
- 禪客曰：
“一切眾生，
畢竟還得聞無情說法不？”
- 師曰：
“眾生若聞，
即非眾生。”
- The master said:
“I don't hear it either!”
- [The Chán guest] further asked:
“Why can't you hear it?”
- The master said:
“It is fortunate that I do not hear
their expounding the dharma.
If I could hear non-sentient [objects]
expound the dharma,
then I would be equal to the sages.
How could you possibly see me
then⁸¹
or manage to hear me expound the
dharma?”
- The Chán-guest said:
“Will all sentient beings
in the end hear non-sentient
[objects] expound the dharma?”
- The master said:
“If the sentient beings heard it,
than they would not be sentient
beings.”

[This part of the dialogue is an entertaining piece of hair-splitting polemic. Huìzhōng introduces here the concept of 'sage' (*zhū shèng* 諸聖). It is interesting that, according to his arguments, these sages are completely separated from the sphere of regular sentient beings:

- regular beings cannot hear the teaching of objects
- only sages can hear it
- Huìzhōng is not a sage therefore he cannot hear it either

⁸⁰ 於 is usually written with the variant 於 in ZTJ.

⁸¹ *ruòwéi* is a colloquial question word for 'how'; this word is quite rare in ZTJ.

- if he could hear it then he himself could not be seen or heard by others
- ergo: sages cannot be perceived by non-sages.

If Huìzhōng is not a sage, how does he know that objects expound the dharma and how does he know that sages can hear it?

In order to support his view Huìzhōng cites below one of the (very few) references in the scriptures which could be interpreted in favour of his proposition.]

[section 2.2]

禪客曰：

“無情說法，

還有典據也無？”

The Chán-guest asked:

“[Does the doctrine of] ‘non-sentient [objects] expound the dharma

have a base in the scriptures?”

師曰：

“言不開(關)典，

非君子之所談。

汝豈不見《彌(彌)陀經》云：

‘水、鳥、樹林，
皆是念佛、念法、念僧。’

鳥是有情，
水及樹豈是有情乎？

又《華嚴經》云：

The master said:

“Words which do not refer to the scriptures

are not used by the Gentleman.

Did you not read the Amithaba-sūtra, where it is said:

‘Water, birds, forests
all recite [the name of] Buddha,
Dharma and Sangha.’⁸²

Birds are sentient beings,
but water and trees—how could they
be sentient?

Furthermore the Avataṃsaka-sūtra
states:

⁸² *Āmítuó jīng* 阿彌陀經 (Sukhāvatīvyūha); T. 12, no. 366. I actually could not locate this or any similar passage in the sūtras. However, similar quotes are very frequent in commentaries to the Sukhāvatīvyūha and also in later Chán scriptures.

<p>‘刹說眾生說， 三世一切說。’</p>	<p>‘Territories⁸³ teach, sentient beings teach, everything in the three periods of time teaches.’⁸⁴</p>
<p>眾生是有情， 刹豈是有情乎？”</p>	<p>Living beings are sentient, but certainly not [things like] territories!”</p>
<p>客曰： “既是無情有佛性， 未審有情又如何？”</p>	<p>The Chán-guest said: “Since non-sentient objects have Buddha-Nature, what about sentient beings?”</p>
<p>師曰： “無情尚尔(爾)， 豈況有情乎？”</p>	<p>The master said: “If non-sentient objects are like this, this applies all the more to sentient beings!”</p>

[Huìzhōng surprisingly stresses the importance of scriptures and cites several passages in support of his thesis. However, I was unable to locate the exact source of these citations.]

[section 2.2]

<p>禪客曰： “若有情無情俱有佛性， 殺有情而食噉(啖)其身， 分即結於罪怨相報；⁸⁵</p>	<p>The Chán guest said: “Assuming both sentient beings and non-sentient [objects] possess Buddha-nature: in case one kills a sentient being and eats it then the fate [of that person] will be bound to the retribution of his sins.</p>
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⁸³ *chà* 刹 is an abbreviation for *chātǔ* 刹土, the phonetic transcription of skr. *kṣetra*: ‘lands, fields, country, universe’.

⁸⁴ *Dà fāngguǎng fó huāyán jīng* 大方廣佛華嚴經 (Avatamsaka sūtra), T. 9, no. 278, p. 611a24-a25.

⁸⁵ Wu/Gu has a different punctuation: 殺有情而食噉其身分，即結於罪怨相報, but this reading does not make much sense. Foguang punctuates: 殺有情而食噉，其身分即結於罪怨相報; this interpretation makes sense, but the first clause 殺有

損害無情， ⁸⁶	In the case of damaging non-sentient [objects],
食噉(啖)五穀、采(菜)蔬、	eating things like the five kinds of grains, vegetables,
菓(果)栗等物，	fruits, etc.,
不聞有罪，	I have never heard that it involves guilt
互相讎報也。”	and mutual retribution.”
師曰：	The master said:
“有情是正報，	“Sentient beings are [a case of] <i>direct retribution</i> . ⁸⁷
從無始劫來，	From beginningless kalpas ⁸⁸ on,
虛妄顛倒，	they are deluded and have perverted views,
計我我所，	they posit a self and things belonging to a self, ⁸⁹ [?]
而懷結恨，	they harbour resentment and hate;
即有怨報。	therefore they are subjected to retribution.
無情是依報，	Non-sentient [objects] are [a case of] <i>dependant retribution</i> .
無顛倒結恨心，	they are without perverted views and without a mind of resentment and hate;
所以不言有報。”	therefore one does not talk about retribution [in their case].”

情而食噉 seems odd because of the missing object after 食噉.

⁸⁶ Suddenly 無 is written with the variant 无.

⁸⁷ *zhèngbào* 正報 'direct retribution' is the resultant person as consequence of previous actions and is in contrast to *yībào* 依報 'indirect/dependant retribution', i.e. the environment, the country, the family, etc. into which one is born (see Nakamura, p. 705a and 102b).

⁸⁸ *jié* 劫, skr. kalpa, denotes the time-period from the creation of an universe until its destruction (> infinite time period).

⁸⁹ *jì wǒ wǒsuǒ* 計我我所 is an expression from the *Dàshèng qīxìn lùn*, T. 32, no. 1666, p. 577b25. This expression is grammatically problematic and the translation follows convention.

客曰：
 “經教中但見有情授
 三菩提記，
 於未來世，
 而得作佛，
 号(號)曰某等，
 不見無情授菩提記
 作佛之處(處)，
 只如賢劫千佛中，
 阿那(那)个(個)是無情成佛，
 請為示之。”

師曰：
 “我今問汝：
 譬如皇太子受王位時，
 為太子一身受於王位，
 為復國界一一受也？”

對曰：

The guest said:
 “In the teaching of the scriptures⁹⁰ it
 is only written that sentient beings
 receive
 the prediction of complete enlighten-
 ment.
 In future times
 they will become a Buddha
 who will be called so and so.
 I have not read about a passage
 where non-sentient objects receive
 the prediction of complete enlighten-
 ment,⁹¹
 and become Buddhas.
 As for the thousand Buddhas of the
 present kalpa,⁹²
 which one is a non-sentient [object]
 having become a Buddha;
 please point it out to me.”

The master said:
 “I ask you now:
 When, for example, the crown
 prince receives the throne,
 does the crown prince [only] receive
 the throne
 or does he receive everything in the
 country?”

[The Chán guest] answered:

⁹⁰ See for example *Miàofǎ liánhuā jīng* 妙法蓮華經, chapter 6 (*shòuji pīn* 授記品), T. 9, no. 262, pp. 20b-22a and chapter 8 (*wúbǎi dìzǐ shòuji pīn* 五百弟子受記品), pp. 27b-29b.

⁹¹ *jì* 記, skr. *vyākaraṇa*: the prediction that all sentient beings will attain enlightenment and become Buddhas; *sānpútí* 三菩提 is the phonetical transcription of skr. *sambyaksambodhi*, the complete enlightenment of a Buddha.

⁹² *xiánjié*, skr. *bhadrakalpa*, refers to the present kalpa. This kalpa should produce 1000 Buddhas, Śākyamuni being the fourth of them.

<p>“但令太子受得王位， 國土一切自屬於王， 寧當別受乎？”</p>	<p>“If the crown prince receives the throne,⁹³ everything in the country belongs to the king, how could he receive anything in addition to it!”</p>
<p>師曰： “今此亦尔(爾)。 但令有情授記作佛之時， 三千大千世界， 一切國土， 盡屬毗盧遮那(那)佛身。 佛身之外，那(那)得更有 無情而得授記耶？”</p>	<p>The master said: “Now the matter is also like this: if sentient beings receive the prediction of becoming a Buddha, in the great chiliocosm,⁹⁴ all countries belong to the body of Pílúzhēnà-Buddha.⁹⁵ How could there exist, outside the Buddha-body, additional non-sentient [objects] that receive the prediction?”</p>
<p>客曰： “一切大地既是佛身，</p>	<p>The guest said: “All worlds are the Buddha-body⁹⁶</p>

⁹³ *dànling* 但令 corresponds probably to the more common *dànshǐ* 但使 (not used in the ZTJ) ‘given the case that; in the event that; if’. The combination with ...*zhī shí* ... 之時 is noteworthy. On non-temporal usages of *shí* see Eifring 1995, p. 354 ff and Eifring 1991).

⁹⁴ *sānqiān dàqiān shìjiè* 三千大千世界, skr. tri-sahasra-mahā-sahasra-loka-dhātu.

⁹⁵ Skr.: Vairocana; he is often described as the essential body of Buddha-truth which permeates everything.

⁹⁶ *fóshēn* 佛身: “The Buddha’s (physical) body. As a result of the questions of Buddhist followers, inquiries were made resulting in “buddha-body theory.” Śākyamuni himself established the position of believing in the true principle (dharma): that he himself would die but the dharma was indestructible and therefore said that after his death the dharma was to be depended upon. However, many disciples held to their concept of the Buddha’s person and believed in it as the Buddha-dharma, and therefore, even while Śākyamuni was still in the world his body had come to be seen as transcendent. Because of this, after he died, the dharma that he had explained was regarded as indestructible, and was set up in contrast to his natural body, bringing about a ‘two body’ theory.” (Muller)

一切眾生居佛身上，
便利穢汗(污)佛身，
穿鑿(鑿)踐踏佛身，
豈無罪乎？”

and all sentient beings dwell on this
body;
they urinate and shit [on it], soiling
the Buddha-body,
they drill holes in it and trample on
it.
How can they be without guilt!”

師曰：
“一切眾生全是佛身，
誰為罪乎？”

The master said:
“All living beings *are* the Buddha
body.
Who could be guilty then?”

客曰：
“佛身無為，
無所罣碍(礙)。
今以有為質罣(礙)之物而
作佛身，
豈不乖於聖旨乎？”

The guest said:
“The Buddha-body is unconditioned
and without any hindrances.
But now phenomena which are
conditioned⁹⁷ and are of obstructive
nature
manifest themselves as Buddha
body.
Is that not against the holy teach-
ing?”

師曰：
“汝今不見《小品經》曰：

The master said:
“Now, haven't you read the *Dà pǐn
jīng*?⁹⁸

⁹⁷ The term *yǒuwéi* 有為 is used in contrast to *wúwéi* 無為 which refers to the natural, perfect, unconditioned and is often associated with the eternal 'truth-body' of the Buddha, nirvāṇa, dharma-nature (*fǎxìng* 法性), dharma-element (dharma-dhātu; *fǎjiè* 法界), etc. *Yǒu wéi* corresponds to skr. *saṃskṛta* and refers to the conditioned and composite nature of things (material things, the mind) which are subject to arising and extinction. Here the translations 'unconditioned' and the 'conditioned' are used.

⁹⁸ *Dàpǐn bōrě jīng* 小品般若經 (= *Móhē bōrě bōluómìduō jīng* 摩訶般若波羅蜜多經 *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā[mahā]prajñāpāramitā*); T. 8, no. 223, ch. 27, p. 232b22-23: “有為性不見無為性。無為性不見有為性。何以故。離有為不可說無為。離無為不可說有為。” (see also Yanagida 1990, p. 392, fn. 257).

‘不可離有為而說無為，
又不可離無為而說有為。’
汝信色是空不？”

‘One cannot leave the conditioned
and talk about the unconditioned;
One cannot leave the unconditioned
and talk about the conditioned.’
Do you have faith that form is
emptiness?”

對曰：
“佛之誠言，
那(那)敢不信？”

[The guest] answered:
“Buddha’s true words—
how could I dare not to believe in
them?”

師曰：
“色既是空，
寧有罣碍(礙)？”

The master said:
“Since form is emptiness,
how can there be obstruction!”

[In this section several issues which apply to sentient beings are brought up by Shénhuì and compared to non-sentient objects. It is hard to overlook the humoristic note of this undertaking. Was there any object which became a concrete Buddha? Are objects promised to become Buddhas like sentient beings are? (This topic is taken up from the *Shénhuì yǔlù*, see below). Huìzhōng argues along the line that objects as some kind of by-product achieve all this, since everybody and everything is part of the Buddha-body. Shénhuì is utterly ridiculed by letting him take this last statement literally and asking the ignorant question: whether activities like walking, pissing, shitting or digging in this world (which is the Buddha-body) were an insult to the Buddha!]

[section 2.3]

又問：
“眾生与(與)佛既同者，
只用一佛修行，
一切眾生應一時解脫。
今見不尔(爾)，

[The guest] asked further:
“Since living beings and Buddha are
the same;
then, only using the practice of the
one Buddha,
all sentient beings are bound to be
liberated at the same time.
Now you see that it is not like this –

‘同’義何在？”

師曰：

“汝不見《華嚴經》中‘六相’義，

‘同中有異，
異中有同；
成中有壞，

壞中有成；

惣(總)中有別；
別中有惣(總)。
眾生与(與)佛雖同一性，

不妨各各自修自得。

看他人食，
終自不飽。”

[section 3.1]

又問：

“古德曰：
‘青青翠竹，
盡是真如，
鬱鬱黃花

無非般若。’

wherein lies the meaning of *tóng* 同 ‘same’”?

The master said:

“Have you not read about the meaning of the ‘Six Marks’ in the Avatamsaka-sūtra:⁹⁹

‘Amidst equality there is difference, amidst difference there is equality; amidst completion there is destruction,

amidst destruction there is completion;

in the whole there are the parts; amidst the parts there is the whole.’

Even if sentient beings and Buddha have one and the same nature, that does not prevent each individual from personal practice and attainment [of Buddhahood].

To watch other people eat does in the end not satisfy one’s own hunger!”

[The Chán guest] asked again:

“A master of old said:

‘The fresh and green bamboo are all true suchness, the densely growing chrysanthemums

are all wisdom (prajña).’¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ On the Six Marks, see Yanagida 1990, p. 393, fn. 258. I do not think this is a direct citation but possibly a free interpretation of the meaning of the Six Marks.

¹⁰⁰ This quotation alludes to a passage in *Shénhui yǔlù* 神會語錄, ed. in Hu Shi (ed.) 1930, p. 139 (a tentative translation is added):

牛頭山袁禪師問：

Chán master Yuán from Mt. Niútóu raised the following question:

有人不許，

是邪說；
亦有人信，
言：
‘不可思議’
不知若為？”

師曰：

“佛性遍一切有情，

不遍一切無情。

聞先輩大德言：

‘青青翠竹，
盡是法身；
鬱鬱黃花，
無非般若。’
今何故言獨遍一切有情，

不遍一切無情？”

答：

“豈將青青翠竹同功德法身，

鬱鬱黃花等般若之智？

若言青竹黃花同法身般若，

如來於何經中為青竹黃花授菩提記？

若將青竹黃花同法身般若者，

此即是外道說，

何以故？

為涅槃經云：

‘無佛性者所為無情物是。’”

There are people who do not agree
with this [statement],
[and claim] this is heretic teaching;
there are also people who believe it
and say:

‘How wonderful!’
Tell me: How is it?”

The master said:

“Buddha-nature permeates all sentient
beings,

but does not permeate all non-sentient
[objects].

I have heard that a great master from the
past said:

‘The fresh and green bamboo
wholly is the dharma-body
the densely growing chrysanthemums,
none which is not *prajñā*.’

Why do you state now that it only permeates
sentient beings

and not non-sentient [objects]?”

[Shénhuì] answered:

“How can the fresh and green bamboo be
regarded as equal to the virtuous dharma-
body

and things like the densely growing
chrysanthemums equal to the wisdom of
prajñā?

If one says the green bamboo and the
chrysanthemums are like the dharma-body
or *prajñā*,

in which scriptures does the Buddha give
them the prediction of enlightenment?

If one takes the green bamboo and the
chrysanthemums as equal to the dharma-
body or *prajñā*,

then it is a heretical teaching.

Why?

In the *Nirvāṇa-sūtra* it is written:

That which has no Buddha-nature is a
non-sentient object.”

“此蓋是普賢、
 文殊大人之境界，
 非諸凡小而能信受。
 皆与(與)大乘了義經意合。
 故《華嚴經》云：
 ‘佛身充滿於法界，
 普現一切群生前，
 隨緣赴感靡不周，
 而恆處此菩提座。’
 翠竹既不出于法界，
 豈非法身乎？
 又《摩訶般若經》曰：

“This [statement above] is something in the realm of the Bodhisattvas Pǔxián (Samanta-bhadra) and Wénshū (Mañjuśrī)¹⁰¹ and not something commoners can accept as belief. All of it is in accordance with the truth of Mahāyāna and the meaning of the sūtras. Therefore the Avataṃsaka states: ‘The Buddha-body is permeating the dharma-element,¹⁰² everywhere appearing in front of the sentient beings, adapting to circumstances and responding to their feelings, under all conditions. Every place is the seat of enlightenment (bodhi).¹⁰³ The thickly-growing bamboo is not going beyond the dharma-element (dharmadhātu)—how could it possibly not be dharma-body (dharmakāya)¹⁰⁴! Moreover, the Mahāprajñāparamitā-sūtra states:

¹⁰¹ The bodhisattvas of wisdom and pervading goodness.

¹⁰² “[...] Especially in Mahāyāna teaching, dharma-dhātu refers to a religious basis or principle—the origin of all things. In this kind of teaching, where the whole universe is taken as phenomena, it is understood as the manifestation of true thusness. Accordingly, this dharma-realm, being true reality, is equated to the reality-body of the Buddha. Also called the ‘reality-realm.’” (Muller)

¹⁰³ That is a word-for-word citation from *Dà fāngguāng fó huāyán jīng* 大方廣佛華嚴經 (Avataṃsaka-sūtra), T. 9, no. 278, chapter Lúshěnnàfó 盧舍那佛, p.30a6-7 (see also Yanagida 1990, p. 394, fn. 259).

¹⁰⁴ “In general Mahāyāna teaching, the ‘reality-body’ is a name for absolute existence, the manifestation of all existences. The true body of reality. Buddha as eternal principle. The body of essence that is pure, possesses no marks of distinction, and is the same as emptiness.” (Muller)

‘色無邊，
故般若無邊。’

黃花既不越于色，

豈非般若乎？

此深遠之言，
不省者難為措意。”

‘Form is boundless,
therefore wisdom (prajñā) is
boundless.’¹⁰⁵

Since the chrysanthemums do not
go beyond [the realm of] form,
how could they not be wisdom
(prajñā)!

These deep words
are hard to make sense of for
somebody who did not investigate
[this himself].”

[In section 3.1 Huìzhōng’s answers get more and more personal, aiming at pointing out S’s ignorance. In the first part of this section a topic from the *Shénhuì yǔlù* is taken up and opposed. This passage probably aims at disqualifying adherents of Shénhuì’s teaching from having a proper understanding of Buddhism. It appears as if at the time of the composition of ZTJ sectarian struggles between the Mǎzǔ faction and the Shénhuì faction had not yet been settled.]

[section 3.2]

又問：

“有善知識言，

學道人但識得本心了，

無常來時，

拋卻殼漏子一邊著。

[The Chán-guest] further asked:

“There is a saying by a good friend
[i.e. master]

that students of Buddhism, only if
they have become aware of their
original mind,

at the time of death¹⁰⁶

cast aside their physical body,¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ *Móhē bōrě bōluómíduō jīng* 摩訶般若波羅蜜多經 (Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā [mahā]prajñāpāramitā); T. 8, no. 223, p. 423b11: “色無邊故當知般若波羅蜜亦無邊。”; see also *Xiǎopǐn bōrěbōluómì jīng* 小品般若波羅蜜經 (Aṣṭasāhasrikā); T. 8, no. 227, ch. 10, p. 676a16-17: “色無邊故般若波羅蜜亦無邊。”

¹⁰⁶ lit. ‘when the time of impermanence comes’.

¹⁰⁷ *kélòuzi* 殼漏子 (also written *kélòuzi* 殼陋子) lit. ‘husk (of grain)’ points to the physical body as ‘home; shell’ for the mind. *Zhuó* 著 is here used as a sentence-final particle.

靈臺覺性，	[but] the consciousness of their minds
迴然而去，	goes far away.
名為解脫，	This is called liberation. ¹⁰⁸
此復若為？”	How about this?”
師曰：	The master said:
“此猶未離二乘外道之量。	“These are thoughts of somebody who did not become detached from the views of the two [minor] vehicles or the heretic teachings. Followers of the two vehicles all detest and separate themselves from conditioned birth and death [i.e. <i>samsāra</i>] and rejoice in <i>nirvāṇa</i> without remainder. ¹⁰⁹
二乘之人，	
皆厭(=厭?)離有為生死，	
忻樂無餘涅槃。	
《老子》亦曰：	In the <i>Lǎozǐ</i> it is also written:
‘吾有大患，	‘That I have a great worry
為吾有身。’	is due to my having a body/self.’ ¹¹⁰
忻樂冥諦，	To rejoice in the subtle truth,
而為至道，	to take it as the Supreme Way

¹⁰⁸ According to Yanagida this points to a branch of southern Chán which believed that the body is subject to birth and death whereas the mind is not. There is some kind of ‘soul’ which, after death, travels to another place (see Yanagida 1990, p. 394, fn. 260).

¹⁰⁹ “[...] One of the four kinds of *nirvāṇa* in the theory of the school of Consciousness-only. The hindrances due to defilement in the mind are cut off, and the body that is composed of the five aggregates is extinguished. Therefore there is nothing remaining to depend upon. [...]” (Muller)

¹¹⁰ Compare *Lǎozǐ* 13; tr. D.C. Lau 1982: 19

何謂	What is meant by saying
貴大患若身?	that high rank is, like one's body, a source of great trouble?
吾所以有大患者，	The reason I have great trouble
為吾有身，	is that I have a body.
及吾無身，	When I no longer have a body,
吾有何患?	what trouble have I?

乃趣冥諦。	and then direct oneself towards this subtle truth:
須陀洹人八万劫， ¹¹¹	the srota-āpanna ¹¹² for 80 000 <i>jié</i> (kalpas),
斯陀含人六万劫，	the sakṛdāgāmin ¹¹³ for 60 000 kalpas,
阿那(那)含人四万劫，	the anāgāmin ¹¹⁴ for 40 000 kalpas,
阿羅漢人二万劫，	the arhat for 20 000 kalpas,
辟支佛十千劫。	the pratyeka-buddhas ¹¹⁵ for 10 000 kalpas,
住於芝(定)中， ¹¹⁶	will dwell in deep concentration [samādhi].
外道亦八万大劫。	The heretics indeed for 80 000 great kalpas!
住非想非非想天，	Having dwelled in heaven of no-thought and no no-thought ¹¹⁷

¹¹¹ All 劫 in this text are written with the variant 劫 in the original.

¹¹² Xūtuōhuán-rén, those who 'entered the stream' (*rù liú* 入流) of holy living.

¹¹³ Sītuōhán-rén, those who reached arhatship and will be reborn only one more time.

¹¹⁴ Ānàhán-rén, those sages who will not return to the world again but will be reborn in the rūpa- or arūpa-heavens.

¹¹⁵ Pìzhīfó-rén, one who seeks sagehood; sometimes described as someone who attains enlightenment through his own effort, meditation and study. Note that the number ten thousand is written *shí qiān* 十千 (ten-thousand) here and not *yī wàn* 一万 (one ten-thousand). This is very unusual and may be influenced by the Sanskrit system of numbers.

¹¹⁶ Note that 於 appears here in its standard graphic form (in contrast to the occurrences above). These variations of the graphic forms of Chinese characters are very typical for ZTJ (some Chinese characters are written in four or five different ways throughout the work). The reason for this might be that the work originally was compiled from a variety of sources (like notes on lectures taken by monks, miscellaneous accounts on the lives and deeds of monks [*xínglù* 行錄, *shílù* 實錄], etc.) and that the work was not thoroughly revised when it was carved on wooden blocks.

¹¹⁷ "A state of meditation where there are no objects (concepts) yet there is no non-presence of objects. This is the highest state of the formless realm, and thus the highest existence of the three realms. It is not yet nirvāṇa, because there is still a very subtle kind of thought remaining. It is the fourth heaven of the formless realm, the most subtle state of the three realms." (Muller)

二乘劫滿猶迴心向大，
外道劫滿不免輪迴生死。”

the followers of the two vehicles,
after the fulfillment of the kalpas,
will direct their minds to [the
teachings of the] Great [vehicle],
but the heretics, after the completion
of the kalpas, cannot avoid returning
to [the cycle of] life and death.

[Again an issue from Shénhuì's supposed teachings is taken up: that there is something which survives the physical death. Huìzhōng's response is even more insulting this time. He hints that this kind of teaching is the lowest of all, i.e. the teachings of heretics.]

[section 3.3]

又問：

“一切人佛性，
為復一種，
為復有別？”

[The Chán guest] furthermore raised
the [following] question:

“The Buddha-nature of all men,
is it of one kind,
or are there differences?”

師曰：
“不得一種。”

The master said:
“It can't be of one kind.”

進曰：
“云何有別？”

[The Chán guest] said further:
“How come there are differences?”

師曰：
“有人佛性，
全不生滅，
有人佛性，
半生滅半不生滅。”

The Master said:
“Some people's Buddha-nature
is in no way subject to birth and
death.
Some people's Buddha-nature
is half subject to birth and death and
half not.”

進曰：
“誰人佛性，
全不生滅？”

[The Chán guest] asked further:
“Whose Buddha-nature
is in no way subject to birth and
death?”

誰人佛性，

Whose Buddha-nature

半生滅半不生滅耶？”

is half subject to birth and death and half not?”

師曰：

The master said:

“我此間佛性，
全不生滅，

“This Buddha-nature of mine
is in no way subject to birth and
death.

彼南方佛性，

The Buddha-nature of [yours] that
Southerner

半生滅半不生滅。”

is half subject to birth and death and
half not.”

進曰：

[The Chán guest] said further:

“和尚佛性，
若為全不生滅？

“The Buddha-nature of yours,
in what way is it not at all subject to
birth and death?

南方佛性，

The Buddha-nature of me, the
Southerner,

若為半生滅半不生滅？”

in what way is it half subject to birth
and death and half not?”

師曰：

The master said:

“我之佛性，
身心一如，
身外無餘，
所以全不生滅。

“As to my Buddha-nature,
body and mind are one,
nothing remains outside the body.
That is the reason why it is not
subject to birth and death.

南方佛性，

As to the Buddha-nature of yours,
the Southerner,

身是無常，
心性是常，

your body is impermanent,
while the nature of your mind is
permanent.

所以半生滅半不生滅也。”

That is the reason why it is half
subject to birth and death and half
not.”

[Towards the end of this dialogue the questions and answers seem highly constructed and speculative in nature in order to fit into the

rhetorical structure (which demands an utter defeat of the opponent). The questions of Shénhuì are more and more off the mark and Huìzhōng's answers become increasingly personally insulting, 'exposing' the inferior understanding of his opponent. What began as an exchange of arguments on several topics of the teaching between two quite equal opponents had turned into a personal attack on the opponent. The rhetorical structure demands that Shénhuì readily accepts his role as the inferior part and in addition actively helps 'to dig his own grave' by asking questions and giving comments which easily can be turned against him. An example is the question whether Buddha-nature was the same for everybody or not. Huìzhōng insults him by indicating that he is only 'half a portion'. He mockingly takes up the theory of the 'Southerner' that the body is impermanent and the mind permanent and concludes that Southerners accordingly only have half a Buddha-nature which is not subject to birth and death.]

[section 3.4]

進曰：

“和尚身是色身，

豈得便同法身不生滅耶？”

師曰：

“汝今那(那)得入邪道乎？”

禪客曰：

“某甲早晚入於(於)
邪道也？”

師曰：

“《金剛經》曰：
‘若以色見我，

以音聲(聲)求我，

[The Chán guest] said further:

“The body of yours is a body of form.

How could it be equal to the dharma-body which is not subject to birth and death?”

The master said:

“How could you now enter the way of the heretics!”

The Chán guest said:

“When did I enter the way of the heretics?”

The master said:

“In the Diamond-sūtra it is said:

‘If [somebody] perceives me by means of form,

and seeks [to listen to] me by means of sound,

是人行邪道，	then this man walks the way of the
不能見如來。’	heretics,
汝既作色見我，	and cannot see the Tathāghata (i.e.
豈非入邪道乎？”	Buddha). ¹¹⁸
	Since you perceived me in terms of
	form,
	you certainly have entered the way
	of the heretics!”

於(於)是禪客作禮而嘆曰：	At that the Chán guest bowed and
“和尚此說，	said with a sigh:
事無不盡，	“As for this teaching of yours,
理無不周。	no phenomenon does it not deal
某甲若不遇和尚，	with exhaustively
空過一生矣。”	no principle does it not cover fully.
	If I had not met you
	I would have spent my life in vain!”

[In this section the dialogue reaches its climax. Huìzhōng, up till now answering the questions asked by Shénhuì, cuts off the exchange of arguments and directly states what was only indicated up till now: that Shénhuì is acting like a ‘heretic’. He brilliantly makes his point by retrospectively analysing the nature of the dialogue as blindly sticking to words (‘sound’) and summing it up in the form of a citation from a scripture. The dialogue is concluded by Shénhuì’s ritual submission to Huìzhōng.]

WU QING SHUO FA IN OTHER PASSAGES OF ZTJ

The story of *wú qíng shuō fǎ* became a frequently quoted topic in Chán writings, sometimes quoted directly, at other times in variations.

The question ‘who is able to hear the teaching of non-sentient objects?’ developed into the rhetorically most effective part. In another part of ZTJ the famous master Dòngshān 洞山 picks up this story and uses it in his teachings:

¹¹⁸ *Jīngāng bōrě bōluómìduō jīng* 金剛般若波羅蜜經 (Vajracchedikā), T. 8, no. 236, p.761b4-5: 若以色見我，以音聲心我，是人行邪道。不應得見我。

ZTJ 2.011,11-012,03:

洞山便問：
“無情說法什麼人得聞？”

師曰：
“無情說法無情得聞。
進曰：
“和尚還聞得不？”

師云：
“我若聞，
汝則不得見我。”
進曰：
“與麼則
某甲不得聞和尚說法去也。”

師云：
“吾說法尚自不聞，
豈況於無情說法乎？”

因此洞山息疑情，

乃作偈曰：
可笑奇，
可笑奇，
無情解說不思議。

Dòngshān then asked:
“Who is able to hear the teaching of
non-sentients?”

The master said:
“Non-sentients can hear it.”
He said further:
“Can you hear it?”

The master said:
“If I heard it
then you could not see me!”
[Dòngshān] continued:
“If that is so, then
I won't be able to hear your
teaching.”¹¹⁹

The master said:
“If you cannot even hear my
teaching,¹²⁰
how much less the teaching of
non-sentients!”

At that Dòngshān resolved his
feelings of doubt
and composed the following stanza:
'How wonderful! /kfi/
how wonderful!¹²¹ /kfi/
The teaching of non-sentients is
inconceivable. /ŋi`/

¹¹⁹ *qù* 去 is here a sentence final particle; in the ZTJ it is very frequently used in the construction: *yù mó zé... qù yě* 與麼則...去也 “If it is like this then...”; here *qù* seems to stress a consequence in the future which results from the present state of affairs.

¹²⁰ *shàngzì* 尚自 (modern *shàngqiě* 尚且) ‘even’ (with negated main verb) is usually used in rhetorical questions expressing an extreme or highly hypothetical case (Jiang/Cao, p. 331).

¹²¹ Note that *kěxiào* 可笑 is here not used in the sense of ‘laughable’ or ‘ridiculous’, a meaning which is also attested in Táng texts, but as an intensifier: ‘very’; ‘to a high degree’ (see Jiang/Cao, p. 208).

若將耳聽聲不現，
眼處聞聲方得知。

If you listen with your ears to the
sound, it won't be manifest;
only by listening with your eyes can
you perceive it. /tri/

The story was also elaborated on in the two editions of the *Recorded Sayings of Dòngshān* which were edited in the middle of the eighteenth century. At that time the ZTJ had been absent from China for a long time. The compilation of the accounts of Dòngshān (who lived from 807 till 869) were probably based on old materials.¹²²

In the entry on master Fúróng 芙蓉 in ZTJ we find an interesting variation on the theme. In the entry on Huìzhōng *wúqíng shuō fǎ* is treated in a quite systematic way following a loosely traditional Buddhist style of argumentation. In the passage below, however, the master reacts in a completely different way and avoids any theoretical explanations. It is very interesting that these two rhetorical styles are accounted for in the ZTJ and it might give us some clues to the development of idiomized phrases (and later kōans) and their rhetorical and pedagogical functions in Chán literature. Huìzhōng (or the authors of ZTJ) established *wúqíng shuō fǎ* in its theoretical context, and the doctrine became accepted among Chán adherents. After being established and having become a well-known story in Chán circles, the doctrine could be handled more freely. The Chán monk in the dialogue below is completely aware of the theoretical implications of the concept when he poses his question. The question is posed rather in order to initiate an exchange on religious and/or epistemological issues with his master.

ZTJ 5.022,12-023,03:

問：

“如何是無情說法？”

[A monk] asked:

“How about ‘non-sentients expound the dharma’?”

師指東邊露柱云：

“這個師僧說得。”

The master pointed to the eastern pillar [of the temple] and said:

“This monk¹²³ here can teach.”¹²⁴

¹²² See *Dòngshān yǔlù* (a), T. 47, no. 1986(a), pp. 507b08- c13 and *Dòngshān yǔlù* (b), T. 47, no. 1986(b), pp. 519b22-520a03.

¹²³ *shīsēng* 師僧 is a late colloquial, often derogative expression for a monk

僧云：	The monk asked:
“什摩人得聞？”	“Who can hear [their teaching]?”
師指西邊露柱云：	The master pointed to the western pillar and said:
“這個師僧得聞。”	“This monk here can hear it.”
僧云：	The monk asked:
“師還聞摩？”	“Are you able to hear it?”
師云：	The master said:
“我若聞則教誰舉？”	“If I could hear it then who should conduct the teaching?” ¹²⁵ [?]
師示眾云：	The master instructed the assembly:
“富貴則易，	“If you are rich then it is easy;
貧窮則難。”	if you are poor then it is difficult.”

WÚQÍNG SHUŌ Fǎ IN OTHER CHÁN WORKS

The phrase *wúqíng shuō fǎ* developed into an important rhetorical device and was echoed in many historical works and collections of *Recorded Sayings* throughout the history of Chán, in too many passages to cite them exhaustively. The ZTJ is probably the oldest source for this story and embedded it in a critique on Shénhuì. The polemic context, which at the time of the compilation may have been motivated by a still ongoing sectarian struggle between different factions of Chán, was dropped in subsequent versions of this story. In the Sòng period the question of the “orthodox lineages” had been more or less settled. The episode came to be used in dialogues between masters and their disciples as a rhetoric and pedagogic element. The story became ‘a case of a master of old’, and the doctrine of *wúqíng shuō fǎ* the ‘trademark’ of Huìzhōng, an important monk for the early Chán period about whom we know very little. *Wúqíng shuō fǎ* remained the trademark of master Huìzhōng and also became an important part of Dòngshān’s teaching. Consequently the phrase is cited in all records on those two persons. But also many other Chán-masters took up this ‘case’ in their rhetorical repertoire. The following are some variations

especially used in Chán texts (see Nakamura, p. 544d).

¹²⁴ *dé* 得 after the verb can be interpreted here as potential complement (‘be able to’).

¹²⁵ Another possible translation of this phrase: “If I hear it then whom shall I instruct to bring it up (i.e. cite it) [as essential phrase].”

on the topic from the collection *Wǔ dēng huì yuán* 五燈會元, which was compiled in 1252 A.D. by the monk Pǔjì 普濟 (1179-1253):

Wǔ dēng huì yuán 五燈會元, p. 300 (Tóuzǐ Dàtóng chánshī 投子大同禪師):

問：	[A monk] asked:
“如何是無情說法？”	“How about ‘non-sentients expound the dharma?’”
師曰：	Master [Tóuzǐ Dàtóng 投子大同] said:
“惡。”	“è (‘evil’)!”
[...]	[...]
問：	[A monk] asked:
“如何是無情說法？”	“How about ‘non-sentient [objects] expound the dharma?’”
師曰：	The master said:
“莫惡口。”	“Don’t be evil-speaking!”

Wǔ dēng huì yuán 五燈會元, p. 824 (Tóng Ānpǐ chánshī 同安丕禪師):

問：	[A monk] asked:
“無情還解說法也無？”	“Do non-sentients expound the dharma?”
師曰：	Master [Tóng Ānpī] said:
“玉犬夜行， 不知天曉。”	“The jade-dog walks at night and is not aware of the coming of day.”

Wǔ dēng huì yuán 五燈會元, p. 1048 (Xiànmíng Shànzī chánshī 顯明善孜禪師):

問：	[A monk] asked:
“如何是無情說法？”	“How about ‘non-sentients expound the dharma?’”
師曰：	Master [Xiànmíng Shànzī 顯明善孜] said:
“燈籠掛露柱。”	“The lantern is suspended from the temple pillar.” ¹²⁶

¹²⁶ *dēnglóng* 燈籠, lanterns, and especially *lùzhù* 露柱, the round vertical pillars of Buddhist temples, are expressions which are frequently used in Chán-texts to

曰：	[The monk] asked:
“甚麼人得聞？”	“Who gets to hear it?”
師曰：	The master said:
“牆壁有耳。”	“The walls have ears.”

In the entry on Hùshèng Jūjìng 護聖居靜 *wúqíng shuō fǎ* is mentioned as the third of ten gates of Chán-Buddhist practice:

Wǔ dēng huì yuán 五燈會元, p. 1323:

一、須信有教外別傳。	Firstly, one has to <i>believe</i> that there is a separate transmission outside the [written] teachings;
二、須知有教外別傳。	Secondly, one has to <i>know</i> that there is a separate transmission outside the [written] teachings;
三、須會無情說法與有情說法無二。	Thirdly, one has to know that the teaching of non-sentients and the teaching of sentient beings are one and the same. [...]

Gǔ zūnsú yǔlù 古尊宿語錄, ZZ 118, p. 573a10-12:

今夏舉無情說法因緣。	This summer we took up the case of ‘non-sentients expound the dharma’.
祇是錯會者多。	But there are many who are mistaken about this.
你見無情便說無情。	If you see a non-sentient [object] then you say ‘non-sentient’.
若見有情便喚作有情。	If you encounter sentient beings then you call them ‘sentient beings’.
你參禪人。	You people engaged in Chán –
不明無情說法。	if you are not clear about ‘non-sentients expound the dharma’,
如何了得行腳事。	how can you fulfil your monk’s business? ¹²⁷

symbolize the realm of inanimate objects (see Nakamura, p. 1445c).

¹²⁷ *xíngjiǎo* 行腳 refers to the monk’s practice of setting out to find a teacher and seeking after the dharma.

做善知識不會無情說法。	If you act as a teacher and do not understand 'the teaching of non-sentients'
如何接物利生。	how can you guide and benefit human beings! ¹²⁸ [...]

Final Remarks on Parts One and Two

A survey of the conceptual evolution of the term *qíng* in Chinese Buddhism would necessitate a thorough study of its occurrences in sūtra translations and early Buddhist works produced in China. That is a task which goes far beyond the scope of this study. However, it seems likely that 'sense faculty' was the earliest specific Buddhist meaning of *qíng* going as far back as to the second century A.D. The extended meanings 'sense faculty > perception > that which has sense faculties/perception > sentient being' and 'sense faculty > perception > false perception > deluded thinking/feeling' seem to have developed significantly later, probably in the early Táng dynasty.

This article has focused on the use of *qíng* in Chán texts as exemplified by the 10th-century ZTJ. The analysis of the occurrences of the term in this work gives evidence that at this point *qíng* already had a wide range of meanings established in the Buddhist context. Typically for Chinese Buddhist terms, these different meanings are by no means standardized and only loosely hang together.¹²⁹ One can

¹²⁸ *jiēwù lìshēng* 接物利生 is an expression which also appears in the kōan-collection *Bìyán lù* 碧巖錄 (T.48, no. 2003, p. 212c; see also Nakamura, p. 829c).

¹²⁹ At this point it should be noted that the study of Chinese Buddhist terms/concepts poses considerable difficulties. This is due to the fact that Sanskrit terms were translated with a variety of different Chinese characters by different translators and during different periods. Many terms/concepts were also continuously reinterpreted and assumed new meanings or nuances. This tendency became especially strong during Táng times when many of the typical Chinese Buddhist schools arose and traditional terms were reinterpreted in the contexts of those schools. Adherents of Chán Buddhism were especially notorious for the reinterpretation of terms/concepts, an activity which actually can be regarded as one of the main features of the newly arising Chán school(s). When we deal with Buddhist terms in China we therefore always have to be aware of the variety of meanings in usage and that the search for a 'unified' meaning is often futile.

roughly divide the semantics of *qíng* in ZTJ into three main groups. The first group includes general Buddhist meanings, the second includes those which are rather specific to the Chán school, and in the third group *qíng* appears in colloquial expressions characteristic of the late Táng/Five Dynasties periods.

The most typical Buddhist meaning of *qíng* appears in the compound *yǒuqíng* 'sentient (being)' and its antonym *wúqíng* 'non-sentient (object)'. In this quite neutral term *qíng* indicates what is specific to living beings, i.e. *perceptual and cognitive processes*. According to this definition plant life is excluded from *yǒuqíng*. As we have seen even this most general meaning of *qíng* was redefined in Chán Buddhist terms.

In the second group *qíng* has much more negative connotations. Since the rise of Chán Buddhism in the early Táng, mind and mental processes have been topics of great concern and were elaborated on in literary products of its adherents. The emphasis was often on mental processes which inhibit enlightenment and which were contrasted to the naturally pure and perfect state of mind. A wide range of different terminology was applied for this purpose. In ZTJ *qíng* typically refers to mental processes of the unenlightened mind, the mind of the average person. The *qíng*-like mental functions further attachment to the world and hinder, in Buddhist terms, direct insight. In a way *qíng* might be compared to a 'filter' which interpretes perceived data and furthers the formation of a distorted view of the world. These activities consist of cognitive processes (dualistic thinking, differentiating, judging, etc.) and emotional responses (liking, disliking, etc.). Naturally *qíng* overlaps with many other terms referring to the activities of the unenlightened mind. There is also a strong element of *grasping* and *attachment* in *qíng*. According to this interpretation *qíng* stands in sharp contrast to the term 'true mind'. *Zhēnxīn* 真心 refers to a highly idealized state of mind which is usually described in terms of the *absence* of the deluded mental activities mentioned above and which is supposed to enable some kind of direct insight into the nature of things.¹³⁰

In ZTJ there are two kinds of interpretations of *yǒuqíng*, the first merely designating a sentient being and the other stressing the deluded

¹³⁰ A thorough contrasting textual study on *xīn*, *qíng* and related terms in Chán Buddhist texts would probably be very rewarding.

mental processes which characterize sentient beings. The second interpretation has possibly the origin in Xuánzàng's 玄奘 (600-664) translations of Sanskrit Yogācāra texts into Chinese. In Yogācāra texts the analysis of the deluded activities of the mind is often one of the main topics. Xuánzàng replaced the quite neutral term *zhòngshēng* (lit. 'all beings') for *sattva* ('sentient beings') with the term *yǒuqíng*. However, at that point of time *qíng* might already have had an established meaning of 'deluded mental activity; deluded thinking' and this meaning might have 'coloured' the term *yǒu qíng* as translation for *sattva*.¹³¹ Seen from this background the appearance of the term *wú qíng* 'non sentients' referring to those who have ceased all deluded mental activities is not quite so surprising and puzzling after all. We get a twofold antonym pair of *yǒuqíng* versus *wúqíng*:

'sentient being' ⇔ 'non-sentient object'

'sentient being' ⇔ 'being without deluded mental processes'

The second *wúqíng* does not refer to non-animate objects but to a Bodhisattva-like being who has transcended the afflictions characteristic for human beings.

One might wonder how a speculative concept like *wúqíng shuō fǎ* 'non-sentients expound the dharma' could achieve such prominence in Chán Buddhist texts. It is indeed striking how *useless* the concept is for practical religious purposes. Limited to the realm of 'the sages' the teaching of non-sentients can be neither heard nor verified. One possible answer to this puzzling question is that it is exactly this vagueness which favoured the development into an important pedagogical device and a frequently used element in the rhetorical structure of subsequent Chán scriptures. A question about a philosophical or religious topic which can be answered in a definite way is in danger of losing its relevance – there is no need to think about things one is certain about. Themes like 'non-sentients expound the dharma' stay unresolved and obscure even after long theoretical discussions, and are by nature open-ended, thereby preserving their epistemological and soteriological potential. By employing the dialogue-form and

¹³¹ Xuánzàng's new translations had great impact on the Chinese Buddhist communities and it is thinkable that in the period of Huìzhōng's religious activities his translations were still a matter of ardent debates among Buddhist practitioners.

extensively using the vernacular language one could deal with religious topics in an entertaining and lively way (in contrast to the theoretical and repetitive style of many Buddhist scriptures and commentaries): making use of hair-splitting arguments, pseudo-logical chains of arguments, unusual comparisons, abusing or ridiculing remarks, etc. The ZTJ is the first document which clearly reflects this evolution within Chán Buddhist literary activities.

We have evidence that at the time of the composition of ZTJ many of the rhetorical devices typical of the literature of the Chán school had already been developed. In our case study of *wú qíng shuō fǎ* we find passages of rhetorically sophisticated exchanges of arguments as well as *short dialogues which are centered around essential phrases*. Meditation on essential phrases (*huàtóu* 話頭) came to play an important role in Chán-practice (*gōng'àn* 公案 practice) and is usually associated with the Sòng period. But in ZTJ we already find the expressions *huàtóu* 話頭 ('speech + suffix', used one time) and *wèntóu* 問頭 ('ask + suffix', used seven times).¹³² Although these terms did not necessarily refer to a specific technique at this time, it seems likely that they did already refer to (epistemologically and/or soteriologically) essential phrases and questions which were extracted from recorded dialogues. In ZTJ those phrases occasionally serve as basis to initiate dialogues for the purpose of teaching:

ZTJ 5.103,13:

曹山禮拜，
便請問頭。

Cáoshan bowed politely
and then asked for a (*essential*)
question.

曹山再三苦切問，

Cáoshān desperately asked two or
three times

三度方得問頭。

and only [after] the third time he got
a (*essential*) *question*.

Wèntóu does not refer to just any kind of question but to a question which can initiate an exchange on important soteriological/epistemological issues.

¹³² It is striking that *huà* and *wèn* combine with the suffix *tóu* 頭. In ZTJ this suffix is usually restricted to concrete nouns, some relative place words and the pronoun *nà* 那.

In the case of *wúqíng shuō fǎ* especially two phrases developed into some kind of 'huàtōu': *rúhé shì wúqíng shuō fǎ* 如何是無情說法 "How is the teaching of non-sentients?" and *wúqíng shuō fǎ shí mó rén dé wén* 無情說法什麼人得聞 "Who is able to hear the teaching on non-sentients?"

These two phrases were taken up (*jǔ* 舉) and commented upon (in ZTJ often indicated with *dàishuō* 代說) by later masters. They had become a case of a 'person of old' (*gǔrén* 古人). In ZTJ the term *yīnyuán* 因緣 is often used when referring to such a 'case'. *Yīnyuán* has a wide range of Buddhist meanings and originally refers to direct and indirect causes/conditions. The fact that Chán Buddhists began to use this term when referring to cases of former masters is not accidental. The term *yīnyuán* was also used to translate the Sanskrit word *nidāna* which refers to historical narratives inserted into Buddhist sūtras and commentaries.¹³³ Chán adherents probably used this term because they regarded the accounts of the sayings and deeds of former masters as historical events which—condensed to the essence—could be used to 'condition' an enlightenment experience in the present. This quite fascinating development within religious literary genres is of course closely connected to the introduction of the vernacular language as medium for recording the masters' words and deeds.

In this article I have tried to trace some aspects of the development of the term *qíng* in Chinese Buddhism and show how the use of this term reflects some of the developments in Chán Buddhist thought and literary activities in the mid- and late Táng period. We have seen that the interpretation of the term in the Buddhist context was quite different from the meanings it originally had in pre-Buddhist Chinese. In the course of time the Buddhist meanings diversified (and accumulated) until the meaning 'sentient being' became predominant through the influence of Xuánzàng's translations. We can see how the term got embedded in the rhetorical structure of Chán dialogues of the *Recorded Sayings*, underwent re-interpretation and finally became part of short essential phrases which were extracted from the dialogues.

¹³³ *Nidāna* (the phonetic translation is *nítuónà* 尼陀那) is regarded as one of the twelve divisions of the Buddhist canon (see Nakamura: 658b).

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THE TRANSFORMATION OF DOUBT (*YÍQÍNG* 疑情)

IN CHINESE BUDDHIST MEDITATION

ROBERT E. BUSWELL, JR.

"Of those past and present spiritual mentors in India and China who were disseminating these teachings, there are none who did anything more than simply resolve this one doubt. Whether it is a thousand doubts or a myriad doubts, they are all just this one doubt. One who resolves this doubt will doubt nothing more. And once he has no further doubts, he will be identical to Śākyamuni and Maitreya."

Gāofēng Yuánmiào 高峰原妙 (1238-1295)

One of the more striking transformations that occurred within Buddhism as it adapted to its new homeland of China was the creation of new, uniquely Chinese systems of meditation practice that had few analogues in the imported Indian traditions of the religion. Certainly the Sinitic system best known in the West is that of Chán—or Zen as it is more commonly known through its Japanese pronunciation. The Chán school had always presumed itself to be the repository of contemplative expertise in Chinese Buddhism, as the adoption of the name "Meditation" (*chán* 禪) for the school suggests. From virtually its inception, Chán sought to create forms of meditation that it could claim exclusively as its own. This process involved both critiquing the practices common to other Sino-Indian schools as being 'gradual,' while claiming exclusively for itself putatively 'subitist' forms of religious training. Chán also experimented with forms of rhetoric it considered proleptic and transformative, in order to demonstrate the autonomy of Chán from the rest of the Buddhist tradition. To simplify a complex process of development, we may say that this parallel evolution in both praxis and rhetoric led to the creation of *kànhuà* Chán 看話禪 (lit. the "Chán of observing the keyword") during the Song dynasty (960-1279). In this form of meditation, stories about earlier masters—termed "public cases" (Ch. *gōng'àn*; Jpn. *kōan* 公案)—were used by Chán masters for instructing their students and

testing the depth of their understanding. Some teachers even began to assign such exchanges as themes to be contemplated during meditation.

By the middle of the Song, these “public cases” came to be seen as significant not because they were the repository of Chan’s pedagogical lore, but instead because they expressed the enlightened state of mind of the Chán master involved in the exchange. Students then were no longer taught to contemplate the case in its entirety, but to focus instead on its “keyword,” or “critical phrase” (*huàtóu* 話頭), so that they too would come to realize, and in turn be able to express, their own enlightened state of mind. Single-minded attention to the “critical phrase” was claimed to create an introspective focus that would eventually lead the student back to the enlightened source of his own mind—a process referred to as “tracing back the radiance” (*huíguāng fǎnzhào* 迴光返照) emanating from the mind, or, as John McRae has suggested, “counter-illumination.” Once the student had rediscovered the source of his own mind through such counter-illumination, he would come to know the enlightened intent of the Chán master involved in the public case, and in turn consummate in himself the same state of enlightenment. Through this technique, then, the student patterns his mind after that of the eminent Chán masters of old until they think—and ultimately act—as one.

One of the most crucial dimensions of *kànhuà* Chán practice is the emphasis on the need for doubt, which is viewed as the motive force that moves meditation forward. The notion of doubt (Sanskrit, *vicikitsā*; Ch. *yí* 疑) appears from virtually the inception of the Indian Buddhist tradition, but exclusively as one of the five principal hindrances (*nivaraṇa*; *gài* 蓋) to concentration or mental absorption (*dhyāna*; *dìng* 定). Doubt had no constructive role to play in Indian Buddhist spiritual culture, but was instead an obstacle that must be overcome if progress was to proceed. By the time doubt has been fully appraised and considered by Chán Buddhist theorists, however, this debilitating mental concomitant has been transformed into the principal force driving one toward enlightenment. This chapter seeks to tell the story of this transformation.

Early Indian Notions of Doubt

In early Indian materials, doubt most often appears as the fifth of the five hindrances to mental absorption, along with sensual desire, ill-will, sloth and torpor, and restless and worry. It does not have an affective dimension in Indian materials, but is generally viewed as a debilitation of the intellect: as the *Visuddhimagga* (*Path of Purification*) states (using “uncertainty” as the translation for the term I render “doubt”): “...Uncertainty ... has the characteristic of doubt. Its function is to waver. It is manifested as indecisiveness, or it is manifested as taking various sides. Its proximate cause is unwise attention. It should be regarded as obstructive of theory” (*Visuddhimagga*, XIV.177).¹ Doubt is always associated with unwholesome states of consciousness in the sensual sphere of existence (i.e., it does not exist in the realms of subtle materiality or formlessness) that are rooted in delusion (*Visuddhimagga*, XIV.89-93). It involves skepticism about various intellectual propositions concerning the state of one’s existence in past, present, and future: viz., Did I exist, or not, in the past? As what and how did I exist in the past? Having been something previously, how did I come to exist in the past? (And so, too, for the future and, with slight alterations, the present.) (*Visuddhimagga*, XIX.6). Because of the uncertainty created by doubt, the mind becomes agitated, thus obstructing sustained thought (*vicāra*; *guān* 觀, *sì* 伺), and thus full mental absorption (*dhyāna*).² Because of its intellectual dimension, doubt will be fully removed from consciousness once all wrong views (*mithyādṛṣṭi*; *wàngjiàn* 妄見) are resolved at the moment of awakening: the moment when one becomes a “stream-enterer” (*srotāpanna*; *yùliú* 預流) on the path of vision (*darśanamārga*; *jiàndào* 見道) brings insight into the reality of nirvāṇa that forever vanquishes all mistaken beliefs about the true nature of one’s self and one’s world.

For our subsequent discussion, however, it is important to note that doubt was always viewed by Indian Buddhists in association with sustained meditative practice. This is because the five hindrances,

¹ All translations from the *Visuddhimagga* are taken from the translation by Bhikkhu Ñānamoli, *The Path of Purification* (5th edition, Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1991).

² The *Visuddhimagga* states that these five hindrances are “specifically obstructive” of mental absorption; IV.104.

doubt among them, were specifically said to stand in opposition to the five constituents that were present in meditative absorption (*dhyāna*): sensual desire obstructs one-pointedness of mind, ill-will obstructs rapture, sloth and torpor obstructs applied thought, restless and worry obstruct ease, and doubt obstructs sustained thought (*Visud-dhimagga*, IV.86).

In order to remove this hindrance, various types of counteragents are taught in Indian scripture. Perhaps the most fundamental way of counteracting this hindrance is outlined in the various recensions of the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta* (Foundations of Mindfulness Sūtra). There, the meditator is taught simply to note mindfully and with full attention the presence or absence of doubt or the other hindrances in the mind: "Herein, monks, when doubt is present in him, the monk knows, 'There is doubt in me,' or when doubt is absent, he knows, 'There is no doubt in me.' He knows how the arising of non-arisen doubt comes to be; he knows how the rejection of arisen doubt comes to be; he knows how the non-arising in the future of the rejected doubt comes to be."³ Two purposes of this basic awareness are noted: the operation of the presently appearing hindrance is temporarily suspended; and as the awareness of the hindrance becomes stronger, it will be more difficult for it to arise unrecognized in the future. As Nyanaponika states, "This method is based on a simple psychological fact, which is expressed by the commentators as follows: 'A good and an evil thought cannot occur in combination. Therefore, at the time of *knowing* the [doubt that arises in the preceding moment, that negative sense of doubt] no longer exists [but only the positive act of knowing].'"⁴

Given, however, that the proximate cause of doubt is presumed to be unwise, or unsystematic, attention (*ayoniśomanaskāra*; *búzhèng sīwéi* 不正思維, *fēilǐ zuòyì* 非理作意), Buddhist texts teach specific practices and contemplations that are considered to be conducive to abandoning doubt. These techniques specifically include systematic attention to such dichotomies as the distinction between wholesome and unwholesome, noble and vile, good and evil, etc., so that one

³ Nyanaponika Thera, *The Heart of Buddhist Meditation* (New York: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1962), p. 123-4.

⁴ Nyanaponika Thera, *The Five Mental Hindrances and Their Conquest*, Wheel Series no. 26 (1947; reprint ed., Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1961), p. 4.

trains oneself in correct doctrinal knowledge, viz., wisdom (*prajñā*; *zhìhuì* 智慧). Continued study and memorization of Buddhist scriptures can also develop wisdom into a spiritual faculty that will further help to control doubt. One of the earliest systematic presentations of Buddhist meditation written in China, Kumārajīva's (344-413) *Zuòchán sānmèi jīng* (Book on Sitting Meditation 坐禪三昧經), a compilation of teachings on dhyāna practice deriving from a number of masters in the Sarvāstivāda, or "All Exists," school of Indian mainstream Buddhism, mentions doubt in this same context, as a product of delusion, which is to be overcome through one of the five "inhibitory" or "counteractive" (*zhì* 治) meditations, in this case the meditation on dependent origination.⁵

Even throughout this almost exclusively negative treatment of doubt as an unwholesome mental state, there are a few tantalizing hints in Indian religious texts of the more positive connotations that the term acquires later in East Asian Buddhism. Indian scriptures, such as the *Brāhmaṇa-s*, for example, recognize the role that doubt can play in prompting religious inquiry. This salutary role of doubt is mentioned, for example, in a few passages where doubt (*vicikitsā*) leads to questioning about eschatological issues, such as whether there is an afterlife.⁶ Doubt about whether there is in fact an afterlife promotes religious questioning and even genuinely philosophical inquiry.

Doubt, therefore, always stands in direct distinction to the more intellectual faculty of wisdom, not the affective faculty of faith. In Indian Buddhism, faith was regarded as one of the five faculties (*indriya*; *gēn* 根) crucial to spiritual progress, along with diligence, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom. The faculty of faith, in fact, is usually considered to be the direct counteragent of ill-will, not of doubt, clearly demonstrating its affective dimension. Faith produces the affective aspect of bliss (*prīti*), which brings about serenity of mind and thought; in addition, faith also produces self-confidence, engendering the conative characteristic of diligence (*vīrya*).⁷ Faith

⁵ *Zuòchán sānmèi jīng*, *T[aishō shinshū daizōkyō]* 614:15.272c-273a.

⁶ E.g., "Pratardana . . . questions about his doubt" (*Pratardanaḥ vicikitsam papraccha*); *Kauśītakī Brāhmaṇa* 26.5, quoted in K. N. Jayatilleke, *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1963), p. 30.

⁷ N. Dutt, "Place of Faith in Buddhism," *Indian Historical Quarterly* 16, p. 639; see the discussion and critique of Dutt's putative third dimension of faith—as

and wisdom, which were at equal poles from the faculty of mindfulness, were to be kept constantly counterpoised. By balancing them, faith would guard against excessive wisdom, which could lead to skepticism, while wisdom would protect against excessive faith, which could lead to blind, uncritical acceptance. The result was a "rational faith" (Pali: *ākārāvati saddhā*)⁸ that was prompted more by investigation than acquiescence. Preliminary examination of the Buddhist teachings would encourage the student to take up religious practice and, after cultivating those teachings, his initial tacit faith would be confirmed through direct experience. The arrangement itself speaks to the subordinate place faith occupied in Indian Buddhist praxis: faith may serve as the basis of practice, but it had always to be carefully counterbalanced by intellectual understanding. Faith and doubt are therefore part of a continuum of religious practice, doubt promoting critical examination of the teachings, faith resulting from the conviction that comes through understanding and prompting, in turn, further conative energy. Faith is thus the "'mental appreciation' or 'intellectual joy' resulting from intelligent study and a clarification of one's thought"⁹ and is a direct result of the resolution of doubt.

The New Conception of Doubt in Chán Meditation

Doubt plays a crucial role in the technique of *kànhuà* Chán ("Chán of observing the keyword," or "critical phrase"), a style of Buddhist meditation unique to East Asia, which becomes emblematic of the Línjì 臨濟 school of the classical and post-classical Chán periods. In Chán treatments, doubt is typically called the *yíqíng* (疑情): the emotion, feeling, or perhaps better the "sensation" of doubt. Even though the *-qíng* in *yíqíng* is never, so far as I am aware, glossed in the literature, its connotation is clear: *qíng* is a palpable conative sensation that ultimately serves to pervade all of one's thoughts, feelings, emo-

an antidote to doubt—in Jayatilleke, *Knowledge*, p. 387.

⁸ "The faith of him, which is thus fixed, rooted and established on these reasons, grounds, and features is said to be a rational faith, rooted in insight, firm and irremovable by a recluse or brahmin, a god, Māra or Brahmā, or anyone else in the world." *Vīmañsaka Sutta* (M.i.320); quoted in Jayatilleke, *Knowledge*, p. 393.

⁹ Jayatilleke, *Knowledge*, p. 386.

tions, and eventually even one's physical body, with the doubt generated through *kànhuà* practice.

Modern scholars have often asserted that the evolution of this form of meditation was the product of an internal crisis in Song dynasty Chán, brought about by the degeneration of the tradition after the demise of the charismatic Chán masters of the preceding Tang dynasty. As I have detailed in an earlier article,¹⁰ however, I prefer instead to view *kànhuà* Chán as one of several products of the Sinicization of Buddhism. To my mind, *kànhuà* practice may be viewed as the culmination of an internal dynamic within Chán, beginning in the Tang and climaxing in the Song, whereby subitist rhetoric came to be extended to pedagogy and finally to practice. *Kànhuà* meditation thus emerges as a practical application of the "sudden teachings" (*dùnjiào* 頓教) that had been the clarion call of Chán since early in its history. I have treated the evolution of this uniquely Chinese style of meditation previously, so I won't repeat that discussion in this chapter. Let me instead focus here on the sensation of doubt itself.

Early discussions about the place of doubt in proto-*kànhuà* practice still hone closely to earlier Indian notions of doubt as a hindrance to meditative development. For example, Yuánwù Kèqín 圓悟克勤 (1063-1135), an important figure in the transformation of the literary study of *gōng'àn* into a meditative system, still treats the sensation of doubt as something harmful to faith, which should be diligently avoided at all times—but especially so in the course of *gōng'àn* investigation.¹¹ When Kèqín talks about "cutting through the sensation of doubt with

¹⁰ Robert E. Buswell, Jr., "The 'Short-cut' Approach of *K'an-hua* Meditation: The Evolution of a Practical Subitism in Chinese Chan Buddhism," in Peter N. Gregory, ed., *Sudden and Gradual: Approaches to Enlightenment in Chinese Thought*, Studies in East Asian Buddhism, no. 5 (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, A Kuroda Institute Book, 1987), 321-77.

¹¹ The most thorough treatment to date of Yuánwù Kèqín's approach to *kànhuà* practice appears in Ding-hwa Evelyn Hsieh's "Yüan-wu K'o-ch'in's (1063-1135) Teaching of Chan *Kung-an* Practice: A Transition from the Literary Study of Chan *Kung-an* to the Practice of *K'an-hua* Chan," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 17-1 (Nov., 1994): 66-95. For a selection of Kèqín's writings, see also J. C. Cleary and Thomas Cleary, translators, *Zen Letters: Teachings of Yuanwu* (Boston and London: Shambhala, 1994).

an adamant sword,"¹² he views doubt as an obstacle to faith, and thus to understanding, which must be removed at all costs.

It is Kèqín's famous disciple Dàhuì Zōnggāo 大慧宗杲 (1089-1163) who turns Kèqín's view toward doubt on its head, re-conceiving it instead as the principal force driving one toward enlightenment. Since I have discussed Zōnggāo's treatment in detail elsewhere,¹³ I would like in this chapter to focus on what I believe is the most systematic, and at times even eloquent, presentation of the role of doubt in mature *kànhuà* Chán meditation found anywhere in the literature: the *Chányào* 禪要 (*Essentials of Chán*), by the important Yuan-dynasty Línjì figure Gāofēng Yuánmiào 高峰原妙 (1239-1295). Yuánmiào's own contribution to the theory of *kànhuà* meditation comes not so much from his innovations as instead the clarity with which he explains and systematizes the thought of others. Most of the concepts treated in Yuánmiào's work derive from his predecessors in the Chinese Línjì school. Even so, few other teachers have explored this topic with such perspicuity and insight. Yuánmiào's descriptions help to remove much of the veil of mystery in which Chán practice is often enveloped in Western portrayals of the school.

The most important feature of Yuánmiào's presentation of *kànhuà* Chán praxis was to systematize its principal constituents into what he termed the "three essentials" (*sānyào* 三要): 1) the faculty of great faith (*dà xìn'gēn* 大信根); 2) great passionate intent (*dà fènzhì* 大憤志); and 3) the great sensation of doubt (*dà yíqíng* 大疑情). Yuánmiào's typology will subsequently be followed in the independent Chán traditions of China, Korea, and Japan. In one of the most celebrated passages in post-classical Chán literature, Yuánmiào defines each constituent as follows: "If you are to study Chán correctly, there are three essentials with which you absolutely must be endowed. The first essential is to have the faculty of great faith. You should know clearly that this matter [means to be so steadfast in your beliefs that it] is as if you were leaning against Mt. Sumeru [the mythological supporting axis of the world]. The second essential is to have great passionate intent. This is like [the passion that consumes you when] you come across the brigand who killed your father and right away you want to cut him in two with a single slice of your sword. The

¹² *Yuánwù yǔlù* 圓悟語錄 3, T 1997:47.723c12.

¹³ Buswell, "K'an-hua Meditation," especially pp. 343-56.

third essential is to have the great sensation of doubt. This is like [the anxiety and sense of anticipation you feel when,] having done a heinous act in a private place, [you don't know] whether you are about to be exposed."¹⁴

I have discussed above the Indian notion of faith as a precursor to insight. Faith in the Chán tradition was conceived rather differently. The doctrinal foundation of virtually all of Sinitic Buddhism was its claim that enlightenment was immanent in all people, an idea expressed in the term "Buddha-nature" (*fóxìng* 佛性). As Yuánmiào explains, ultimately all that needed to be done in order to achieve enlightenment was simply to accept that fact—have "faith" in it wholeheartedly—and thereby let go of the mistaken notion that one was not enlightened. Faith was the catalyst for this change of heart. It was seen as a beneficial influence constantly emanating from the enlightened nature, prompting all conscious beings toward enlightenment. Once his faith were sufficient, the student would immediately acquiesce to his original state of mind and "re-cognize" his innate enlightenment. Hence, faith was upgraded in Chán Buddhism from a necessary, but decidedly subsidiary, component of praxis, to a principal catalyst of awakening.

But Yuánmiào, like many Línjì teachers before him, also had a realistic view of the human condition. While people may in truth be enlightened, they have had years—if not lifetimes, in the Buddhist view—to convince themselves that they were not. Therefore, it was perfectly natural to expect that the sincere adept would also have doubts concerning the truth of his innate enlightenment, his capacity to rediscover that truth, and the ability of his teacher to guide him toward that rediscovery. In a striking accommodation to the frailty of human nature, rather than making the perfection of faith alone the prerequisite to enlightenment, the Línjì school of Chán developed an

¹⁴ *Gāofēng Chányào* 高峰禪要, sect. 16, *Xùzàngjīng* 續藏經 (*Supplement to the Canon*), vol. 122: 257a ff. Since there is no standard edition of this text, I will henceforth cite it only by section number. These three essentials seem to be modeled on a similar list of "three states of mind" (*sānxīn* 三心) found in the *Guān Wúliàngshòu jīng* 觀無量壽經 (*Contemplating the Buddha of Infinite Life*). That scripture mentions that "rebirth in the pure land occurs through generating three states of mind" (344c11): perfect sincerity (*zhìchéng xīn* 至誠心); profound resolve (*shēnxīn* 深心), resolving to transmit merit to others (*huíxiàng fāyuàn xīn* 迴向發願心). See *Guān Wúliàngshòu jīng*, T 365:12.344c11-12. The term *sānyào* is also used, though without clarification, in the *Línjì lù* 臨濟錄, T 1985:47.497a15,20.

approach to practice that drew on the doubts normally experienced by the religious believer.

Yuánmiào seeks to use this natural tension between faith (that fact that I am innately enlightened) and doubt (the reality that I am an ordinary, ignorant person) as the catalyst for the experience of awakening (*wù* 悟). In Section 11 of his *Essentials of Chán*, Yuánmiào treats both factors as being in symbiotic relationship (“to the extent you can generate faith, to that same extent you will have doubt”). He treats faith as the “essence” (*tǐ* 體) of doubt, while awakening is the “function” (*yòng* 用) of doubt, drawing upon a rubric popularized in the *Awakening of Faith* (*Dàshèng qǐxìn lùn* 大乘起信論), an important Sinitic apocryphal treatise that was extremely influential in the evolution of Chán ideology and praxis. Religious doubt arises from the deepest recesses of one’s faith. The tension between them creates an existential quandary that ultimately leads to the experience of awakening. All three factors are inextricably interconnected, so that “when faith is a hundred percent, so too will be doubt. When doubt is a hundred percent, so too will be awakening” (*Chányào*, sect. 11).

Yuánmiào describes the pervasive effect of this sensation of doubt in an evocative passage of his *Essentials of Chán*:

Less than one month after I returned to the [meditation] hall, unexpectedly in my sleep I began to doubt [the *huàtóu*] “the thousand dharmas return to one; to what does the one return?”¹⁵ From then on, the sensation of doubt suddenly erupted. I stopped sleeping and forgot about eating. I couldn’t distinguish east from west and couldn’t tell day from night. Whether spreading out my sitting mat or laying out my bowls, whether defecating or urinating—finally whether active or still, whether speaking or silent, everything was just this “to what does the one return?” There wasn’t the slightest extraneous thought. And even if I had wanted to have any extraneous thoughts, I absolutely couldn’t have done it. [My mind] was exactly like something nailed or glued: no matter how hard you shook it, it would not move. Even if I was in a dense crowd of

¹⁵ This phrase appears in a famous *gōng’àn* involving Zhàozhōu Cóngshěn 趙州從諗 (778-897): “A monk asked Zhàozhōu, ‘The myriad dharmas return to one; to what does the one return?’ Zhàozhōu replied, ‘When I was in Qīngzhōu 淸州, I made a cloth shirt that weighted seven-*jīn* 金.’” See *Biyán lù* 碧岩錄 5, case no. 45, T 2003:48.181c17-20; Thomas Cleary and J.C. Cleary, translators, *Blue Cliff Record* (Boulder: Shambhala Press, 1978), vol. 2, p. 318.

people, it was like no one was there.... It was as if I were stupid or senseless. (*Chányào*, sect. 1.)

The existential doubt created through investigating the critical phrase becomes the locus around which all the other doubts experienced in life coalesce. This overwhelming sense of doubt creates intense pressure on the meditator's intellectual processes and on his own sense of self-identity and self-worth. The coalescence of all the meditator's thoughts and actions around that doubt produces the courage necessary to abandon himself seemingly to ultimate disaster: his own personal destruction. This courage is what Yuánmiào means by the second of his three essentials, great passionate intent. This passion creates a strong urgency about religious praxis, which sustains the student through the existential crises created by the doubt. Through the sustaining power engendered by passionate intent, the doubt will not dissipate, but will become increasingly intense. Then, just as a filial son would avenge his father's death without concern for his own life, so too would the meditator continue to investigate the critical phrase until he no longer could resist the mental pressure created by the doubt. At that point the doubt explodes (*pò* 破), annihilating the student's identification with body and mind. The bifurcating tendencies of thought are brought to an end and the limiting "point of view" that is the ego is eliminated. One's awareness now has no fixed locus and the distinctions between oneself and others vanish. Consciousness expands infinitely, encompassing the entire universe both spatially and temporally. This is the meaning of enlightenment in the Línjì soteriological system. Hence, Yuánmiào can claim that enlightenment means simply to "resolve this one doubt. Whether it is a thousand doubts or a myriad doubts, they are all just this one doubt. One who resolves this doubt will doubt nothing more. And once he has no further doubts, he will be identical to Śākyamuni [the present Buddha] and Maitreya [the future Buddha]..." (*Chányào*, sect. 11).

Yuánmiào is particularly adept at describing clearly the principal constituents of *kànhuà* meditation, providing detailed instructions on how the technique is to be cultivated in practice, and encouraging lay people who are trying to maintain their religious cultivation amid the distracting secular world. Indeed, the majority of Yuánmiào's directives are delivered to lay people and his instructions to them illustrate the Chinese penchant to see the ordinary world as the ground of

enlightenment. Considering that mental stress and existential quandary—viz. doubt—were exactly the states *kànhuà* Chán sought to foster, it is perhaps no surprise that Yuánmiào considered the laity to be the ideal audience for his directives on Chán meditation. The emphasis on doubt in *kànhuà* meditation encouraged the student to foster all the confusion and perplexity he could muster, seemingly making the technique ideally suited to practice amid the typical afflictions of ordinary life. The secular world was the ideal training ground for religious practice because it provided a plethora of situations in which frustration, doubting, and insecurity would appear—all weapons in the arsenal of *kànhuà* meditation. Moreover the obstacles facing the householder were so ubiquitous and seductive (sex, wealth, fame, and so on, ad infinitum) that a person who was able to withstand them developed a tremendous “dynamism” (*lì* 力) that was far superior to that of the sequestered monk. This dynamism would shake the student loose from his attachments and the things with which he identified, and thus help to consummate the radical nonattachment to both body and mind that was the goal of Chán practice. But it is the peculiarly Chán notion of doubt that plays the pivotal role in transforming the meditator from a deluded ordinary person (*prthagjana*; *fánfū* 凡夫) into an enlightened sage.

LANGUAGES OF LOVE AND PARAMETERS OF CULTURE
IN PEONY PAVILION AND THE STORY OF THE STONE

WAIYEE LI

The expression of love through varying stylistic levels is an acknowledged convention in vernacular Chinese literature. In many cases, the protagonists profess their love and longing in an elevated diction liberally sprinkled with classical expressions, poems and parallel prose, literary and historical allusions, while lowly or uncouth characters sport vulgar puns, bawdy jokes, explicit sexual references, and a deromanticizing rhetoric when it comes to matters emotional and erotic. Languages of love encompass sentimental and ironic attitudes. Romantic protagonists are likely to idealize their emotions and their beloved, drawing on metaphors from celestial, divine, or mythic realms. By contrast, ironic observers point to the conventionality, artificiality and wilful self-indulgence of romantic passion. A maid may observe how romantic roles are assumed by the protagonists (e.g., Hóngniáng 紅娘 in *The Western Chamber* [*Xīxiāng jì* 西廂記], act 3, sc. 1), denizens of courtesan quarters are prone to comment on the reality of money, exchange, and transaction behind a scholar-courtesan romance (as in *Peach Blossom Fan* [*Táohuā shàn* 桃花扇], scs. 6 and 7).

These variations have sometimes been explained in terms of verisimilitude—i.e., divergent modes of perception and expression reflect social reality and mark class differences. Generic conventions also play a role. Since literary talent is deemed a necessary attribute for the protagonists in so many works of late-imperial drama and fiction, it follows that the mediation of love and longing through the shared knowledge and language of elite culture is all but inevitable. Commenting on the romantic entanglements of the protagonists, or engaged in their own dalliances, maids, servants, or other secondary characters introduce comic relief and ironic insights. This obvious and ubiquitous

I am responsible for all the translations in this essay, unless otherwise indicated.

formula is often assimilated into a broader vision of totality built on complementary opposites. The high and low, sentimental and ironic diction of love thus fit into a matrix of other juxtapositions in *chuánqí* 傳奇 drama and full-length vernacular fiction—those between, for example, inner chamber scenes and frontier scenes, mythic and mundane realms, love interest and historical-political concerns, the gathering and dispersal of characters, contemplative and exuberant moods, tensions and laxity.¹ These assertions, based on naive realism and on formal-aesthetic structure, respectively, purport to be “givens”. I prefer to regard them as the premises for further questions. What are the functions of these variations beyond presumed verisimilitude and formal balance and coherence? How does the representation of romantic longing and sexual passion thereby gain in complexity?

The broader context is the intrinsic hybridity of vernacular literature. During the literary revolution of the late 1910's and early 1920's, the new written language that purports to be more popular, immediate, and closer to the spoken language draws from traditional vernacular literature (especially fiction) and seeks therein its own lineage. The literary revolution canonized vernacular literature as the “counter-tradition”. As such its ties with orality, performance, popular literature, perhaps even subversive potential for moral-socio-political order (a much more problematic proposition) have often been emphasized in twentieth century criticism.

However, many scholars have noted how the literati was actively engaged in the creation of vernacular texts, which sometimes became one of the venues through which members of the elite displayed their learning, expressed and defined their ideals, frustrations, and self-understanding. It is now widely accepted that vernacular literature is premised on the co-presence and tension between high and low diction, between literati culture and popular culture (although these categories remain fluid and resist precise delineation). The best examples of vernacular fiction and drama almost never fail to self-consciously exploit the interplay of generic traits and stylistic levels to achieve ironic disjunctions or visions of totality based on complementary

¹ Andrew Plaks examines structural patterns of alternations and juxtapositions in “Towards a Critical Theory of Chinese Narrative”, in *Chinese Narrative*, ed. A. Plaks (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), 309-52. The same principle of balances and counterpoints also informs *chuánqí* drama.

opposites and balanced juxtapositions. In some cases, distinctions in levels of style are also based on self-conscious demarcations and reevaluations of “refinement” (*yǎ* 雅) and “vulgarity” (*sú* 俗) and thus imply debates on the parameters of culture. Given these premises, what does the interplay of different languages of love tell us about the parameters of culture?

Peony Pavilion

I will turn to Tāng Xiǎnzǔ's 湯顯祖 (1550-1616) *Peony Pavilion* (*Mǔdān tíng* 牡丹亭 Tāng's preface dated 1598),² since both the conception of love and the discriminations regarding refinement and vulgarity are dominant late-Ming concerns. *Peony Pavilion* tells of Dù Lìniáng 杜麗娘, a cloistered maiden, dreaming up the scholar Liú Mèngméi 柳夢梅. Their sexual union in a dream is followed by her futile quest for the dream's repetition and pining unto death. Dù Lìniáng's unappeased ghost finds Liú and they resume their passion. The play ends with his exhumation of her corpse, her resurrection, and their marriage, which after some struggle is eventually sanctioned by family, society, and state. I will concentrate on the section of the play—scenes 7 to 10—that trace the inception of Dù Lìniáng's passion and its consummation in a dream. The remarkable shifts of styles in these scenes testify to how *qíng*—in its various guises as emotions, subjective projection, romantic longing, and sexual desire—explore and challenge the boundaries of culture. We recall that Dù Lìniáng's sexual awakening begins with a lesson in the beginning of the famous first poem in the *Classic of Poetry* (*Shījīng* 詩經) (*MDT* sc. 7, “Schoolroom of the inner chamber” 閨塾, 25-26).³

² The edition cited here refers to Tāng Xiǎnzǔ, *Mǔdān tíng* (hereafter *MDT*), ed. by Xú Shuòfāng 徐朔方 and Yáng Xiàoméi 楊笑梅 (Beijing: Renmin wenzue chubanshe, 1978).

³ Several scholars have drawn our attention to this interesting pedagogical scene. See Sophie Volpp, “Poets, Parrots, and Paradox: Theatricality and Inauthenticity in the work of Tang Xianzu, Li Zhi, and the Gong'an School”, paper presented in the conference “From Late-Ming to Late-Qing”; Stephen Owen, *An Anthology of Chinese Literature*, Anthony Yu, *Rereading the Stone*.

The fishhawks sing *guan guan*
 On sandbars of the stream.
 Virtuous maiden, pure and fair,
 fit pair for a prince.⁴

關關雎鳩
 在河之洲
 窈窕淑女
 君子好逑

Dù's tutor, the pedantic scholar Chén Zuìliáng 陳最良,⁵ follows the wonted Confucian interpretation that the poem is about the moral exemplarity of the virtuous maiden's (*shúnǚ* 淑女) decorous union with the prince (*jūnzǐ* 君子), although he does not mention standard commentaries which specify historical references to virtuous consorts of the early Zhou kings.⁶ Following Confucius, he sums up the meanings of the *Classic of Poetry* as "no deviation" (*wúxié* 無邪). These are well-worn formulations—desires and longings in the *Poetry* may be assimilated into ethical categories, become the basis of moral relationships, and deliver lessons in balance and restraint of emotions. (According to Confucius, "Fishhawks" is "joyful without being licentious, mournful without being injurious" 樂而不淫，哀而不傷。⁷)

Chūnxiāng 春香, Lìniáng's maid, explodes this edifice of moral homilies. Through naive phonetic associations she turns on its head

⁴ Owen's translation, with slight modifications, *Anthology* 72.

⁵ Confucius was "deprived of food at Chén" (*zài Chén jué liáng* 在陳絕糧). That line from the *Analects* is a close homophone of Chén Zuìliáng's name. The tutor's denial of physical and sensuous existence renders the pun of starvation appropriate.

⁶ See the Máo commentary, and annotations by Zhèng Xuán 鄭玄 and Kǒng Yǐngdá 孔穎達 in *Shísān jīng zhùshū* 十三經注疏 (Yiwen yinshu guan, facs. reproduction of 1816 Linchuan edition) 2:20-21, Zhū Xī's 朱熹 comments in *Shījīng jízhù* 詩經集註 (Hong Kong: Guangzhi shuju, n.d.), 1-2. Cf. Discussions of the poem and its commentary traditions in Stephen van Zoren, *Poetry and Personality*, (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1991) p. 30-31, 76-77, 87-103; Pauline Yu, *The Reading of Imagery in the Chinese Poetic Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), p.47, 54. That Chén does not refer to the standard commentaries and seems to have misread *qiú* 逑 (couple, pair, match) as *qiú* 求 (seek) points to his flawed learning, which accords well with his general comic-pathetic image.

⁷ *Analects* 3.20.

the traditional interpretation of the first two lines: the supposedly modest fishhawks prefer the seclusion of the sandbars of the stream; according to Chūnxiāng the shut-in (*guān* 關, a pun on the cries of the fishhawks, *guān guān* 關關) mottled pigeon,⁸ upon release, is to be found in the residence of Assistant Magistrate Hé (*zài Hé zhīzhōu* 在何知州, punning with “on sandbars of the stream” [*zài hé zhī zhōu* 在河之洲]). The fishhawks’ serene cry (*guānguān*) now describes captivity (*guān*), contentment in demure withdrawal to the stream’s islet (*zài hé zhī zhōu*) is turned into daring escape to a man’s abode (*zài Hé zhīzhōu*).

Chén Zuìliáng declares that the first two lines function as an “affective image” (*xīng* 興).⁹ Unlike the clearly articulated contrasts and analogies in the principle of metaphor (*bǐ* 比), the affective image works in a more mysterious way. Presumably the image stirs the poet and becomes the impetus for the poem, this pre-discursive emotive core is then transmitted to the reader (and thereby morally transforms and improves him). Hence the principle of affective image is prized for two reasons—as the origins of poetry, the basis of the act of poetic creation; and as the marker of continuity in literary communication. This exalted and yet elusive principle is rendered in simple causative terms by the prosaic tutor:

Xīng, the affective principle, a stirring, means to start up. It starts up that which follows—the “virtuous maiden” is a quiet and modest girl, and there is that kind of prince who comes and properly seeks her.

興者起也。起那下頭窈窕淑女，是幽閒女子，有那等君子好好的來求他。

To which Chūnxiāng retorts:

⁸ The fishhawk (*jū jiū* 雉鳩) is here misidentified as the much more common pigeon (*bānjiū* 斑鳩), see Owen’s note in *Anthology*, 73.

⁹ One of the so-called “six principles” in the making of the *Classic of Poetry*: airs (*fēng* 風), odes (*yǎ* 雅), hymns (*sòng* 頌), exposition or direct description (*fù* 賦), comparison (*bǐ* 比), affective image (*xīng* 興). The translations here follow Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1992), 45.

Why does he properly seek her?
為甚好好的求他？

Chén's vernacular paraphrase of the line "Fit pair for a prince" substitutes "seek" (*qiú* 求) for "pair" (*qiú* 逌), movement for stasis, a transitive verb for a verb functioning as noun. Centuries of exegetical traditions have emphasized *qiú* ("pair") over *qiú* ("seek"), precisely because the idea of "seeking and not finding" (*qiú zhī bùdé* 求之不得) is deemed too unsettling. The tutor seeks to contain potential intensity by the words *hǎohǎo de* 好好的, meaning properly, in good fashion. Yet *hǎohǎo de*, when set in a question by Chūnxiāng, implies ulterior motive—*hǎohǎo de* is synonymous with *hǎo duānduān de* 好端端的 which suggests *wúduān* 無端 (for no good reason). Chūnxiāng thereby returns desires, tensions, disequilibrium to the idea of "seeking", inadvertently reminding the audience or reader of the images of intense longing from the second and third stanzas of "Fishhawk":

Virtuous maiden, pure and fair—
He sought her, waking and asleep
Sought her, had her not,
Waking, sleeping, he thought of her,
On and on he thought of her,
He tossed from one side to another¹⁰
窈窕淑女
寤寐求之
求之不得
寤寐思服
悠哉悠哉
輾轉反側

The affective image stirs, arouses, stimulates—*xīng* in this context acquires distinctly sexual connotations.

The schoolroom scene in *Peony Pavilion* echoes late-Ming debates about the parameters of culture.¹¹ Late-Ming writers fascinated with

¹⁰ Owen's translation, with slight modifications (*Anthology* 30-31).

¹¹ Sophie Volpp links the exchange between Chén Zuiliáng and Chūnxiāng to the debates between the archaists and the advocates of spontaneity ("Poets, Parrots, Paradox").

popular literature seek to redefine the hierarchy of literary forms and presents popular, vernacular literature as true heir to values (especially genuineness and spontaneity) long lost to the culture. In doing so, they assert their distinctiveness—perhaps thereby raising themselves higher—in the elite culture by claiming the position of opposition.¹² Thus Lǐ Kāixiān 李開先 (1502-1568) and Féng Mènglóng 馮夢龍 (1574-1645) trace the genealogy of contemporary popular songs to the *Poetry*.

Although popular songs are extremely vulgar, may they not be what remains of the Zhèng and Wèi airs in *Poetry*? Moreover, though our age is belated (*jìshì* 季世, literally, last era or final phase of a culture), there exist only fake poetry and fake belles-lettres, never fake popular songs. That is because popular songs do not compete for honor with poetry and belles-lettres, and therefore do not deign to be fake. Precisely because they do not deign to be fake, I can use them to preserve the genuine, is that not admissible?¹³
山歌雖俚甚矣。獨非鄭衛之遺歟。且今雖季世，而但有假詩文，無假山歌。則以山歌不與詩文爭名，故不屑假。苟其不屑假，而吾藉以存真。不亦可乎？

If popular songs preserve the spirit of the *Poetry*, it follows that one may look for folk origins and expressive-affective immediacy in the *Poetry*. The desire to reach the pristine core of the canonical classic unencumbered by exegetical traditions prompts some Ming readers to put aside Zhū Xī's commentary, even as five centuries earlier Zhū Xī urges the rejection of Han commentaries.

Chūnxiāng's response is in some ways the caricature of an ideal encounter¹⁴ with the canonical classic, since she is unburdened by traditions and conventions of reading. Her naive and mischievous

¹² I discussed these issues in "The Rhetoric of Spontaneity in Late-Ming Literature", in *Ming Studies* 35 (1995), 32-52.

¹³ Féng Mènglóng, "Xù shāngē" 序山歌 (Preface to [a collection of] popular songs), in Guō Shào'yú 郭紹虞 ed., *Zhōngguó lidài wénlùn xuǎn*, 2:425; cf. Lǐ Kāixiān, "Shìjīng yàncí xù" 市井豔詞序 (Preface to the love songs of the marketplace), in *ibid.*, 2:427.

¹⁴ For discussions of such an encounter, see, for example, Zhāng Dài 張岱, *Sìshū yù* 四書遇 (*Encounter with the Four Books*).

interpretation of “Fishhawk”, although obviously wrong and comic, is yet unfeigned and immediate. Her arias at the end of scene 9, replete with explicit sexual references, show distinct affinities with late-Ming popular songs. In other words, she fits easily into late-Ming debates on the boundaries of culture as the voice of unmediated genuineness. However, the play is not interested in *her* spontaneity and immediacy per se, but in her effect on Dù Lìniáng. This implies that the real issue is the cultural elite’s appropriation and transformation of the unschooled, uninhibited voice of popular culture. Chūnxiāng’s vulgar reading is instrumental to Lìniáng’s awakening to longing and passion.

The schoolroom scene ends with Chūnxiāng’s furtive visit to the garden and her report to Lìniáng about this forbidden precinct. (Typically enough, the maid is on her way to the latrine—such bodily functions are mentioned only in connection with “low” characters.) In scene 9, “Getting the garden in order” 肅苑, Chūnxiāng prepares the garden for Lìniáng’s visit and describes the latter’s response to “Fishhawk”, which is mediated through Chūnxiāng’s own unmediated reading. Chūnxiāng reports to Chén Zuiliáng:

The young mistress said, “Even the fishhawks shut in still feel the stirrings of sandbars on the stream. How can humans not even measure up to birds?”

小姐說，關了的睢鳩，尚然有洲渚之興，何以人而不如鳥乎！
(MDT sc. 9.39)

Lìniáng adopts Chūnxiāng’s pun on *guān* and corollary images of entrapment, release and freedom, finding therein her own feelings mirrored, even while presumably recognizing the misreading as such. According to Chūnxiāng, her modest and serious mistress is moved to longing by the poem.

Quietly she put aside the book and sighed, “The feelings of the sage are completely revealed here. The ancients and the moderns share the same emotions, how can it be otherwise?”

悄然廢書而歎曰：聖人之情，盡鑒於此矣。今古同懷，豈不然乎？
(sc. 9.38).

“The feelings of the sages” (*shèngrén zhī qíng* 聖人之情) can mean either the sages’ susceptibility to love and longing or their moral rectitude in restraining excesses. The ambiguities here are only resolved when we are told about Liniáng’s restless melancholy—she is obviously invoking the ancients to legitimize her own yearnings.

Scene 9 concludes with a bawdy exchange between Chūnxiāng and the gardener (Flower Lad 花郎, played by the clown [*chǒu* 丑]) who is to sweep the garden.

(To the tune “Líhuā’ér”) (Flower Lad):

Flowers waving in heat, little Flower Lad has seen it all,
 Mistress Chūn’s flower is soaked, awash with glistening water.
 Let us steal our pleasure while the sun is high and bright,
 Ah, but what is to be done if the good flowering branch shrivels
 and dries up?

(Chūnxiāng):

Now let me give you one back.

(To the same tune):

Flowers waving in heat, little Flower lad has done it all,
 With little slops narrowly flanking the big slop?¹⁵

(Flower Lad):

Ai-yo!

(Chūnxiāng):

Just wait till I go give the master a round of words—
 (she seizes the clown by the hair) then perhaps a few bamboo rod
 lashes can break you even!

(梨花兒) (丑)：

小花郎看盡了花成浪，

¹⁵ *Lángdāng* 郎當 has the meaning of “hanging loose”, the expression *diào’ér lángdāng* 吊兒郎當 describes an untidy, irresponsible person. *Dāngláng* is the same as *tāngláng* 螳螂, mantis. (One megalomaniac mantis thinks that it can withhold a carriage, in the idiomatic expression *tāngbì dāngjū* 螳臂當車.) The line can be also rendered as “Little ones hanging loose narrowly flanking the big mantis”. In both cases, it probably describes the penis. In the Chinese edition, Xú Shuòfāng and Yáng Xiàoméi do not gloss these six lines and only sum them up as “punning dirty words”.

則春姐花沁的水洗浪。
和你這日高頭偷眼眼，
嗒，好花枝乾驚了作麼朗！

(貼)：
待俺還你也哥。(前腔)：
小花郎做盡花兒浪，
小郎當夾細的大當郎？

(丑)：
哎喲，

(貼)：
俺待到老爺回時說一浪，

(采丑髮介)：
嗒，敢幾箇小榔頭把你分的朗。
(MDT sc. 9.40)

The word “waves” (*làng* 浪) in “waving flowers” (literally, “flowers forming waves”, *huā chéng làng* 花成浪) is commonly used to describe a woman’s sexual excitement. Flower or “flower’s heart” (*huāxīn* 花心) is the term for vagina or clitoris in erotic fiction and sex manuals. The arias here combine explicit sexual references and ribald humor, and they follow the pattern of provocation and playful rebuff common in late-Ming popular songs.

Flower imagery functions on a very different level in the next scene (sc. 10, “Surprised in a Dream” 驚夢), probably the most frequently performed excerpt from the play. In this famous episode, Dù Lìniáng visits the garden in spring and then in a dream experiences sexual initiation with Liú Mèngméi, the lover she has yet to meet. Flowers in the garden inspire romantic passion in two ways. First, Lìniáng’s perception of beauty in nature, symbolized by flowers in bloom, is linked to her self-consciousness as the object of desire. She looks into the mirror and perceives herself from the perspective of the desiring other. The mirroring process is seductive, the beckoning mirror image that

steals half of the face, and teases the tresses askew

偷人半面，迤逗的彩雲偏。

(*MDT* sc. 10.43)

conveys sweet confusion, desire that does not yet know its name. Second, flowers bring intimations of ephemerality and mortality, thereby lending urgency to the quest for love.

(To the tune "Zào luópáo") (Dù Lìniáng):

Thus it is that glorious purple and splendid red opening everywhere,
Are like this left to broken wells and crumbling walls.

Bright morn, beautiful scene, heaven helpless and unappeased—

In whose gardens are the pleasures that delight the heart?

(阜羅袍) (旦)：

原來姹紫嫣紅開遍，

似這般都付與斷井頽垣。

良辰美景奈何天，

賞心樂事誰家院。

(*MDT* sc. 10.43)

Here elevated language is based on heightened self-consciousness and the gentle melancholy born of the awareness of inevitable negativity in longing.

Indeed, we have a consistently high diction in scene 10, even the maid Chūnxiāng recites poems and uses classical allusions. The dream love of Dù Lìniáng and Liú Mèngméi is enacted in the language of solemn recognition and karmic destiny. Immediately before and again after they make love they sing these lines:

(Together):

Where was it that we saw each other before,

In our mutual gaze so familiar—

How can it be that at this lovely moment we should meet and
speak no word?

(合)：

是那處曾相見，

相看儼然，

早難道這好處相逢無一言？

(*MDT* sc. 10.45)

Liú Mèngméi speaks of undressing Lìniáng and how she will “bear his tender attentions” (*rěnnài wēncún* 忍耐溫存), but their sexual union is described by the Flower God,¹⁶ who comes on stage as Liú carries Dù offstage. The language of the Flower God combines explicit sexual references with philosophical detachment.

(To the tune “Bào lǎo cuī”) (Flower God):

No less than the yang force rising and transforming—
See how he, inexorably squirming like worm, fans her desire.
Likewise her soul trembles in dewy beauty and lush opening.
This is but shadows’ conjunction,
Consummation within the mind,
Revelation inside karmic cause.
Alas, but my flower terrace palace is sullied by lust.
I will let fall a flower petal to wake her.

(He scatters flowers towards the ghost door.¹⁷)

Deep in her dream, seeped in spring, how can she linger?
A flower in hand, soon broken into flecks of red.

(鮑老催) (末)：

單則是混陽蒸變，
看他似蟲兒般蠢動把風情搦。
一般兒嬌凝翠綻魂兒顫。
這是景上緣，
想內成，
因中見。
呀，淫邪展污了花臺殿。
咱待拈片落花兒驚醒他。

(向鬼門丟花介)

他夢酣春透了怎留連？
拈花閃碎的紅如片。

(MDT sc. 10.45)

¹⁶ In the text the Flower God is an older male character with bound-up hair under a cap, red gown, and flowers stuck in cap and gown. In Qing and modern performances, the Flower God is often transformed into a Flower Goddess.

¹⁷ Ghost door (*guǐmén* 鬼門), also called ancient door (*gǔmén* 古門), is the place where actors come on or exit from stage.

The graphic metaphors of sexual intercourse could have come from Chūnxiāng. However, even as the “vernacular impetus” of Lìniáng’s passion is reenacted, it is bracketed by lofty philosophical-religious distancing. The Flower God veers from sexual metaphors to Buddhist notions of insubstantiality. Ecstasy is but the marriage of shadows, the product of the mind and the contingent karmic cause. The conjunction of the imagery of physicality and ephemerality in the Flower God’s aria is echoed in his ambivalent role as overseer of Lìniáng’s passion. His avowed purpose is to ensure her “perfect bliss” (*shífēn huānxìng* 十分歡幸), yet he also describes his palace as being “sullied by lust”. The tattered flower petals appear to be a palpable symbol of Lìniáng’s deflowering, yet the token of consummation also signals the end of the dream. Flower imagery thus marks shifting registers in scenes 9 and 10—it sustains bawdy humor and sexual jokes as Chūnxiāng and the Flower Lad prepare the garden for Lìniáng’s visit in scene 9; in scene 10 it stirs romantic longing in Lìniáng by reminding her of her own beauty and mortality as she steps into the garden; it also demonstrates the tension between sexual passion and philosophical detachment in her dream, as the Flower God presides over her sexual union with Liú Mèngméi in a discourse balanced precariously between explicit sexual reference and philosophical reflection on the margins between dreaming and waking.

Scenes 7 to 10 of *Peony Pavilion* demonstrate distinctions between the presumed high and low languages of *qíng* and show how these “languages” merge or qualify each other. The fluid division reflects late-Ming debates on the boundaries of elite culture, perhaps because *qíng* is precisely the one sphere of experience where sexuality, sensibility, sentimentality, and philosophical reflection can easily converge. The assimilation or appropriation of a vulgar, low diction into a varied fabric made up of sentimental, romantic, philosophical rhetoric becomes a mark of genuine emotions (*zhēnqíng* 真情). Genuineness in this context is a kind of second innocence, since the author (or character) self-consciously traverses boundaries and encompasses opposites of experience. In being realized both through refinement and vulgarity, both the life of the mind and physical existence, the claims of genuineness incorporate the sublime and the grotesque. Even as Dù Lìniáng dies from unfulfilled love and longing, we have, closely juxtaposed with the pathos of her illness and death, comic interludes premised on the preoccupation with bodily functions (or malfunctions)

and the “vernacularization” of the classics (i.e., “application” of the classics to the situation at hand through uses of homophonic puns). In scene 18, when Chén Zuiliáng hazards diagnosis of Liniáng’s illness, Tāng Xiǎnzǔ cannot resist spinning (again) puns on lines from the *Poetry*. Chén opines that since Liniáng falls sick from studying the *Poetry*, remedies are to be found in the same classic. In the manner of Chūnxiāng, he uses homophonic associations and extrapolations to find names of Chinese medicinal herbs, and even (most uncharacteristically) makes sexual jokes (*MDT* sc. 18.84).¹⁸ Similarly, the scene of Liniáng’s resurrection, another moment that testifies to the transcendence of passion, is announced by the vulgar jokes of Scabby Turtle (*Làitóu yuán* 癩頭龜, played by the clown) (sc. 35). For while Liú Mèngméi gives the order to have Dù Liniáng disinterred, the actual digging is done by Scabby Turtle and Sister Stone. The medicine administered to Dù upon her resurrection is made from the ashes obtained after the seat-patch of a virile male’s trousers is burnt¹⁹ (*MDT* scs. 34 and 35), a parodic version of the idea of life-giving *yáng* energy and sexual passion.

Tāng Xianzu’s mixture of high and low diction has to be apprehended in the broader literary context that defines heuristic perspectives on the natures and functions of different languages of *qíng*. The “high language of *qíng*” in *Peony Pavilion* is generally rooted in the ornate, sensual diction of romantic-erotic *shī* 詩 poetry and song lyrics (*cí* 詞). However, its most intense moments are more specifically tied to

¹⁸ One may say that Chūnxiāng’s “creative misreading” prevails. Even “unnatural characters” who deny the body’s appetites, such as Chén Zuiliáng and Sister Stone (Shí Dàogū 石道姑), appeal to physical and sexual domains in their vernacular parody of classical texts. In one of the most hilarious scenes in the play, Sister Stone elaborates endless puns in an extended monologue by playing with quotations from “The Thousand-character Essay” (Qiānzì wén 千字文), a school children’s primer, to describe her adventures as a “stone woman” (*shí nǚ* 石女, a woman with a closed vagina.)

¹⁹ In sc. 34, Sister Stone goes to Chén Zuiliáng, the tutor turned “Confucian doctor” (*rúyī* 儒醫), and looks for medicine to be administered to Dù Liniáng (under the pretense that the medicine will be used to revive a visiting Daoist nun). Chén gives her “the trouser patch of a virile male” 壯男子的褲襠, to be burnt and consumed as ashes (*MDT* sc. 34.169). However, in sc.35, Liú Mèngméi is shown cutting a patch from a pair of trousers on stage. No burning is mentioned, and it is not clear how this patch is transformed into “the pill for return of the soul” (*huánhún dān* 還魂丹).

loss and death, hence the stories of its fatal appeal—there is the pseudo-historical (and more probably fictional) Féng Xiǎoqīng 馮小青, a beautiful, talented, and ill-fated concubine, an avid reader of *Peony Pavilion* who identifies so much with Lìniáng's "obsessive longing" (*chī* 癡) that she expires from the burden of excessive emotions; there was also the actress Shāng Xiǎolíng 商小玲, who was said to have died of a broken heart (on stage) while performing scene 12 ("Quest for the Dream" 尋夢) of *Peony Pavilion*. The most memorable examples of love poetry in the Chinese tradition are likewise premised on absence and unfulfillment. This is as true of the poems on longing and abandonment in the *Classic of Poetry*, the motif of the hopeless quest of the goddess in the *Chǔcí* tradition (whose romantic-erotic imagery, which might have served allegorical functions in religious or political realms, is readily appropriated by later amatory literature), as of works by countless poets. Some well-known lines come readily to mind:

Coming was an empty word, leaving, all traces are gone,
Slanting moonlight atop the tower, already the fifth watch sounds.
Dreams of cries that, across distant separation, cannot summon,
Letters, being hurried to completion, are of ink not yet thickened.

來是空言去絕蹤
月斜樓上五更鐘
夢為遠別啼難喚
書被催成墨未濃

(Lǐ Shāngyīn 李商隱, "Untitled" 無題, l. 1-4)

This love had to wait, perhaps, till it became memory,
But then, even at that moment, the loss already overcame me.

此情可待成追憶
只是當時已惘然

(Lǐ Shāngyīn, "Patterned Lute" 錦瑟, l. 7-8)

Red tower across the rain, a mutual gaze in the cold,
Drifting light behind the pearl curtain, I return alone.

紅樓隔雨相望冷
珠箔飄燈獨自歸

(Lǐ Shāngyīn, "Spring Rain" 春雨, l. 3-4)

Dreams, even when they do come, are in vain,
How can I bear it when dreams are no more?

夢魂縱有也成虛
那堪和夢無

(Yàn Jidào 晏幾道, to the tune "Ruǎn láng guī" 阮郎歸, last two lines)

Stars like these are not those of last evening,
For whose sake do I stand in wind and dew through midnight?

似此星辰非昨夜
為誰風露立中宵

(Huáng Zhòngzé 黃仲則, "Longings" 綺懷, l. 3-4)

Examples can be infinitely multiplied. Romantic drama and fiction carry on the lyrical tradition of projecting intensity of emotions through frustrations and postponements. In *The Western Chamber*, for instance, we have a series of furtive, at times voyeuristic encounters, in which the male protagonist Zhāng Gǒng 張珙 compares the heroine Cūi Yīngyīng 崔鶯鶯 to unattainable divine women such as the bodhisattva Guānyīn, the Xiāng River goddesses, or the moon goddess Cháng'é, even while describing her palpable physical charms and graphically imagining intimacy with her.²⁰ Longing, usually expressed by female characters as vague, pervasive melancholy and by male characters as intense physical passion, depends on an aesthetics of retardation. Thus Lǐ Zhì (1527-1602) applauds Yīngyīng's sudden change of heart in their first rendezvous:

If they attain union just like this, then Zhāng would not be a talented scholar, and Yīngyīng would not be a beauty.²¹

若便成合，則張非才子，鶯非佳人。

But *The Western Chamber* also follows the convention of romantic comedy, with its inevitable denouement of marriage and social integration. For this Hóngniáng (Yīngyīng's maid) plays a crucial role,

²⁰ See Wáng Shífū 王實甫, *Xīxiāng jì jíjiě* 西廂記集解, Fù Xiǎoháng 傅曉航 comp. (Lanzhou: Gansu renmin chubanshe, 1989), act 1, sc. 1.6, act 1, sc. 3.49, act 1, sc. 4.62. Yīngyīng also compares herself to such goddesses, see act 2, sc. 4.141-42.

²¹ Lǐ Zhì's comment is cited in the Máo Qíling edition, see *Xīxiāng jì jíjiě*, 200.

chiding Zhāng Gǒng and Yīngyīng for their role-playing and affectations while arranging their meetings, being in turn moralist and sexual instructress as she dispenses practical advice to Zhāng. Hóngniáng anchors intense, wilful emotions to mundane reality. This “contextualization” is often necessary for the representational density of fiction and drama.

After a relative hiatus of about two centuries, *The Western Chamber* attained great popularity when romantic *chuánqí* reached its height of development in the sixteenth century. Wáng Jidé 王驥德 (?-1623), a contemporary of Tāng Xiǎnzǔ, noted that there were scores of variant editions of the play during the Wànlì era. Compared to *The Western Chamber*, *Peony Pavilion* is a more self-conscious attempt to celebrate the transcendent dimensions of love. Yīngyīng uses metaphors of evanescence as she bemoans her thwarted union with Zhāng:

He becomes the lover in the shadow, I become the beloved in the painting.

他做了箇影兒裏的情郎。我做了箇畫兒裏的愛寵。

(*Xixiang ji* act 2, sc. 4.141).

However, whereas Zhāng Gǒng and Yīngyīng (symbolically) consummate their union on stage and Zhāng sings several arias on his sexual ecstasy (act 4, sc. 1.222-23),²² in *Peony Pavilion* sexual union is dreamed, remembered and imagined (scs. 10, 12, 28). It is most explicitly described when the meeting of Dù's ghost and Liú is interrupted by prying intruders (sc. 30).

The mediation of love through memory, imagination, and representation (Lìniáng's self-portrait), and its fulfillment in dreams and the realm beyond death, are central to Tāng Xiǎnzǔ's project of making absolute claims for *qíng*. The wilful intensity of passion depends on absence: this is most obvious in Lìniáng's quest for her lost dream of sexual union with Liú Mèngméi (sc. 12, “Quest for the dream” 尋夢) and, to a lesser extent, in Liú's devotional invocation of Lìniáng's painted image (sc. 26, “Appreciating the Likeness” 玩真). These pointedly parallel scenes both use otherworldly realms to convey

²² In Wáng Jidé's opinion, some lines here “greatly compromise subtlety” 大傷蘊藉, see *Xixiang ji jijiè*, 230.

hopeless longing. Dù Lìniáng reverses gender roles in the literary topos of the quest of the goddess:

Why is it then, that the goddess retraces the Wǔlíng Spring? Because water drops fly with flowers in front of her eyes.

為甚呵，玉真重溯武陵源？也則為水點花飛在眼前。

(MDT sc. 12.53).

(The Wǔlíng Spring in Táo Qián's "Peach Blossom Spring" [*Táohuā yuán jī*] is often mixed up in poetic metaphors with the Peach Spring Cave [*Táoyuán dòng*] in Mount Tiāntái, where Liú Chén and Ruǎn Zhào encounter goddesses.) Liú Mèngméi, for his part, at first imagines that Lìniáng's self-portrait is a representation of the bodhisattva Guānyīn or of the moon goddess Cháng'é. Although the painted figure's small feet²³ and the absence of celestial clouds soon disabuse him of those illusions, he proceeds to address the painted image, having surmised the painting's origins as self-portrait (and therefore the embodiment of the painter's essence and spirit) and projected reciprocity in a mutual gaze. He is to

day and night appreciate it (the painting), bow to it, call it, praise it.

早晚玩之，拜之，叫之，贊之。

(MDT sc. 26.131).

Both scenes are linked to Lìniáng's pursuit of passion in dreams and and after death (her ghost answers Liú's call to her self-portrait). The realms of dreams and ghosts in *Peony Pavilion* serve a double function—they emphasize the tenacious intensity of passion but also bracket its transgressive potential. As C.T. Hsia and others have noted, Lìniáng is daring only in her dream and after death, upon her resurrection, she becomes much more concerned with decorum.²⁴ The fulfillment

²³ Guānyīn, of course, does not have bound feet.

²⁴ See C.T. Hsia, "Time and Human Condition in the Plays of T'ang Hsien-tsu", in *Self and Society in Ming Thought*, ed. by Theodore de Bary (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), 279. I also discussed this issue in *Enchantment and Disenchantment: Love and Illusion in Chinese Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 54-55.

of passion in mundane reality calls for compromises and reconciliation, which Tāng Xiǎnzǔ effects by introducing comic elements and a vulgar diction. In doing so, he is making yet another claim for *qíng*—namely, that it is rooted in the ordinary. We recall Lǐ Zhì's famous assertion that

wearing clothes and eating rice is already (integral to) human relationships and the principles of things.

穿衣吃飯。即是人倫物理。

Even as Tāng Xiǎnzǔ strives towards the idealization of the transcendent dimensions of *qíng*, he uses the conventions of romantic *chuanqi* drama to emphasize its fundamental connection with basic, mundane human needs and emotions (including the desire for worldly happiness and social integration).

The Story of the Stone

I will now turn to the dual legacy of *Peony Pavilion*: the attempt to idealize *qíng* by endowing volition, imagination, and longing with transformative power; the interplay of high and low diction to bring about the fulfillment of *qíng* in the mundane world. These issues acquire a new urgency in the eighteenth-century masterpiece, Cáo Xuěqín's 曹雪芹 (1715?-1763?) *The Story of the Stone* 石頭記. While Cáo Xuěqín embraces the first proposition and explores it in an even more radical and determined fashion, he seems to recognize its inherent contradiction with the second proposition. As is well-known, Cáo shows his familiarity with drama, especially *Peony Pavilion* and *The Western Chamber*, in his novel. In *Stone*, the striving for a higher ideality in the representation of transcendent *qíng* creates deeper conflicts and leaves less room for its accommodation in systems of order, be they social, political, moral, philosophical. Correspondingly, shifts in stylistic levels do not facilitate comic reconciliation, instead they underline these contradictions.

Further, the issue is not merely that the changing registers in *Stone* point to the opposition or disconnection between idealized *qíng* and socio-political reality. On a deeper level, the tension between sexual desire and romantic longing in the very conception of *qíng* put into

question the distinction between high and low languages of *qing*. This is nowhere more evident than in Bǎoyù's dream visit to the Illusory Realm of Great Void in chapter 5, in which heightened sensual experiences unfold and culminate in his first sexual experience with the sister of Disenchantment 警幻, the goddess who purports to use the experience to bring about his enlightenment. The diction in this chapter is consistently ornate and elaborate, reminiscent of literary antecedents about visits to immortal precincts and romantic-erotic encounters with goddesses. Yet banality, vulgarity, and transgression, though unspoken, make their repressed presence felt in this account and its defining context, chiefly through the enigmatic figure of Qín Kěqīng.

I would like to retrace some of the details of Bǎoyù's dream and awakening, although the terrain may be all too familiar to some readers. Bǎoyù has been sleeping in the room of his nephew's wife, Qín Kěqīng 秦可卿, in the Níng mansion. Qín Kěqīng leads Bǎoyù into his dream—at first he sees her figure walking ahead, and then Disenchantment appears. Her figure merges emblematically with Disenchantment's sister, whose childhood name is Jiānměi 兼美 and whose sobriquet is Kěqīng 可卿. Jiānměi ("Two-in-One" in David Hawkes's translation) has

the luminous beauty of Bǎochāi and the ethereal loveliness of Dàiyù

其鮮妍嫵媚有似寶釵，其嫵娜風流則又如黛玉

and is in some ways a symbolic condensation of all the girls that Bǎoyù is going to love and cherish (for the most part apparently without any hints of sexual tension). After their blissful sexual union, just as they are happily roaming, they confront the Ford of Delusion, filled with clamoring demons, and Bǎoyù's beautiful dream turns into a nightmare. Disenchantment urges awakening and detachment, but instead of heeding her "lesson" Bǎoyù calls out for his lover in the dream, "Kěqīng, save me!" 可卿救我! At that moment Qín Kěqīng is outside the room, telling the maids to watch out for fighting cats and dogs ("fighting" is sometimes an euphemism for sexual intercourse), for fear that Bǎoyù would be disturbed in his sleep. She is puzzled to hear Bǎoyù calling out her name: "No one here knows

my informal name. Why would he know it and call it out in his dream?"

Cáo Xuěqín thus deliberately sustains the ambiguity—Jiānměi and Qín Kěqīng overlap and yet remain distinct. With the mergence of these two figures Cáo Xuěqín tantalizingly points to Bǎoyù's liaison with Qín Kěqīng. This is incest, at least in the Chinese sense of the term—*luànlún* 亂倫 is "the perversion of order (in the family)." A few chapters later, Qín Kěqīng was afflicted with a mysterious illness. When Bǎoyù hears Qín Kěqīng describes her illness, "it was as if ten thousand arrows pierced his heart" (chapter 11), and he spits blood upon hearing of her death (chapter 13). It might have been Crooked Tablet 畸笏, probably Cáo's uncle or older male relative and one of the authors of the Red Inkstone 脂硯齋 Commentary, who wrote:

Bǎoyù could see even then that the only one who could be entrusted with the family's affairs was Kěqīng. That was why he was so devastated when he heard that Kěqīng had died.

寶玉早已看定可繼家務事者，可卿也，今聞死了，大失所望。
(ZYZ 244)

This is a rather transparent attempt to gloss over Bǎoyù's deep feelings for Kěqīng and seems to suggest a "family secret." Many scholars of the *Stone* have risen to the occasion, trying to determine whether the youthful Cáo Xuěqín or Red Inkstone had an affair with an older female relative. In other words, to insist on the identification of Qín Kěqīng and Jiānměi is to dissolve the logic of dreams and, in some cases, to ignore the boundary between fiction and historical reality. However, Cáo does maintain the distinction between Qín Kěqīng and Jiānměi. If their connection is merely symbolic, then Kěqīng can still claim her elusive place in the world of defenseless love and ineffable, infinite longing—the ambiguous answer to Bǎoyù's "lust of the mind" (*yiyín* 意淫) in the Illusory Realm of Great Void.

Crooked Tablet is credited with covering up another "family secret." In the present version of the text, there are broad hints of an illicit relationship between Qín Kěqīng and her father-in-law, Jiǎ Zhēn 賈珍. As is well known, these hints are supposed to be the tamed version of a much more explicit indictment that was modified because of Crooked Tablet's intervention. What remains are indices to information withheld. Qín Kěqīng's mysterious illness is linked to menstrual

or reproductive disorder, which in the symbolic universe of late-imperial Chinese fiction is often associated with sexual misconduct. News of Qín Kěqīng's death comes to the Róng mansion in chapter 13. Everybody was

without exception taken aback, and a little bit suspicious.
無不納罕，都有些疑心。

If Qín Kěqīng had been so ill, why should her death occasion such surprise? One of the authors of the Red Inkstone commentary, Tángcūn 棠村 (probably Cáo Xuěqín's cousin), comments on the family's reaction:

These nine words give a full sense of events on the Heavenly Fragrance Tower. This is writing by not writing.
九個字寫盡天香樓事，是不寫之寫。(ZYZ 243)

This perspective is juxtaposed with another:

The commentary should take this up. The whole chapter deliberately conceals how Kěqīng dies. That happened because of my great compassion. Alas! Alas! Late spring, the year *rénwǔ* (1762), Old Man of Crooked Tablet.
可從此批。通回將可卿如何死故隱去，是余大發慈悲也。嘆嘆。壬午季春。畸笏叟。(ZYZ 243)

We learn from Crooked Tablet that the original titular couplet of chapter 13 contains the line “Qín Kěqīng died of lust on Heavenly Fragrance Tower” 秦可卿淫喪天香樓 and that he “ordered” Cáo Xuěqín to delete explicit references to Qín's “death from lust”—Qín should be forgiven, he reasons, if only because her spirit offers judicious and far-sighted advice about the family to Wáng Xífèng in her dream. Although this intervention is couched in terms of fictional logic (i.e., the extent to which the character Qín Kěqīng should engage our compassion), most scholars believe that Crooked Tablet maneuvers textual emendations because the original version reveals too much about the actual history of the Cáo family. The Red Inkstone commentary on chapter 13 is a fascinating example of the negotiations that might have informed the writing of the book. There seems to

have been a veritable struggle for the control of meanings, presentation, and interpretation. Whereas Crooked Tablet dictates changes for fear of compromising family secrets, Tangcun implicitly protests against the revisions and points out how silence can best reveal the truth.

According to most scholars of *Stone*, the original version of chapter 13 tells the following sequence of events: two maids, Ruìzhū 瑞珠 and Bǎozhū 寶珠, surprise Qín Kěqīng and her father-in-law, Jiǎ Zhēn, in their rendezvous on Heavenly Fragrance Tower. Kěqīng hangs herself out of shame. Fearing vengeance from the family or anticipating ploys to silence them, Ruìzhū kills herself, while Bǎozhū vows to become Qín Kěqīng's "daughter," which means she will guard Qín's tablet and thus will not leave the family and disclose the secret. The stories of the two maids are preserved in the present version; only their actions are presented as a mark of their loyalty and devotion to Qín Kěqīng. The altar set up on Heavenly Fragrance Tower, mentioned only once, might also have been a detail preserved from the original version. We also know that Qín Kěqīng hangs herself because of the registers on the fate of "the twelve beauties of Jīnlíng" in the Land of Illusion (chapter 5). While Bǎoyù may not understand the meanings of the enigmatic poems and paintings, a reader (at least upon second reading) would realize that the image of a beauty who commits suicide in a tower refers to Qín Kěqīng.

Actually, all kinds of clues point to the illicit affair between Jiǎ Zhēn and Qín Kěqīng as well as Qín's shameful death. In chapter 7, a drunken servant, Jiāo Dà,

even brought Jiǎ Zhēn into his tirade
越發連賈珍都說出來

when he laments the degeneration of Jiǎ clan:

there are those who crawl in ashes
爬灰的爬灰

To "crawl in ashes" one soils one's knees (*wūxī* 污膝), an expression homophonous with "defiling one's daughter-in-law" (*wūxī* 污媳). The tone of chapter 13 subtly but unmistakably disparages Jiǎ Zhēn. His excessive grief goes well beyond what is proper mourning for the death of a daughter-in-law. On the line,

Jiǎ Zhēn was dissolved in tears,
賈珍哭得如淚人一般

the Red Inkstone Commentary notes:

Laughable—as if he were bereft of his parents—this is the author’s caustic, revelatory brush.

可笑，如喪考妣，此作者刺心筆也。(ZYZ 245)

The ostentatious and extravagant funeral for Qín Kěqīng obviously flouts ritual propriety. When asked to restrain his grief and consider the management of the funeral, Jiǎ Zhēn dramatically declares:

What is to be done for her funeral? What else but use up what I have!

如何料理，不過盡我所有罷了。

To add to Qín Kěqīng’s glory in her funeral, Jiǎ Zhēn also purchases an official title for his son, Qín’s husband Jiǎ Róng 賈蓉. If indeed the first half of the titular couplet, “Qín Kěqīng gained the title of Imperial Dragon Aide after death,” 秦可卿死封龍禁尉 replaces “Qín Kěqīng died of lust on Heavenly Fragrance Tower,” we may surmise that explicit references to the adulterous liaison between Jiǎ Zhēn and Qín Kěqīng have given way to indirect yet nevertheless pointed hints in our present version. Hence Tángcūn’s comment: “This is writing by not writing.”

Crooked Tablet might have been motivated by considerations of family honor, but Cáo Xuěqín’s apparent decision to follow his injunction is in the end totally justified by his own ambivalence regarding desire and sexuality. Qín Kěqīng’s death has to be shrouded in mystery and silence because she is an enigmatic figure that traverses the worlds of sensual desire (*yín* 淫) and love or longing (*qíng* 情). On one level, she embodies the dangers of desire. Her adulterous liaison with Jiǎ Zhēn finds parallels in Jiǎ Ruì’s 賈瑞 obsessive lust for Wáng Xīfèng 王熙鳳 (chapters 11-12), and Jiǎ Liǎn’s 賈璉 disastrous affair with Yóu Èrjiě 尤二姐 (chapters 64-49). This is a world where desire is transgressive and incestuous, carnality is implicated in money and power, and lust results in punishments of death and destruction—its dominant metaphor is the instrument of Jiǎ Ruì’s fatal obsession, the

Precious Mirror of Desire (*fengyue baojian* 風月寶鑒). Carnal desire is also tied to oblivious extravagance and the abuse of power, and thus heralds the decline and fall of the family. Qín Kěqīng's name has been glossed as *qíng kěqīng* 情可傾, "love can topple (a family or a kingdom)." The characters for the compound "wind-moon" (*fēngyuè*), the standard euphemism for sensual pleasure and carnal love (as in *fēngyuè bǎojiàn*), appear in the song on Qín Kěqīng's destiny in chapter 5:

Skilled in the art of dalliance (literally, "wind feelings"),
 Endowed with unusual beauty (literally, "moon looks"),
 She becomes the root of the family's downfall.
 擅風情，秉月貌，便是敗家的根本。

The issue then is why Cáo Xuěqín deems it necessary to introduce a sense of transgression to Bǎoyù's dream, and why intimations of transgression remain intimations as he manipulates a differentiating margin between Jiānměi and Kěqīng, dream and wakeful life. The answer lies perhaps in the problematic relationship between sexuality and sentimentality, spiritual ideals and carnal desire. When Disenchantment expresses appreciation for Bǎoyù as

the most lustful person in the world,
 乃天下古今第一淫人也。

she castigates the hypocrisy of those who claim "appreciation of beauty free from lust" (*hàosè bù yín* 好色不淫) and "love that is not lustful" (*qíng ér bù yín* 情而不淫):

To appreciate beauty is already lust, to know love and longing
 even more so.
 好色淫，知情更淫。

It is as if Disenchantment is dismantling in advance categories of sublimation ("appreciation of beauty," "spiritual affinity") where Bǎoyù may seek refuge and resolution—the sensual and spiritual realms are simply not separable. In the same breath, however, Disenchantment insists on the difference between Bǎoyù's "lust of the mind" and worldly lust:

Although lust is just one principle, there are different meanings to it. What the world calls lustful, for instance, are those seeking pleasure in fair looks, music, or dancing; those who indulge endlessly and indiscriminately in flirtations and love-making; those who wish that all the beautiful women in the world would be at their disposal to satisfy their whim of the moment—those are mere sensualist brutes. But your nature has been endowed from birth with this obsessive longing, what we call ‘lust of the mind.’ The words ‘lust of the mind’ can be intuitively understood but not spoken of, apprehensible with the spirit yet not communicable through language.

淫雖一理，意則有別。如世之好淫者，不過悅容貌，喜歌舞，調笑無厭，雲雨無時，恨不能盡天下之美女供我片時之趣興，此皆皮膚濫淫之蠢物耳。如爾，則天分中生成一段癡情，吾輩推之為意淫。意淫二字，可意會而不可言傳，可神通而不可語達。

The line between love and lust seems both necessary and yet impossible to draw. However, contradictions can be suspended in a dream—Disenchantment’s sister both is and is not Kěqīng; she combines Bǎochāi and Dàiyù (and the opposite temperament and world-views they represent); “lust of the mind” can be “rewarded” with sexual initiation.

Qín Kěqīng is a crucial character in the book, yet we are denied access to her thoughts, except when she wonders why Bǎoyù is calling out her name in his dream. She speaks on very few occasions, only when she suggests that Bǎoyù takes a nap in her room, introduces Bǎoyù to her brother Qín Zhōng 秦鍾, receives Wáng Xīfèng and Bǎoyù in the throes of her mysterious illness, and when her spirit appears to Wáng Xīfèng to give advice on measures to forestall the family’s total destruction. Qín Kěqīng’s life and death remain enigmatic because she belongs to both the Illusory Realm of Great Void and the Precious Mirror of Desire—she bears the burden of being the symbol of the paradoxical mutual implication and negation of *qíng* and *yín*. The poem on her fate in chapter 5 contains this line:

When feelings meet, lust has to take over
情既相逢必主淫

—that is, innocent, ineffable longing is not in the end separable from transgressive sexual desire. Bǎoyù's sexual union in a dream with the figure who resembles both Bǎochāi and Dàiyù may also be refractions of an illicit relationship with his nephew's wife. Yet *The Story of the Stone* is valiantly devoted to demarcating "lust of the mind" and "ordinary lust" as distinct categories. The deaths of Qín Kěqīng and her brother, Qín Zhōng (chapter 15), whose homosexual relationship with Bǎoyù is conveyed with broad hints, herald the building of the garden. With the unfolding of the garden world, Bǎoyù's carnal knowledge happily coexists with a return of innocence, as love and longing are elevated to an almost metaphysical ideal and transgressive desire is precariously held in abeyance.

The focus on the problematic mutual implication of *qíng* and *yín*, as embodied by Qín Kěqīng and Qín Zhōng, is echoed in Bǎoyù's relationship with his maid Xírén 襲人 and the actor Jiǎng Yùhàn 蔣玉函. After Bǎoyù wakes up from his dream visit to the Illusory Realm, he repeats Disenchantment's lesson with Xírén (chapter 6). The linguistic registers shift from the mythic to the mundane, but the precarious balance between *qíng* and *yín* persists. Indeed, Bǎoyù's loss of virginity, despite some graphic details, is one of the most innocent and "guilt-free" accounts of sexual intimacy in late-imperial Chinese literature. By contrast, hints of a homosexual relationship between Bǎoyù and Jiǎng Yùhàn remain hints, while being charged at the same time with intimations of transgression. However, for most parts of the book, especially after the building of the garden, Cáo Xuěqín tries to maintain distinctions between the language of ineffable longing that defines the world of Bǎoyù and his beloved girls, and the language of transaction and the quest for sensual gratification that motivates many of the other—especially male—characters.

Such distinctions are dramatized when scenes that celebrate the power of the imagination and the pathos of longing are closely juxtaposed with depictions of voracious carnality. For example, in chapter 19, in the middle of the bustle of new-year celebrations and noisy theatrical performances, Bǎoyù is suddenly overwhelmed with the desire to commune with the painted image of a beauty, which he imagines to be languishing in loneliness. He comes to the study with the painting, and his sentimental musings are interrupted by moaning sounds. He peeps—

That beauty on the painting had not come to life, rather it was Míngyān (Bǎoyù's page) holding down a girl and also doing what Disenchantment had instructed.

那軸美人卻不曾活，卻是茗煙按著一個女孩子也幹那警幻所訓之事。(HLM 19.187)

Aesthetic contemplation has turned into voyeuristic encounter, yet there is nothing prurient in Bǎoyù's indignation. The planes of *qíng* and *yín* meet only to dramatize their difference—Bǎoyù is as protective of the girl as Míngyān is cavalier about his escapade. We have a much more tragic variant of the same theme in the last meeting between Bǎoyù and his maid Qíngwén 晴雯. Qíngwén's expulsion, on the suspicion of her improper relations with Bǎoyù, signals the more general collapse of the garden world. On her deathbed, Qíngwén protests the injustice of the charge and comes closest to avowing her feelings for Bǎoyù:

Now that I already bore the blame in vain, and am moreover facing death—it is not as if I regret it, yet if I may say so—had I known earlier that things would come to this, I too in those days might have planned differently. But in my single-minded devotion and foolish reckoning, I only thought we would in any case be together.

今日既已擔了虛名，而且臨死，不是我說一句後悔的話，早知如此，我當日也另有個道理。不料癡心傻意，只說大家橫豎是在一處。(HLM 77.879)

Just as Bǎoyù and Qíngwén are exchanging final tokens of their feelings for each other, Qíngwén's sister-in-law, Lantern 燈姑娘, bursts upon them. Her aggressive, almost predatory, sexuality as she forces herself on Bǎoyù is a stark contrast to the pathos of the scene she interrupts. Yet ultimately she is not threatening—her lust only functions to testify to how Bǎoyù and Qíngwén share a “love that is not lustful” (*qíng ér bù yín* 情而不淫).

The tensions between these two positions—that *qíng* and *yín* are intertwined, and that distinctions are viable and imperative—define the arduous search for a language of love in *Stone*. *Qíng* in the garden world purports to set itself apart, straining towards a higher ideality of wilful innocence and arbitrary self-containment, suspicious

of sexuality and yet bound by idioms that convey intense emotions through sensual longing, as evinced by the lines from *The Western Chamber* that Bǎoyù and Dàiyù quote to express their emotions. Perhaps that is why love cannot be told in the garden world in *Stone*. (In the example cited above, Qíngwén can be somewhat more direct about her feelings, in part because of “class difference”—as a maid she seems less bound by the worshipful idealization that applies to characters like Dàiyù.) Again and again we see the frustrations of miscommunication and inadequate expression. As noted earlier, Disenchantment pronounces the innocent, yet boundless and dangerous “lust of the mind” (yìyín 意淫) inexpressible and incommunicable. Red Inkstone also describes the language of love as “befuddled and incomprehensible” (húlún bùjiě 囫圇不解, comment in ch. 19).

The inexpressibility topos is common in Chinese literature on love. Thus Cūi Yīngyīng sings in *The Western Chamber*:

Before I saw him I prepared
A thousand, ten thousand words,
Which all turned into sighs long and short at the moment of union.

...

All ready to unburden the sorrow of my heart,
And yet at the moment of union I could speak no word.
不見時準備著千言萬語。得相逢都變做短嘆長吁……將腹中愁
恰待申訴。及至相逢一句也無。(act 5, sc. 4.317).

In the prologue of *Peony Pavilion*, Tāng Xiǎnzǔ also speaks of the difficulty of writing about love:

Daylong I polished verses for bowels' torture
For the telling of love, in all life hardest to tell.²⁵
白日消磨腸斷句，世間只有情難訴。

(The second line is a slightly altered quotation from the Tang poet Gù Kuàng 顧況.) Neither *The Western Chamber* nor *Peony Pavilion*, however, lack profuse descriptions and avowals of romantic longing and sensual passion.

²⁵ Cyril Birch's translation.

In comparison with these plays, the sense of paradox and anxiety about sensual passion is much deeper in *Stone*, and the language of love becomes correspondingly more deeply problematic. The usual diction defining romantic relationships in fiction and drama, including the exchange of sentimental and erotic poems, is not admissible in *Stone*. In this sense, the inexpressibility of love is taken much more seriously in *Stone* than in earlier works. When Bǎoyù in extreme agitation finally avows his love to Dàiyù, it is Xírén who overhears him (*HLM* ch. 32.339). Shortly thereafter Xírén warns Madame Wáng (Bǎoyù's mother) of possible laxity in the garden and urges vigilance (ch. 34). In the name of defending Bǎoyù's moral well-being and reputation Xírén sows the seeds for the eventual destruction of the garden world. Bǎoyù's misdirected confession of love thus arouses suspicions that finally erupt in the fury of the "search of the garden" (*chāoyuán* 抄園, ch. 74). A moment of perfect (non-verbal) communion, when Bǎoyù sends Dàiyù some old handkerchiefs on which she then writes of her longing, is immediately followed by intimations of death (Dàiyù stops writing because of consumptive feverishness) (*HLM* ch. 34.358). (Of course she never sends those poems.) In both examples, the avowal or recognition of love has inevitable negative implications. To know love is to apprehend its implacable negation, hence Dàiyù's grief when she listens to arias from *Peony Pavilion* (*HLM* ch. 23.235-36).

Cáo Xuěqín knows well how to exploit the interplay of crude sexual language and romantic, sentimental rhetoric for comic purpose, as in the wine game in ch. 28, when Xuē Pán's 薛蟠 offensively explicit sexual references are juxtaposed with the more refined, conventional romantic expressions from Bǎoyù and others. Xuē Pán's level of expression often obtains in accounts of carnal, transgressive desire in *Stone*, as in the episodes on the sexual escapades and adulterous affairs of Jiǎ Liǎn, Jiǎ Shè 賈赦, Jiǎ Zhēn, Jiǎ Ruì, and Xuē Pán himself. But the romantic-sentimental formulations in that wine game are inadequate to the complex emotions of the garden world. Whereas the distinctions between refinement and vulgarity are simple and obvious in this scene, they are much more problematic in the larger scheme of the book. "Once said, it becomes vulgar" (*yìshuō jiùsú* 一說就俗)—the inexpressibility topos is rooted in anxieties about vulgarity, doubts as to whether subjective consciousness, imagination, and aesthetic sensibility can create an alternative existence,

fears that distinctions between refinement and vulgarity, us and them, may be wilful and arbitrary.

One may say that the anxiety over the boundary between *qíng* and *yín* displaces the quest for an adequate language of love as questions on the definitions of culture. Bǎoyù and his beloved girls do not address romantic poems to each other, instead they form a poetry society. Reflections on *qíng* in *Stone* take on the broadest meanings of the word—Cáo Xuěqín ponders the capacity of subjective consciousness and emotions to create and sustain a world. In *Stone* the concern with the parameters of refinement and vulgarity is less a function of literati self-definition or public definition of culture than of emotional investment in the claims of lyrical consciousness. Bǎoyù once declares himself

a vulgar person—the vulgar of the vulgar.
俗中又俗的一個俗人。(HLM 32.336).²⁶

The occasion for this remark is Jiǎ Yǔcūn's 賈雨村 visits to the Jiǎ household and his frequent requests to see Bǎoyù. Shǐ Xiāngyún 史湘雲 explains, half in jest, that

when the host is refined, the guest is assiduous in coming.
主雅客來勤。

In response Bǎoyù disclaims refinement and proclaims his vulgarity. This exchange also provokes one of Bǎoyù's diatribes against expectations of his integration into a moral-socio-political system that values orthodox learning, the civil service examination, an official career, and knowledge of worldly affairs, which Bǎoyù (perversely) puts under the rubric of "refinement". In other words, for Bǎoyù vulgarity is the position of opposition vis-à-vis official culture.

In this sense the opposition between refinement and vulgarity is integrally linked to the claims of *qíng*—namely, the idea of lyrical

²⁶ The edition cited refers to *Hónglóu mèng bāshí huí jiàoběn* 紅樓夢八十回校本 (hereafter HLM), ed. by Yú Píngbó 俞平伯 and Wáng Xīshí 王惜時 (Hong Kong: Zhonghua shuju, 1974), 4 vols. Red Inkstone citations refer to *Xīnbiān Shítóu jì Zhīyàn zhāi píngyǔ jíjiào* 新編石頭記脂硯齋評語輯較 (hereafter ZYZ), ed. by Chén Qìngào 陳慶浩 (Taipei: Lianjing chuban shiye gongsi, 1986).

self-containment, the power of the mind to dream and imagine a world, the conception of the romantic-aesthetic realm as an alternative sphere of existence. We recall that the Grand View Garden, the major locus of action in *Stone* (chs. 23-78, with some exceptions), is made up of vistas named by Bǎoyù and the girls, and contains abodes fashioned as extensions of their personalities. The garden world thus defines its own values and lives by different rules. Although numerous “painterly scenes” in the garden typify the mood of “leisurely refinement” (*xiányǎ* 閒雅) as usually understood, there is also self-conscious delight in violating the decorum of refinement, as when Bǎoyù and the girls barbecue venison (ch. 49). In one of Bǎoyù’s rare excursions, his half-sister Tànchūn 探春 asks him to use his refined taste to buy for her figurines of clay and straw, vulgar objects disdained by the marketplace but treasured by the truly discerning. The inmates of the garden world claim to redefine refinement and vulgarity. When the poetry society is formed, they come up with poetic pseudonyms, for only by putting aside conventional modes of address will they be “not vulgar” (*bùsú* 不俗) (ch. 37). Economic reality is definitely vulgar. Thus when Bǎochāi 寶釵 and Tànchūn plan to make use of the economic resources of the garden, their discussion is filled with copious learned quotations, for

unguided by academic discourse, our enterprise may sink to the vulgar level of the marketplace.

不拿學問提著。便都流入市俗去了。

(*HLM* ch. 56.611).

Of course, there is something disingenuous and tragic in this disdain for or blithe oblivion to economic reality. Even as the poetry society needs the financial support of a self-styled “vulgar person” (*súrén* 俗人) Wáng Xīfèng 王熙鳳, the financial ruin of the Jiǎ family spells doom for the garden.

The visits of Liú lǎo lao 劉姥姥, a poor, distant relative of the Jiǎ family, focus attention on the parameters of vulgarity and refinement. We recall that in ch. 6 she introduces the Jiǎ household through defamiliarization—i.e., the unschooled, wide-eyed perspective of the peasant; she revisits when the garden world is at its height (chs. 39-41) and when the Jiǎ family declines (ch. 113). Both naive and worldly, simple and crafty, Liú lǎo lao is the spinner of tales who is

nevertheless credulous of others' tales. She is the perfect outsider who represents the diametrical opposite of the garden inmates—she is old, common, impoverished, illiterate. During her visit to the garden, Bǎoyù and the girls focus on Liú lǎo lao in their merry-making, by including what is vulgar they make their refinement more unconventional and distinctive. However, by playing the role of vulgarized, displaced court jester, Liú lǎo lao also exposes the arbitrariness of distinctions. In fact, there is a radical continuity between her and Bǎoyù—both conflate, or bring about the confusion of, fact and fiction, reality and representation. She compares the garden to a painting. She talks about firewood and a fire starts. She fabricates a story about an unfortunate young girl turned minor deity, and Bǎoyù sets off in hopeless quest of this elusive figure. Both Liú lǎo lao and Bǎoyù are connected to the image of the mirror—the locus of illusion, enlightenment, primitive fascination, primary differentiation of self and other. It is thus strangely fitting that she should fall asleep on Bǎoyù's bed in her total inebriation.

Liú lǎo lao's visit to the garden parallels the brief incursion of Bǎoyù, Bǎochāi, and Dàiyù into the secluded precinct of the Daoist nun Miaoyu 妙玉 (ch. 41). Each traverses significant boundaries. If Liú lǎo lao inspires questions on the self-conscious demarcation of refinement and vulgarity, Miàoyù's obsessive insistence on such distinctions raise even greater doubts regarding their viability and meanings. In some ways Miàoyù's obsession with cleanliness and purity is a caricature of the garden mentality. We recall that Dàiyù refuses Bǎoyù's gift which he received from Prince Běijìng 北靜王, because it is vulgarized through association with a man. The garden sets itself apart, wary of pollution by the outside world. Miàoyù sets herself and her precinct apart from the garden, afraid of contamination by the garden inmates. Even ethereal Dàiyù is accused of being "a deeply vulgar person" (*dàsúrén* 大俗人) because she mistakes the water collected from snow on plum blossoms for rainwater from the previous year. Bǎoyù tries to please Miàoyù by referring to the jade cup as vulgar vessel:

As the saying goes, "follow the customs of the village when in the village", once I am at your abode, naturally all things made of gold, jade, and precious metals are demoted to the status of "vulgar vessels."

俗說入鄉隨俗。到了你這裏，自然把那金玉珠寶一概貶為俗器了。

(*HLM* ch. 41.438).

After the fall of the Jiǎ family, Miàoyù is abducted and probably sold into prostitution. Here the “irony of fate” is also the inevitable reversal of excesses—obsessive concern with a pure space for the self finally undermines the coherence of the self. Hence the riddle-poem telling of her destiny in chapter 5:

You yearn for purity, but are you pure?

Being called the void, it may yet not be the void.

欲潔何曾潔。云空未必空。

(*HLM* ch. 5.51).

The shifting boundaries of culture in *Stone* are deeply connected to lyrical self-definition; the instability and arbitrariness that obtain raise questions on the claims of emotions, desire, imagination, and artistic creation to coherence, autonomy, and responsibility. If the garden world can be discrete and separate from mundane reality, then one may hope for an ideal language of love that will answer its needs. If, however, the garden, like its symbolic counterpart, the Illusory Realm of Great Void, is a precarious dream, then the articulation of the powers and claims of *qíng* has to express itself as deliberate paradox, symbolic condensation, and the aesthetics of reticence.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF LOVE
IN *THE STORY OF THE STONE*

HALVOR EIFRING

According to Milan Kundera, the novel is “the great prose form in which an author thoroughly explores, by means of experimental selves (characters), some great themes of existence”.¹ Kundera only means to characterise the European novel. This article attempts to discuss the mid-18th-century Chinese novel *The Story of the Stone* (石頭記, also known as *The Dream of the Red Chamber* 紅樓夢) and its treatment of love and emotions from a similar perspective.

In the first chapter of *The Story of the Stone*, the Taoist Vanitas 空空道人 discovers upon reading the novel that “its main theme was love” 大旨談情.² In other words, love—or rather *qíng* 情, which is not quite the same—is one of the “great themes of existence” that this novel “thoroughly explores”. Jiǎ Bǎoyù 賈寶玉 and the other characters in the Róngguó 榮國 and Níngguó 寧國 mansions are “experimental selves” by means of which this theme is explored.

In traditional China, the peripheral position of the novel gave it the freedom to explore themes that more orthodox modes of writing seldom touched upon. Before the influx of Western thought, the novel was never allowed a secure place in the Chinese literary canon.

In its treatment of love and emotions, *The Story of the Stone* continues a discourse on themes that had long been addressed in Chinese drama and fiction. It makes numerous references to China’s most famous love dramas, *The Story of the Western Wing* 西廂記

¹ Milan Kundera: *The Art of the Novel*, Faber and Faber, London 1988, p. 142.

² English translations of the novel are from David Hawkes’s version (*The Story of the Stone* vol. 1-3, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth 1973-80), unless otherwise stated. The accuracy of these translations varies a lot, since their primary aim is to recreate a readable text rather than to adhere to philological precision. In cases where this would make a difference for my argument, I have modified Hawkes’s translation or created my own, well aware, unfortunately, that the literary quality is thereby vastly reduced.

and *The Peony Pavilion* 牡丹亭, and scholars and critics have long pointed out its debt to the erotic novel *The Plum in the Golden Vase* 金瓶梅.³ One might read *The Story of the Stone* as just another literary expression of the "cult of *qing*" originating in the late Ming.

The way in which *The Story of the Stone* approaches its theme, however, is original. To an astonishing degree, it is concerned with love and emotions as a complex psychological theme, not just a subject of entertainment or a focus of moral concern. As we shall see, although the novel has often been hailed as a defense of *qing*, its treatment of the sphere of love and emotions is in fact highly ambivalent. On one reading, it is a psychological novel built around a core of conflicting inner impulses.

The present article attempts to provide a preliminary and partial exploration of this psychological core. This goes beyond traditional accounts of the "psychological realism" of individual character depictions.⁴ Although this article will be particularly concerned with Jiǎ Bǎoyù, his personality is only one element in the complex psychological web that underlies the novel.

Note that the analysis is primarily based on the first 80 chapters of the novel, most of which are almost certainly written by Cáo Xuěqín 曹雪芹, not on the last 40 chapters, which may have been written by the editor of the first printed edition, Gāo È 高鹗, though since many scholars doubt this, I shall simply refer to this part as "the anonymous sequel". In addition to the first 80 chapters, I will sometimes mention fragments of later chapters, no longer extant, that are referred to in the Red Inkstone 脂硯齋 commentary, which was at least partly written by people who knew the author well. These chapters were presumably also written by Cáo Xuěqín.

³ See, for instance, Mary Elizabeth Scott: "Azure from Indigo: 'Hong lou meng's debt to 'Jin Ping Mei'", Ph. D. dissertation, Princeton University, 1989; Wáng Nǎijì 王乃驥: *Jīn Píng Méi yǔ Hónglóu mèng* 金瓶梅與紅樓夢, Liren shuju, Taipei 2001; Xú Jūnhuì 徐君慧: *Cóng Jīn Píng Méi dào Hónglóu mèng* 從金瓶梅到紅樓夢, Guangxi renmin chubanshe, Nanning 1987; Shěn Tiānyòu 沈天佑: *Jīn Píng Méi Hónglóu mèng zònghéng tán* 金瓶梅紅樓夢縱橫談, Beijing daxue chubanshe, Beijing 1990.

⁴ See C. T. Hsia: *The Classic Chinese Novel: A Critical Introduction*, Columbia University Press, New York 1968, p. 246.

From Expression to Exploration

Simply speaking, one might view a novel as having one or more of the following four functions:

1. Entertainment
2. Education
3. Emotional expression
4. Existential exploration

Among these four e's, *The Story of the Stone*, in various self-referential passages in chapter 1, explicitly relates to the first three:

1. The novel has been written, we are told, in order to entertain, to "please the reader and divert him from his cares" (悦世之目，破人愁悶, my translation).
2. The novel is morally educating, we are told (albeit with a tint of irony), because it consistently "commends great achievements and praises moral power" (稱功頌德, my translation).
3. The novel also claims to be emotionally expressive, to have been penned "with hot and bitter tears" (一把辛酸淚).

But what about the fourth e? Does the novel ever claim to explore the great themes of existence? Hardly. If *The Story of the Stone* is exploratory in Kundera's sense, this is in spite of the fact that no such claim has been made by its author, nor, for that matter, by traditional critics.

The closest the novel gets to asserting that it is exploratory in this sense is in writing that the Taoist Vanitas upon copying the text of the novel finally "awoke to the Void" (悟空), suggesting that the novel contains clues to an insight into the deepest existential truths, as exposed by Buddhism. In this context, however, awaking to the Void seems to imply a realisation of given religious tenets rather than an exploration of new aspects of the human existence.

I will suggest that the key to the exploratory nature of *The Story of the Stone* does not primarily lie in its ideas of "awaking to the Void", but in its intense emotional expressiveness. In *The Story of the Stone*, therefore, the last two e's merge into one.

Many cultural factors provide the basis for the emotional expressiveness of this novel. First, it is written in the semi-autobiographical mode typical of its time.⁵ Second, the novel had become a mode of communication and a channel for the feelings of frustration of unsuccessful (“displaced”) literati.⁶ Third, the “cult of *qíng*”, of which it may be seen as an example, idealises authenticity and individual expression.⁷ Fourth, the focus on *qíng* implies a focus on emotions and sensibility in general and love and longing in particular. Fifth, the increasing realism and quotidian focus of fiction gives more room for psychological description. Sixth, the higher acceptance of fictionality in a novel also allows for more thorough psychological description, since it is no longer necessary to confine oneself to external description in order to appear “historical”.⁸ Seventh, the novelistic tradition has come to value subtlety in the description of characters over black-and-white distinctions between “good” and “bad” characters, allowing for ambivalence and ambiguity.⁹

⁵ The standard account of *The Story of the Stone* as autobiography is Hú Shì's 胡適 groundbreaking article from 1921, “*Hónglómèng kǎozhèng*” 《紅樓夢》考證, see *Hú Shì Hónglómèng yánjiū lùnshù quánbiān* 胡適紅樓夢研究論述全編, Shanghai guji chubanshe, Shanghai 1988, p. 75-120. See Martin W. Huang's discussion of how autobiographical sensibilities of the late Ming were carried over into the novel of the early Qing (*Literati and Self-Re/Presentation: Autobiographical Sensibility in the Eighteenth-century Chinese Novel*, Stanford University Press, Stanford 1995).

⁶ See Martin W. Huang *Literati and Self-Re/Presentation* and Stephen J. Roddy: *Literati Identity and Its Fictional Representations in Late Imperial China*, Stanford University Press, Stanford 1998.

⁷ See Maram Epstein's discussion of the complex interplay of orthodoxy and authenticity in late imperial Chinese fiction, including *The Story of the Stone* (*Competing Discourses: Orthodoxy, Authenticity, and Engendered Meaning in Late Imperial Chinese Fiction*, Harvard University Asia Center, Cambridge 2001).

⁸ See Sheldon Hsiao-peng Lu: *From Historicity to Fictionality: The Chinese Poetics of Narrative*, Stanford University Press, Stanford 1994, p. 129ff., and, for the fictionality of *The Story of the Stone*, Anthony C. Yu: *Rereading the Stone: Desire and the Making of Fiction in Dream of the Red Chamber*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1997.

⁹ See David L. Rolston: *Traditional Chinese Fiction and Fiction Commentary: Reading and Writing Between the Lines*, Stanford University Press, Stanford 1997, p. 209ff.

In one sense, therefore, *The Story of the Stone* merely brings further ideals that were already part of the culture in which it emerged. In comparison to most earlier novels, it has more autobiographical elements, a more consistent focus on *qíng*, more psychological description, more subtlety in the description of characters, and it is more consciously fictional. The result, however, is a psychological complexity beyond anything seen in earlier fiction and drama.

The Story of the Stone is not the first piece of fiction or drama to problematise the sentimental self-indulgence of its main protagonist. Within drama, Tāng Xiǎnzǔ's *The Story of Hándān* 邯鄲記 and *The Story of Nánkē* 南柯記, as well as Kǒng Shàngrèn's *The Peach Blossom Fan* 桃花扇, all used Buddhist, Daoist and to some extent even Confucian thought to put in question the value of *qíng*. The same can be said of many novels.¹⁰ It is primarily the psychological subtlety of *The Story of the Stone* that brings its descriptions of both *qíng* and the forces in opposition to *qíng* so clearly beyond the works preceding it.

I am, of course, well aware that Milan Kundera's generalisations were never meant to cover the Chinese novelistic tradition. They provide us, however, with an external perspective from which to view the novel and help us see more clearly what the novel does and does not do. The same is true of some of the ideas from Western psychology discussed in this article.

Meanings of Qíng

The term *qíng* is almost as ambiguous in *The Story of the Stone* as it was in classical times.¹¹ Though this is not the place to provide a full analysis of its multitude of meanings and submeanings, a general outline is necessary to identify what kind of *qíng* we are discussing. In the *The Story of the Stone*, the term *qíng* is used in at least three completely different meanings (1-3):

¹⁰ See Maram Epstein *Competing Discourses* and Waiyee Li: *Enchantment and Disenchantment: Love and Illusion in Chinese Literature*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1993.

¹¹ For a thorough analysis of its meanings in classical times, see Christoph Harbsmeier's contribution to the present volume.

1. Real event (as in *shìqíng* 事情)
2. Personality, character (as in *xìngqíng* 性情)
3. Positive emotion towards others (as in *ēnqíng* 恩情)

The *qíng* that acts as a main theme in *The Story of the Stone* is of the third meaning, denoting positive emotions between human beings. This kind of *qíng* may be subdivided into three usages (a-c) with closely related meanings:

- a. Normal (and morally acceptable) feelings towards others (as in *zǐ mèi zhī qíng* 姊妹之情 'the feelings [or love] between sisters')
- b. Interpersonal relations used to achieve a certain goal (as in *qíngmiàn* 情面)
- c. Spontaneous, free-flowing and often uncontrollable feelings towards and desire for others (as in *qíngyù* 情欲)

The *qíng* that constitutes a main theme in *The Story of the Stone* belongs to the third usage. This kind of *qíng* lies at the heart of a dilemma between the *genuine* and the *proper*. Being *genuine*, *qíng* is sometimes strongly idealised, especially among liberal intellectuals from the late Ming onwards. However, since its uncontrollable nature often brings it at odds with moral order (*lǐ* 理) or ritual propriety (*lǐ* 禮), its idealisation is never unambiguous. Unlike the first and second usage, the mere existence of *qíng* in this third usage often implies a contrast to and a conflict with *lǐ* 理 or *lǐ* 禮.

This third usage of *qíng* may be further subdivided into two variants (i-ii):

- i. A strongly eroticised *qíng*, like the *qíng* Jiǎ Ruì 賈瑞 nourishes for Wáng Xīfèng 王熙鳳 in chapter 12, often translatable as 'desire'.
- ii. A less strongly eroticised *qíng*, like the *qíng* Jiǎ Bǎoyù 賈宝玉 nourishes for the young girls of the family, explained by the Red Inkstone commentary as *tǐtiē* 體貼 'sensitivity, empathy, caring'.

Both variants are aspects of the main theme of *The Story of the Stone*, though they dominate different parts of the novel. Basically,

the first variant of *qíng* dominates the parts of the novel considered by the Chinese scholar Yú Píngbó 俞平伯 to reflect the original manuscript of *Precious Mirror for the Romantic* 《風月寶鑑》, an early and now lost piece of fiction by Cáo Xuěqín mentioned in the Red Inkstone commentary. These parts roughly comprise chapters 9-16 and a section beginning in the second half of chapter 63 and running to the end of chapter 69.¹² The second variant of *qíng* dominates in the chapters describing details of everyday life in the Prospect Garden 大觀園. While the description of the first variant of *qíng* is common in traditional Chinese novels, the second variant seems to be Cáo Xuěqín's original creation.

Though the first variant of *qíng* is most strongly eroticised, there is also an erotic element in the second variant. In chapter 5, the fairy Disenchantment 警幻仙子 emphasises that "love, meeting with its like, breeds lust" 情既相逢必主淫. There is, according to her, no such thing as "love untainted by lust" 情而不淫 (translations modified by me). Although Jiǎ Bǎoyù seldom acts out his own sexual desire, his sensitivity and empathy towards the girls (and a handful of boys) still has an erotic undertone, to be further discussed below.

To sum up, when the Taoist Vanitas discovers that the main theme of *The Story of the Stone* is *qíng*, he is referring to the word in meaning 3, usage c, variants i and ii. In this sense, *qíng* is at odds with *lǐ* 理 and *lǐ* 禮 and lies at the heart of psychological conflicts running through the entire novel. Together the two variants of *qíng* constitute one of the "great themes of existence" explored by this novel.

¹² See Yú Píngbó 俞平伯: "Yīngyìn 'Zhīyànzhāi chóngpíng Shítoujì' shǐliù huí hòujì" 影印《脂硯齋重評石頭記》十六回後記, reprinted in *Yú Píngbó lùn Hónglóumèng* 俞平伯論紅樓夢, Shanghai guji chubanshe, Shanghai 1988, p. 957-961 and 975 note 8; see also Wai-yeec Li *Enchantment and Disenchantment* p. 232-233, Epstein *Competing Discourses* p. 173ff., Martin Huang: *Desire and Fictional Narrative in Late Imperial China*, Harvard University Asia Center, Cambridge 2001, p. 280ff.

Qíng and Narcissism

The main character of *The Story of the Stone*, Jiǎ Bǎoyù, is the most important of the “experimental selves” employed by the novel to explore the great existential theme of *qíng*. The Red Inkstone commentary says: “Bǎoyù favours *qíng* over *lǐ*” 寶玉重情不重禮.¹³ In the following, we shall look into some of the psychological traits underlying this attitude.

Consider first Bǎoyù’s idea in chapter 36 of what would constitute a glorious death:

Now if I were fortunate, I would die now, while you [the girls] are all around me; then your tears could combine to make a great river that my corpse could float away on, far, far away to some remote place that no bird has ever flown to, and gently decompose there with the wind, after that never, never to be reborn again as a human being—that would be a really *good* death.

比如我此時若果有造化，該死於此時的，趁你們在，我就死了，再能夠你們哭我的眼淚流成大河，把我的屍首漂起來，送到那鴉雀不到的幽僻之處，隨風化了，自此再不要托生為人，就是我死的得時了。

(translation modified)

In this passage, Bǎoyù has positive fantasies about a state in which his person seems to dissolve into nothing, leaving no trace of individuality. The source of this idealised state, however, lies in the girls, and especially in their tears *for him*. What seems to be a state of egolessness, therefore, turns also out to be a state where Bǎoyù’s ego is the object of considerable aggrandisement, and where the girls and their sorrow is his primary source of pleasure. It is a narcissistic frame of mind.

The egolessness of Bǎoyù’s fantasy is psychologically reminiscent of what Sigmund Freud once called an “oceanic feeling” of “something unlimited, unbounded”,¹⁴ a feeling with origins at a very early stage

¹³ See Chan Hing-ho (Chén Qínhào) 陳慶浩: *Xīnbiān Shítoujì Zhīyànzhāi píngyǔ jíjiào zēngdìngběn* 新編石頭記脂硯齋評語輯校增訂本, Lianjing chuban shiye gongsi, Taipei 1986, p. 394.

¹⁴ “Civilization and Its Discontents”, in vol. 12 of the Pelican Freud Library,

of life. According to Freud, "[a]n infant at the breast does not as yet distinguish his ego from the external world as the source of the sensations flowing in upon him". In another context, he uses the term "primary narcissism" to designate this first state of life, prior to the formation of the ego, epitomised by life in the womb, an objectless, undifferentiated state, with no split between the subject and the external world.¹⁵ Although the existence of such a completely undifferentiated state has been called into question by later psychoanalysts,¹⁶ the important point in our context is the *relative* lack of differentiation associated with Bǎoyù's idealised state.

The aggrandisement of Bǎoyù's ego through the girls and their tears for him, as well as the pleasure he derives therefrom, does involve a relation, and hence a distinction, between Bǎoyù's ego and the "objects" around him, especially the girls. In Freudian terms, it is an expression of secondary narcissism. At the same time, Bǎoyù and the girls - or rather his body and their tears - almost merge into one, and it is literally their tears that bring him to the ultimate destination of his journey, the place (and the state) where his individuality dissolves. In Bǎoyù's fantasy, the girls and their tears exist in order to instil Bǎoyù with a sense of well-being, and to bring him to his goal of egolessness.

Bǎoyù's fantasy, therefore, brings together the egolessness of primary narcissism and the ego-aggrandisement of secondary narcissism, the latter somehow leading to the former. Since the ultimate goal seems to be a non-differentiated state, I shall refer to this and similar fantasies as expressing a longing for a state of primary narcissism. This, however, is a simplification, since in Bǎoyù's case egolessness and ego-aggrandisement always seem to go hand in hand.

As we shall see, Bǎoyù's fantasy is archetypal of much that happens in the novel, and the relation between Bǎoyù and the girls lies at the heart of the novel's treatment of *qíng*. Bǎoyù's *qíng* for the girls repeatedly involves his tears for them or their tears for him or both, and these tears are consistently a source of pleasure to Bǎoyù,

Civilization, Society and Religion, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth 1985, p. 251ff.

¹⁵ Cf. J. Laplanche & J.-B. Pontalis: *The Language of Psychoanalysis*, Norton, New York 1973, p. 337f.

¹⁶ Especially by Melanie Klein, who insists that object-relations are present from the very beginning.

since they create a special bond between him and them. Just as in his fantasy their tears bring his body to a "remote place that no bird has ever flown to", beyond the realm of human beings, so he and the girls are close to creating a cocoon-like existence in the Prospect Garden, based on their mutual bond of tears. In his fantasy, the world outside the cocoon is blissfully absent, while in the garden, the external world is often perceived as a threat and looked upon with fear and contempt.

Both in the fantasy and in the garden, Bǎoyù is the unchallenged centre towards whom everybody's attention is directed. As a boy in a world of girls, he is unique. Compared to the boys and men outside the garden, most of whom are either coarse or pedantic, he is particularly refined. His consideration for and understanding of the girls sets him apart from everybody else. Moreover, since he is doted on by the head of the family, Grandmother Jiǎ 賈母, and since he is the future inheritor of the family fortune, his centrality extends far beyond the garden world. In the design of the novel, the girls are basically satellites circling around Bǎoyù, and their relative centrality in the novel varies with their emotional intimacy and locational proximity to him. The girls seldom bring the narrative forward of their own accord.

For Bǎoyù, *qíng* is primarily an inner state of unity and pleasure. In the cases where the unity is shattered, like when the girls turn away from Bǎoyù, or when external influences threaten to disrupt their cocoon-like existence, Bǎoyù becomes extremely distressed. Thus, while it is true that Bǎoyù's *qíng* implies positive feelings for the girls, and even a sensitivity to their needs, it is also true that the girls are often reduced to an ancillary existence as providers of narcissistic fulfilment for Bǎoyù. His self-centredness is far less crude than that of the novel's many lechers, but even for him, the girls are surprisingly often primarily important as a source of personal well-being.

Qíng and the Dislike of Boundaries

Jiǎ Bǎoyù's favouring of *qíng* over *lǐ* implies a strong dislike for any sort of boundaries. As soon as there are boundaries, there will be restrictions, and *lǐ* 禮 'ritual propriety' is the most direct expression

of such boundaries and restrictions. Bǎoyù's dislike of boundaries is closely related to his longing for the undifferentiated state of primary narcissism.

In the Prospect Garden, and even before the garden was built, Bǎoyù is most of the time allowed to do whatever he pleases. His grandmother dotes on him, and hence the other people of the family do not dare to restrict or restrain him. The only threat to his free and unrestrained life is his father Jiǎ Zhèng 賈政, who tries to force him to study and who once swears that he will beat his son to death and actually tries to do so. Jiǎ Zhèng favours *lǐ* over *qíng* and represents the boundaries and restrictions that Bǎoyù detests.

Bǎoyù's dislike of boundaries is expressed in quite a few peculiar ways. His lack of regard for the boundary between animate and inanimate beings is a recurring theme in the novel. According to the Red Inkstone commentary, the "Roster of Love" 情榜 towards the end of the novel contains the following description of Bǎoyù:

Bǎoyù qíng bù qíng
寶玉情不情。¹⁷

On its most plausible interpretation, the first *qíng* is a transitive verb meaning 'to treat with *qíng*', with the phrase *bù qíng* as its object. In other words, Bǎoyù treats with *qíng* even objects without *qíng*. In Buddhist terminology, the distinction between that which has *qíng* and that which lacks it corresponds to the distinction between sentient and non-sentient beings.¹⁸ As early as in chapter 1, in his former existence as the Divine Luminescent Stone-in-Waiting in the Court of Sunset Glow 赤瑕宮神瑛侍者, he treats with *qíng* the Crimson Pearl Flower 絳珠草, thus enabling her (it?) to "shed her vegetable shape and assume the form of a girl" 遂得脫卻草胎木質，得換人形，僅修成個女體, who is ultimately reborn on earth as Bǎoyù's female cousin and main object of affection Lín Dàiyù 林黛玉. Later, Bǎoyù treats with *qíng* peach blossoms falling down in the wind

¹⁷ *Xīnbiān Shítoujì Zhīyànzhāi píngyǔ jíjiào* p. 192 and 349. The description of Jiǎ Bǎoyù contrasts with that of Lín Dàiyù: *Dàiyù qíng qíng* 黛玉情情, translatable as 'Dàiyù treats with *qíng* those who have *qíng* [for her?]'.

¹⁸ See Christoph Anderl's contribution to the present volume.

(chapter 23) and a fan that one of his maidservants inadvertently treads on (chapter 31). The Red Inkstone commentary concludes:

He cares about and is full of infatuation for all witless objects of this world.

凡世間之無知無識，彼俱有一癡情去體貼。¹⁹

On one occasion, Bǎoyù denies that plants and trees are devoid of *qíng*:

Not only plants and trees, but all things have feelings and reason. And like people, they are most responsive to those who most appreciate them.

不但草木，凡天下之物，皆是有情有理的，也和人一樣，得了知己，便極有靈驗的。

(chapter 77, translation modified)

Bǎoyù does not fully make the usual distinctions between sentient and non-sentient, between people and objects. This may be seen as an expression of extreme sensitivity, but it may also be seen as narcissistic self-indulgence, as a projection of his own state of mind to his surroundings.

Bǎoyù is also sometimes unclear about the boundaries between different groups or kinds of people. First of all, “brothers and sisters [including cousins] were all one to him, and he made no distinction between close and distant relationships” 視姊妹弟兄皆出一意，並無親疏遠近之別 (chapter 5, my translation). Even though his first object of affection is Lín Dàiyù, this does not prevent him from feeling both affection and desire towards his other sisters (including female cousins) and maidservants. Second, as hinted by the same quotation, he sometimes seems to ignore the boundary between male and female, and his affection for some boys (like Qín Zhōng 秦鐘 and Bijou 琪官) is very close to his affection for the girls. Third, he sometimes overlooks the distinction between master and servant, as when he waits on his maidservant Aroma 襲人 in chapter 31. Fourth, he does not always distinguish real and imaginary persons and treats

¹⁹ *Xīnbiān Shítoujì Zhīyànzhāi píngyǔ jíjiào* p. 119. This comment, however, follows a passage in which Bǎoyù himself cracks a cup in anger.

imaginary persons as if they were real, as when he wants to go and comfort a beautiful woman in a painting, lest she feels lonely (chapter 19); or when he believes in Grannie Liú's 劉姥姥 story about a girl stealing wood and wants to go and look for her (chapter 39); or when he believes in and even makes a poem in honour of the Hibiscus goddess 芙蓉之神 invented by one of the maidservants (chapter 78). Fifth, he sometimes does not even distinguish clearly between himself and others, so that he worries about Charmante 齡官 getting wet while he himself is in fact also standing in the rain (chapter 30); he worries that Silver 玉釧 might have been burnt when it is in fact he himself who has (chapter 35); and he also takes it for granted that when he feels affection for Charmante, she will nourish the same feelings for him (chapter 36). This last case most clearly thematises Bǎoyù's self-indulgent traits, since Charmante does not in fact nourish romantic feelings for Bǎoyù.

Some of these traits are not unique to Bǎoyù, but are based on cultural clichés. For instance, the phrase "(even) plants and trees have feelings" 草木(亦)有情 is a standard way of emotionalising nature, such as in the Song poet Lù Yóu's 陸游 (1125-1210) couplet "if they had feelings, plants and trees would shed tears; and though they have no heart, iron and stone will be heartbroken" 草木有情皆落淚、鐵石無心也斷腸.²⁰ The image of someone relating to a portrait as if the person in the portrait were a living being is another such cliché. To treat cultural clichés as psychological symptoms is not unproblematic, but in the case of Bǎoyù, these features are clearly expressions of his eccentric character (性情乖僻, translated by Hawkes as "his character [was] strange and incomprehensible", chapter 3).

In a few cases, Bǎoyù's eccentric traits develop into mental illness, as when he suffers "a delirium caused by a phlegmatic occlusion of the cardiac orifices" 急痛迷心 in chapter 57 and enters "a state of mental collapse" 怔忡之疾 in chapter 70. In most of the first 80 chapters of the novel, however, Bǎoyù is not mentally ill, though his sense of self and of boundaries is not fully developed, and his longing for the unity of primary narcissism is a dominant feature. As we shall see, even his much-lauded empathy with the girls is founded on self-love, on the pursuit of narcissistic fulfilment.

²⁰ Cf. the *Chán* idea of "plants and trees becoming Buddhas" 草木成佛 discussed by Christoph Anderl in this volume.

Qíng and the Lack of Responsibility

A narcissistic frame of mind is basically a self-centred attitude, a kind of self-love. However, Jiǎ Bǎoyù does not immediately strike one as a self-centred person. On the surface, nobody seems to be more concerned with and understanding towards the girls (and a few boys) than he. He is “humble and accomodating in spite of his social position, always willing to defer to others in the interest of harmony [and he has an] affectionate disposition and familiar manner of speech” 能作小服低，賠身下氣，情性體貼，話語綿纏 (chapter 9). I have already mentioned the way he cares about Charmante even when he himself is in fact getting wet in the rain, and the way he cares about Silver even when he himself is burnt by hot water. A similar example occurs in chapter 34, after Bǎoyù has been beaten by his father, and Aroma starts putting the blame on Bǎoyù's cousin Xuē Pán 薛蟠, whereupon Bǎoyù fears that Xuē Pán's sister Bǎochāi 寶釵, who is present, will feel embarrassed. Noticing his concern, Bǎochāi thinks by herself:

What a delicacy of feeling! ...—after so terrible a beating and in spite of all the pain, to be still able to worry about the possibility of someone else's being offended!

打的這個形象，疼還顧不過來，還是這樣細心，怕得罪了人，可見在我們身上也算是用心了。

Many examples could be cited of descriptions of Jiǎ Bǎoyù's caring and understanding for the girls. It seems slightly paradoxical to call such a person self-centred.

Jiǎ Bǎoyù's attitude towards the girls, however, is highly complex and does indeed seem to contain an element of self-centredness. Basically, he is concerned with the tragic lives of the girls because their tragedy reflects his own tragedy and the shattering of the ideals of primary narcissism. That is exactly why their tears create such a strong bond between them. In a sense, the girls may be seen as objects of Jiǎ Bǎoyù's projected self-love. Everything that hurts the girls indirectly also hurts Bǎoyù, and his caring for and protection of the girls are in fact ways of caring for and protecting himself. Most notably, his caring attitude is very limited, being almost exclusively

reserved for young and (with few exceptions) unmarried girls, whose apparent innocence make them more suitable objects of projection.

Jiǎ Bǎoyù's immaturity is reflected in his attitude towards responsibility. Although he is the person who will, in the future, inherit the responsibility for the fortunes of the whole family, he does nothing to prepare for this. On the contrary, he is "exceptionally wild and naughty, ... hate[s] study and like[s] to spend all his time in the women's apartments with the girls" 頑劣異常，極惡讀書，最喜在內幃廝混 (chapter 3). As long as he is a child, such behaviour may still be seen as natural. But when he gradually grows into biological maturity, this looks more and more like plain irresponsibility.

From a modern point of view, one might insist that Bǎoyù is merely revolting against Confucian ideals and a "feudal" system that is contrary to human nature. If so, Bǎoyù's seeming irresponsibility is in fact a higher kind of responsibility. This line of reasoning, however, is less easy to accept when he behaves irresponsibly in ways that directly hurt the girls and boys he loves. The novel describes at least two clear cases of such behaviour.

The first case occurs in chapter 30, when Bǎoyù's mother Lady Wáng 王夫人 strikes her maidservant Golden 金釧 in her face and calls her a "shameless little harlot" 下作小娼婦 for having uttered a few arguably flirtatious remarks to Bǎoyù—on his instigation. Instead of trying to protect her, Bǎoyù immediately slips away 早一溜煙去了, and feeling upset, he rushes into the Prospect Garden 自己沒趣，忙進大觀園來, where he seems to forget about Golden immediately. Lady Wáng dismisses Golden from her service, and Golden ends up committing suicide.

The second case occurs in chapter 33, when the Prince of Zhōngshùn's chamberlain arrives to enquire about the young actor Bijou, who has gone missing from the palace. Bǎoyù initially claims to know nothing about the actor, but when the chamberlain provides evidence for a close relation between the two, Bǎoyù immediately reveals Bijou's hiding place:

From what I've heard, he recently acquired a little villa and an acre or so of land at Fort Redwood, seven miles east of the walls. I suppose he could be there.

聽得說：他如今在東郊離城二十里有個什麼紫檀堡，他在那裡置了幾畝田地，幾間房舍。想是在那裡也未可知。

With Bǎoyù's help, the Prince of Zhōngshùn gets his favorite actor back.

Bǎoyù betrays the people he loves, in order to avoid trouble for himself. Maybe his way of behaviour is understandable if one considers the kind of pressure he was under. However, even in his own dreams, Bǎoyù does not feel guilt for the fact that his behaviour made Golden commit suicide and resulted in Bijou being caught:

He had dozed off. The shadowy form of Jiang Yu-han [=Bijou] had come in to tell him of his capture by the Prince of Zhong-shun's men, followed, shortly after, by Golden, who gave him a tearful account of how she had drowned herself. Bǎoyù was half dreaming, half awake and paid no attention.

這裡寶玉昏昏默默，只見蔣玉函〔即琪官〕走了進來，訴說忠順府拿他之事；又見金釧兒進來，哭說為他投井之情。寶玉半夢半醒，都不在意。

(chapter 34, translation modified)

There is no doubt that Golden's suicide leaves Bǎoyù "in a state of shock" 心中早又五內摧傷 (chapter 33), and "grief for Golden so occupied his mind that he would have preferred to immediately sacrifice his own life and follow her in death" 一心總為金釧兒感傷，恨不得此時也身亡命殞，跟了金釧兒去 (chapter 33, my translation). At no point, however, does he seem to be concerned with his own responsibility for her death. Although Golden's suicide was primarily prompted by Lady Wáng's reaction, it would never have happened if Bǎoyù had not started to flirt with her, and might perhaps have been avoided if he had supported her instead of running away. The fact that Bǎoyù in his dream "paid no attention" 都不在意 contrasts sharply with the strong self-reproach of Lady Wáng:

"... in a moment of anger I struck her a couple of times and sent her back to her mother's. I had only been meaning to leave her there a day or two to punish her. After that I would have had her back again. I never dreamed that she would be so angry with me as to drown herself. Now that she has, I feel that it is all my fault."

我一時生氣，打了他幾下，攆了他下去。我只說氣他兩天，還叫他上來，誰知他這麼氣性大，就投井死了。豈不是我的罪過！

(chapter 32)

Although Lady Wáng has already “given [Golden’s] mother fifty taels” 賞了他娘五十兩銀子 and is comforted by Bǎochāi, she still “feel[s] very uneasy in [her] mind” 心不安. Bǎoyù never says anything like this.

Throughout the whole novel, Bǎoyù hardly ever expresses a sense of guilt or self-reproach. On a few occasions, he does express feelings of inferiority, especially in comparison to girls and effeminate boys (see below), but these feelings are not motivated by guilt, but rather by admiration for the other and shame at his own decrepit state. He also sometimes “regrets having spoken too roughly” 自悔言語冒撞 (chapter 5, my translation), but this feeling is motivated by a wish to avoid other people’s anger rather than by his own sense of remorse. The only instance in which he seems to blame himself for the unfortunate turn of events is in his brief self-reproach after the maidservant Number Four 四兒 is dismissed from the family:

Number Four’s unpopularity I blame myself for. It dates from the time when you [Aroma] and I had quarrelled about something and I allowed her to wait on me in your place. The others must have resented my giving her special treatment, and that, ultimately, must be the reason for what has happened to her today.

四兒是我誤了他，還是那年我和你拌嘴的那日起，叫上來作些細活，未免奪占了地位，故有今日。

(chapter 77)

Most of the time, however, Bǎoyù simply seems to “feel superior to ordinary people” 自為高過世人 (chapter 16, my translation), as his friend Qín Zhōng says on his deathbed.

Jiǎ Bǎoyù’s *qíng* does involve empathy for the girls (and a few boys) and sorrow for their sad fate. It hardly contains, however, any sort of long-term responsibility or commitment. Jiǎ Bǎoyù’s main concern is with his own feeling of well-being and aesthetic pleasure. His empathy is restricted to the people and the situations that provide him with this sense of well-being and pleasure. Rather than reflecting

selfless care it is, in a sense, instrumental in his own attempts to achieve a state of primary narcissism.

Beautiful girls and handsome boys (especially those who are also intelligent and sensitive) are mostly capable of providing him with the sense of well-being he seeks. When these girls and boys are ill or depressed, he has ample opportunity to express his empathy, and this somehow intensifies his feeling of well-being, even as he suffers with them.

As we have seen a number of times, one of the things that disturb his sense of well-being most strongly is other people's anger. As soon as somebody turns angry, Bǎoyù starts "feeling distressed" 自己沒趣 and runs away. This is especially true when the girls, especially Lín Dàiyù, are angry with him, shattering the sense of mutual sympathy that is a precondition for *qíng*.²¹ Chapter 21 is especially telling in this respect. Here the girls with whom Bǎoyù usually empathises are angry with him. At first, Bǎoyù "feels gloomy" 好沒興趣 (my translation). Later, he finds a method of regaining his sense of well-being. He pretends for the moment that they are all dead 權當他們死了, and he finds comfort in the thought: "He was able to stop worrying. He even began to feel quite cheerful" 毫無牽掛，反能怡然自悅. In this case, it is the death of the girls rather than the girls themselves that is instrumental in bringing about Bǎoyù's sense of well-being, his state of primary narcissism. The quest for this feeling lies at the heart of Bǎoyù's—and the novel's—idealisation of *qíng*.

Qíng and the Sense of Guilt

The Story of the Stone has often been seen as an autobiographical novel with Jiǎ Bǎoyù as a fictional representation of the author. To judge both from the novel and from the Red Inkstone commentary,

²¹ When the rejection comes from his father, on the other hand, though he does what he can to avoid it, the actual psychological effect on Bǎoyù is moderate. Jiǎ Zhèng is neither an object nor a source of *qíng*. Even when his father has virtually beaten him to death, Bǎoyù does not, as soon as he regains consciousness, seem to be psychologically distressed. On the contrary, his maltreatment at the hands of his father intensifies the sympathy between him and the girls, intensifies his *qíng*, and thereby indirectly increases his sense of psychological well-being instead of reducing it.

however, the author's attitude towards *qíng* differs from that of Bǎoyù in one important respect: In sharp contrast to Bǎoyù's lack of remorse, the author seems in his own life to have undergone a process of self-examination resulting in a sense of guilt, in sharp contrast to Bǎoyù's lack of guilt and remorse.

In his own presumably autobiographical words in chapter 1, the author has reached "the unbearable day of unbridled embarrassment and useless remorse" 實愧則有餘悔又無益之大無可如何之日 (my translation), his remorse being at least partly due to "the sin of having defied the attempts by my elders to give me a proper upbringing, and of having turned my back on warnings and advice from my teachers and friends, so that today I have acquired no skill by which to make a living, and have idled away half my lifetime" 背父兄教育之恩，負師友規談之德，以至今日一技無成，半生潦倒之罪。 When writing his novel, we are told, the author feels guilt and remorse. Such passages lead Yú Píngbó 俞平伯 to conclude that the novel is "borne out of repentance for a life of *qíng*".²²

Admittedly, the autobiographical passage at the beginning of chapter 1 leaves us with quite a few unresolved questions. Although the passage in which it occurs claims to *quote* the author ("the author says himself" 作者自云), this seems to imply that it is not *written* by the author. In one of the earliest manuscripts we have, it is not a part of the novel at all, but is included as a preface or a pre-chapter commentary. Some scholars believe it to be the preface to Cáo Xuěqín's early work *Precious Mirror for the Romantic* mentioned in the Red Inkstone commentary, written by the author's younger brother (or cousin 弟) Tángcūn 棠村. Tángcūn is sometimes identified with Kǒng Méixī from Eastern Lǔ 東魯孔梅溪, who, according to chapter 1, added the title *Precious Mirror for the Romantic* to the whole novel. By giving him the same family name (Kong) and homeland (Eastern Lǔ) as Confucius, the author might be teasing him for Confucian pedantry. May it be that the remorse expressed is a feeling Tángcūn thought the author *ought to* have felt rather than one he *actually* felt?

Even if this passage does represent the author's own words, however, does it also represent his heartfelt feelings? Or is it just a

²² 《紅樓夢》是情場懺悔而作的。See his "Hónglóumèng biàn" 紅樓夢辨, reprinted in *Yú Píngbó lùn Hónglóumèng* p. 182.

conventional expression of polite modesty? Or perhaps just playful words that were never intended to be taken seriously? An indication of the playfulness of the passage lies in the collocation of Confucian vocabulary (even a sentence modelled on a famous sentence pattern from the *Analects*: “Is it not indeed suitable!” 不亦宜乎) and wildly unconventional (and un-Confucian) values, such as the worship of young girls, the contempt for men, and the idea of writing a book to preserve the glorious memory of young girls 使閨閣昭傳.

However, expressions of self-reproach and remorse with an often slightly Confucian tinge are not restricted to the autobiographical opening passage. They occur in other passages as well, indicating that self-examination is indeed a central theme in the novel. For instance, a little further into chapter 1, the uncarved stone 頑石 that is left unused when Nǚwā 女媧 repairs the sky also expresses dissatisfaction with itself:

Observing that the other blocks had been used for celestial repairs and that it was the only one to have been rejected as unworthy, it became filled with shame and resentment and passed its days in sorrow and embarrassment.

因見眾石俱得補天，獨自己無材不堪入選，遂自怨自嘆，日夜悲號慚愧。

(translation modified)

The expression “repair the sky” 補天 is often used to express the idea of recovering one’s fortunes.²³ The useless stone lies at the foot of *Qīnggǎngfēng* 青埂峰, which is near-homophonous with *qínggēn* 情根 ‘the root of *qíng*’, and the Red Inkstone commentary indicates that this is the reason for the stone’s uselessness:

It says it has fallen to the roots of *qíng*, and hence is of no use in repairing the sky.

自謂落墮情根，故無補天之用。²⁴

²³ *Hànyǔ dà cídiǎn* 漢語大詞典, Hanyu da cidian chubanshe, Shanghai 1986-94, vol. 9, p. 87.

²⁴ *Xīnbiān Shítoujì Zhūyànzhāi píngyǔ jíjiào* p. 5.

Since Jiǎ Bǎoyù may be seen as the stone's incarnation in the world of mortal beings, this seems to indicate that he, too, is useless due to his favouring of *qíng* over *lǐ*. Although Jiǎ Bǎoyù does not reach this conclusion himself in the course of the novel's first 80 chapters, the "sorrow and embarrassment" felt by the stone is a clear parallel to the author's "unbridled embarrassment and useless remorse". Note, however, that beside the passage about the melting of stone to repair the sky 練石補天, the Red Inkstone commentary adds:

"Repairing the sky to benefit the world" is a common expression used in a playful way.

補天濟世，勿認真用常言。²⁵

If the Red Inkstone commentary is right, the self-reproach of the stone also has its humorous aspect, just like the autobiographical passage at the beginning of the chapter.

The commentators often emphasise what they conceive as feelings of embarrassment and remorse lying behind the novel. In chapter 12, in which Jiǎ Ruì eventually dies from his infatuation with Wáng Xīfèng, the 1760 edition 庚辰本 has the following two comments:

Naïve parents and disobedient offspring are pointed out everywhere—this book has grown out of [the author's] embarrassment with himself.

處處點父母癡心，子孫不肖——此書係自愧而成。²⁶

"The sea of bitterness is endless, turn back and you will find the shore." But who is able to turn back? Alas! Alas!

苦海無邊，回頭是岸，若個能回頭也，嘆嘆。²⁷

As we shall see, the story of Jiǎ Ruì is only one of numerous stories of people dying because of blind infatuation, of *qíng*, and one reading of the novel is as a warning against the excesses of romance, as

²⁵ The negator *wù* 勿 is most often used in exhortations, and an alternative translation might be: "As for 'repairing the sky to benefit the world', don't read [use?] this common expression in a serious sense."

²⁶ *Xīnbiān Shítouji Zhīyànzhāi píngyǔ jíjiào* p. 228.

²⁷ *ibid.*

indicated in the Reader's Guide 凡例 of the 1754 edition 甲戌本 (see below).

Such warnings are given to Jiǎ Bǎoyù in the mythical dream of chapter 5. The fairy Disenchantment has been asked by the dead souls of the Duke of Níngguó and the Duke of Róngguó 寧榮二公 to make Jiǎ Bǎoyù "devote himself single-mindedly to the serious things of life" 入於正路, by "initiat[ing] him in the pleasures of the flesh and all that sort of thing in such a way as to shock the silliness out of him" 以情欲聲色等事警其癡頑. When, towards the end of the chapter, Jiǎ Bǎoyù is about to fall into the Ford of Error 迷津, the fairy Disenchantment shouts to him:

Stop! Stop! ... Turn back at once! Turn back!
再休前進，作速回頭要緊！

According to the Red Inkstone commentary, this passage is meant to awaken ordinary people 點醒世人.²⁸ The fairy Disenchantment warns:

If you had gone on walking just now and had fallen in, all the good advice I was at such pains to give you would have been wasted.
設如墮落其中，則深負我從前諄諄警戒之語矣。

The Red Inkstone commentary adds: "When you see how he turns the pen and writes these words, you know that from here it is all about repentance" 看他忽轉筆作此語，則知此後皆是自悔.²⁹ Another commentary in the same chapter says: "Scolding Bǎoyù, he is actually expressing his own repentance" 罵死寶玉，卻是自悔. Jiǎ Bǎoyù, as we have seen, differs from the author in virtually never repenting, never reproaching himself, never feeling remorse.

Again, however, passages like the ones cited from chapter 5 also have humorous elements, and some of them may be read as caricatures of Confucian moralism. When teaching Bǎoyù the mysteries of sexuality, the fairy Disenchantment admonishes him saying: "It is my earnest hope that ... you will henceforth be able to shake yourself free of [love's] entanglements and change your previous way of

²⁸ *Xīnbiān Shítoujì Zhīyànzhāi píngyǔ jíjiào* p. 136.

²⁹ *ibid.*

thinking, devoting your mind seriously to the teachings of Confucius and Mencius and your person wholeheartedly to the betterment of society” 而今後萬萬解釋，改悟前情，留意於孔孟之間，委身於經濟之道。Even the Red Inkstone commentary, which generally tends much more strongly towards moralism than the novel itself, is ambivalent to this overly explicit Confucian statement: “Saying this, Disenchantment also becomes pedantic, but she has no other way” 說出此二句，警幻亦腐矣，然亦不得不然耳。³⁰

Two characters who, while alive, represent the glorification of *qíng* tend towards a more conventional and moralistic view towards the end of their lives: Qín Kěqīng and her brother Qín Zhōng.

In chapter 13, Qín Kěqīng, while dying, appears in a dream to Wáng Xīfèng and tells her to purchase property that, once the family's fortunes decline, may act as “a place where the young people can go to farm and study, as well as a means of maintaining the ancestral sacrifices in unbroken succession” 子孫回家讀書務農，也有個退步，祭祀又可永繼。She adds:

... if you fail to take precautions in good time, you will live to regret it bitterly when it is already too late.

此時若不早為後慮，臨期只恐後悔無益了。

This must have been written by the author at “the unbearable day of unbridled embarrassment and useless remorse” 愧則有餘悔又無益之大無可如何之日 (see above).

In chapter 16, when already half-dead, Qín Zhōng exhorts his closest friend Jiǎ Bǎoyù saying:

You and I used to think we were above ordinary people, but today I know I was wrong. In the future you should set your ambition on your career seeking honour and illustrious achievements.

以前你我見識自為高過世人，我今日才知自誤了。以後還該立志功名，以榮耀顯達為是。

Wai-ye Li argues that this passage is purely humorous, since the immediately preceding passage on the ghosts fetching Qín Zhōng is

³⁰ *Xinbian Shitouji Zhīyànzhāi píngyú jíjiào* p. 135.

indeed jocular.³¹ All the Red Inkstone commentaries, however, take Qín Zhōng's words seriously. The 1760 edition 庚辰本 contains both an interlinear commentary and a marginal commentary:

If at this moment he hadn't made these two statements, he wouldn't have been Bǎoyù's understanding friend.

此刻無此二語，非玉兄之知己。

Reading this we realise that all is about belated regret.

讀此則知全是悔遲之恨。

Many editions add the following comment after Qín Zhōng's first sentence:

Who doesn't regret it's too late!

誰不悔遲！

The word *regret* is a translation of the same Chinese word, *huǐ* 悔, as the one translated as "repent(ance)" and "(feeling) remorse" in other quotations.

To sum up, the author and the early commentators of *The Story of the Stone* again and again emphasise that the favouring of *qíng* over *lǐ* is likely to bring about regret, remorse, and repentance. They usually do so in a humorous way full of irony, but this does not seem to indicate a lack of serious concern with the problem. Although the main protagonist Jiǎ Bǎoyù appears during the first 80 chapters as an unrepentant representative of the glorification of *qíng*, the novel itself and its author are much more complex. Jiǎ Bǎoyù is a fictional character, an experimental self used by the author to explore an attitude to life that has *qíng* as its core value. On many points Bǎoyù undoubtedly resembles the author, but on one point he differs completely: He lacks the regretful and remorseful attitude that underlies much of *The Story of the Stone*.

It would be overly simplistic, however, to see *The Story of the Stone* simply as a book of repentance. The basic attitude underlying this novel is one of ambivalence and irony rather than unequivocal truth. *The Story of the Stone* does not promote any specific argument

³¹ *Enchantment and Disenchantment* p. 240.

either in favour of *qíng* or against it. It contains, in the words of Kundera, “not a single absolute truth but a welter of contradictory truths”. It plunges into the great existential theme of *qíng* with an exploratory attitude based on the “wisdom of uncertainty”.³²

The Story of the Stone vacillates between a strong idealisation of *qíng* on the one hand and feelings of regret and remorse on the other, never coming fully to terms with either. But this conflict not only represents a contradiction between two ways of *thinking*, as Kundera indicates, it also reflects a complex psychological struggle between inner forces that are basically emotional and instinctual rather than purely intellectual.

Since *qíng* represents spontaneous impulses, while *huǐ* 悔 ‘regret, remorse, repentance’ is often associated with moralism, this conflict is easily associated with Freud’s opposition between the *id* and the *super-ego*, the *id* including all spontaneous impulses, instincts, and inner drives, and the *super-ego* including the moral forces that want to control, suppress or eliminate all these impulses, instincts and drives. *Qíng*, however, by no means represents just any impulse belonging to the *id*. On the contrary, the excessive sexual promiscuity displayed by many of the male (and a few of the female) characters in the novel is clearly conceived of as being vulgar and in strong opposition to the sublime sensibilities of *qíng*.

In chapter 5, the fairy Disenchantment distinguishes between “a shallow, promiscuous kind of lust” 皮膚淫濫 and a “lust of the mind” 意淫. Though both of them are “lustful” 淫, the former is of the flesh (literally, of the skin) and the latter of the mind. This dichotomy is a new and highly original version of the traditional distinction between (the morally and aesthetically more acceptable) *qíng* ‘love, emotions’ and (the morally and aesthetically less acceptable) *yù* 欲 (or 慾) ‘desire, lust’.³³ From a psychoanalytic point of

³² *The Art of the Novel* p. 6-7.

³³ The moral and the aesthetic aspects of the distinction are not clearly distinguished. See Bǔ Jiàn 卜鍵: “Měi chǒu dōu zài qíng hé yù zhī jiān” 美醜都在情和欲之間, in his *Jiàng shù liǎng gē—Zhōngguó xiǎoshuō wéntǐ yǔ wénxué jīngshén* 絳樹兩歌——中國小說文體與文學精神, Zhōngguó guāngbō diànshì chūbǎnshè, Beijing 2000, p. 28-42. In the anonymous sequel to *The Story of the Stone*, the more traditional distinction between *qíng* and *yù* returns, as when the ghost of Qín Kěqīng speaks to the ghost of Faithful 鶯鶯 in chapter 111.

view, it is a more advanced version, since it acknowledges sexual desire or "lustfulness" as an integral part of both, there being no such thing as "love untainted by lust" 情而不淫. Using psychoanalytic terms, *qíng* is a highly sublimated, emotionalised form of desire, one that is more acceptable to a strict super-ego than ordinary carnal lust.³⁴ Even so, however, the conflict between an impulsive id and a repressive super-ego still persists, and this conflict lies at the heart of *The Story of the Stone*.

This conflict, however, is not an explicit part of Jiǎ Bǎoyù's character, which represents the cultivation of a purified *qíng*. Bǎoyù has, as we have seen, almost no real sense of guilt. According to Freud, the development of a sense of guilt represents a partial farewell to the self-centredness of the narcissism of the younger child. Bǎoyù seems hardly even to have started to bid farewell to this part of himself.

Qíng and the Sense of Fear

In addition to the sense of guilt, *The Story of the Stone* also describes other psychological forces that threaten the sense of well-being and aesthetic pleasure associated with *qíng*. The strong link between *qíng* and sexual desire sometimes invokes deadly fear, at other times overwhelming shame. In the following, we shall look at each of them in turn.

When Jiǎ Bǎoyù has just entered the Land of Illusion 太虛幻境 in his dream in chapter 5, he catches sight of an inscription that makes him ponder:

I wonder what the meaning of "passion that outlasts all time" can be. And what are "love's debts"? From now on I must make an effort to understand these things.

但不知何為「古今之情」，何為「風月之債」？從今倒要領略領略。

After Bǎoyù has decided to make an effort to understand passion and love, he immediately runs into problems:

³⁴ For a similar conclusion, see Hé Bīngdì "Cóng ài de qīyuán" p. 23.

... merely by thinking this he had invited poisonous demons into the innermost recesses of his heart.

寶玉只顧如此一想，不料早把些邪魔招入膏肓了。

(translation modified)

For the moment, he seems to escape danger, only to reencounter it towards the end of the chapter, when he and Kěqīng, after having made love, walk playfully together holding hands:

Their walk seemed to take them quite suddenly to a place where only thorn-trees grew and wolves and tigers prowled around in pairs. Ahead of them the road ended at the edge of a dark ravine. No bridge connected it with the other side.

忽至一個所在，但見荊榛遍地，狼虎同群，迎面一道黑溪阻路，並無橋梁可通。

The fairy Disenchantment explains to Bǎoyù that this is the Ford of Error 迷津. Fortunately, at the very moment when “a multitude of demons and water monsters reached up and clutched at Bao-yu to drag him down into its depths” 許多夜叉海鬼將寶玉拖將下去, he wakes up to discover it was all a dream.

But if Bǎoyù is saved from calamity, the deadly dangers of love have more grave consequences for a number of other characters in the novel. For quite a few of them, love leads to death:

- In chapter 12, Jiǎ Ruì, who has fallen in love with Wáng Xīfèng, is tricked by her a number of times and then falls sick, with “a palpitation in the heart, a loss of taste in the mouth, a weakness in the hams, a smarting in the eyes, feverishness by night and lassitude by day, albumen in the urine and blood-flecks in the phlegm, ... [producing] a complete breakdown and driv[ing] him to his bed, where he lay, with eyes tight shut, babbling deliriously and inspiring terror in all who saw him” 心內發膨脹，口中無滋味，腳下如綿，眼中似醋，黑夜作燒，白晝常倦，下溺連精，嗽痰帶血，……於是不能支持，一頭睡倒，合上眼還只夢魂顛倒，滿口亂說湖話，驚怖異常. After defying the advice of a mysterious Taoist and looking repeatedly into the front side of the Precious Mirror for the Romantic, where he sees Wáng Xīfèng beckoning him to enter and make love to her, he ceases to move, and when the people around him examine him, “his breathing had already stopped” 已沒了氣.

- In chapter 13, Qín Kěqīng, whose highly erotic bed-chamber is described in detail in chapter 5, and who has both been the dream mistress of Jiǎ Bǎoyù and, according to the most common interpretation, the real mistress of her father-in-law Jiǎ Zhēn 賈珍, dies after a mysterious illness with pregnancy-like symptoms, though there are still traces in the novel of an earlier story where she hangs herself out of shame when her illicit relation to her father-in-law is discovered.

- In chapter 16, Kěqīng's brother Qín Zhōng falls ill after having fallen in love with the young nun Sapiaientia 智能:

The unwonted exposure to wind and cold and immoderate indulgence in secret frolic with Sapiaientia had resulted on his return in a cough and chill accompanied by a total loss of appetite, [and] he presented [a] sorry ... spectacle.

因在郊外受了些風霜，又與智能兒偷期繾綣，未免失於調養，回來時便咳嗽傷風，懶進飲食，大有不勝之態。

At the end of the chapter, he heaves a long sigh in distress and takes his leave with this world 長嘆一聲，蕭然長逝了。

- In chapter 32, the maid Golden kills herself by jumping into a well after Lady Wáng has heard her utter flirtatious words to Bǎoyù (see above). The chapter heading goes: "Golden shows an unconquerable spirit by ending her [*qíng*-incurred] humiliation in death" 含恥辱情烈死金釧。

- In chapter 44, the servant Bāo Èr's wife 鮑二家的 hangs herself after her relation with Jiǎ Liǎn 賈璉 has been discovered by his wife Wáng Xīfèng.

- In chapter 66, Yóu sānjiě 尤三姐 kills herself with one of the two swords Liǔ Xiānglián 柳湘蓮 has given her as a pledge of marriage, after he wants to break the relation. As the chapter heading says: "Shame drives a warm-hearted [*qíng*] young woman to take her life" 情小妹恥情歸地府。

- In chapter 69, her sister Yóu èrjiě 尤二姐 kills herself by swallowing gold after her love for Jiǎ Liǎn has brought her into the same household as his wife Wáng Xīfèng, who in effect tortures her to death.

- In chapter 77, the maid Skybright 晴雯 dies after her pretty looks and close relation to Bǎoyù make Lady Wáng dismiss her for

fear that "Bao-yu were to be corrupted by a little harpy like that" 寶玉……叫這蹄子勾引壞了 (chapter 74). After her dismissal, Sky-bright becomes sicker and, as the chapter heading says, "a pretty maid is wronged and dies young for her unrestrained ways" 俏丫鬟抱屈夭風流 (my translation).

- In the anonymous sequel, Lín Dàiyù's death in chapter 92 is at least partly due to her love for Bǎoyù, and although the present version of this story was most probably not written by Cáo Xuěqín, Dàiyù's death is also a part of the author's original intention. This is less certainly the case with the suicides of the cousin lovers Sīqí 司棋 and Pān Yòu'ān 潘又安 in the same chapter.

The moral of all these stories seems to be the warning given in a Red Inkstone commentary found at the end of chapter 35 in the Royal Household edition 王府本 and the Yǒuzhèng edition 有正本:

The depths of the river of love are bottomless, how can you keep afloat? Once you start sinking, only death can stop you.

愛河之深無底，何可泛濫，一溺其中，非死不止。

According to the Reader's Guide 凡例 of the 1754 edition 甲戌本, *The Story of the Stone* "is also called *Precious Mirror for the Romantic*, warning against the excesses of romantic love" 又曰《風月寶鑑》，是戒妄動風月之情. Both comments see the tragic love stories of the novel as being forged on the same mould of warnings against karmic retribution for sexual sins known from a variety of pieces of traditional Chinese fiction, most notably *The Plum in the Golden Vase*.

However, the stories in *The Story of the Stone* differ from the standard stories of karmic retribution in a number of ways. First of all, the danger in question does not primarily arise from sexual excesses, but from desire generated by genuine feelings of love. In this novel, real love is more dangerous than loveless sex. The novel's numerous lechers do not seem to have a problem, only the ones who fall helplessly in love are in danger. This indicates that the main point of these stories does not lie in the by Cáo Xuěqín's time already well-worn idea of karmic retribution, but rather in a psychological fear of the vulnerability accompanying genuine feelings of love.

Second, the vulnerability of love is made all the more frightening by the presence, in the novel, of the punitive and merciless forces

represented by harbingers of Confucian values like Bǎoyù's father Jiǎ Zhèng and Jiǎ Ruì's grandfather Jiǎ Dàirú 賈代儒. Jiǎ Zhèng tries, albeit unsuccessfully, to beat his son to death, while Jiǎ Dàirú's fierce punishment of his grandson contributes to the latter's illness and subsequent death. Psychologically, the state of primary narcissism associated with *qíng* is under constant threat from cruel forces aimed at destroying it. In this perspective, the resistance against giving up primary narcissism becomes understandable, since the alternative is associated with callous and emotionally destructive forces.

Third, in line with its psychological complexity, *The Story of the Stone* is by no means unequivocal in assigning love as the cause of death in the stories just referred to. As is often the case in this novel, many of the stories have alternative interpretations. For instance, the direct reason for Yóu èrjiě's suicide is not her love for Jiǎ Liǎn, but her maltreatment at the hands of Wáng Xīfèng. In all the stories of death mentioned, love of some sort does play a role, but other factors may be just as important.

Fourth, in its treatment of genuine love, the novel makes a distinction between love that occurs within a prescribed relation and love that violates such relations. When love is not in conflict with *lǐ* 理 or *lǐ* 禮, it carries no danger. For instance, the love relation between Bǎoyù and his maidservant Aroma, which is consummated in chapter 6, is completely safe, since Aroma "knew that Grandmother Jia had given her to Bao-yu, and that this would not count as a transgression of *lǐ*" 素知賈母已將自己與了寶玉的，今便如此，亦不為越禮 (my translation, several early manuscripts write 越理 instead of 越禮). In contrast, all the love relations that end in death somehow violate a taboo. Jiǎ Ruì's love for Wáng Xīfèng is forbidden, since she is his paternal cousin's wife. Qín Kěqīng's dream relation to her husband's paternal uncle Bǎoyù and her real relation to her father-in-law both break taboos. Qín Zhōng's sexual relation to a nun is, of course, a violation of temple regulations. The relation between Bǎoyù and Golden involves, as his father puts it, "violation of a parent's maidservant" 淫辱母婢 (chapter 33), which is tantamount to incest. Jiǎ Liǎn's relation to the wife of his servant Bāo Èr is not acceptable (though Grandmother Jiǎ seems to find it quite normal). Yóu sānjiě pays with her life for her former sin of a sexual relation to her elder sister's husband. Yóu èrjiě moves in with Jiǎ Liǎn when he is still in

mourning and not supposed to marry. Skybright is suspected, albeit mistakenly, by Lady Wáng of "corrupting" her son. And while a marriage between Jiǎ Bǎoyù and Lín Dàiyù would be perfectly acceptable, since they are maternal and not paternal cousins, the sheer fact that their relation is built on love and not on family consent makes it at least semi-illicit.³⁵ While the power of *qíng*, according to the idealised view that originated in late Ming thought, lies in its ability to transcend *lǐ* 理 (or, in *The Story of the Stone*, *lǐ* 禮), this is exactly the reason why *qíng* can also be so dangerous. It is impossible to control and easily leads to transgression.

Fifth, Jiǎ Bǎoyù differs from all of the characters in the standard stories of karmic retribution by seeming to be constitutionally immune to its dangers. In chapter 5, the fairy Disenchantment says about the Ford of Error:

No boat can ever cross it; only a raft manned by a lay-brother called Numb and an acolyte called Dumb. Numb holds the steering-paddle and Dumb wields the pole. They won't ferry anyone across for money, but only take those who are fated to cross over.

中無舟楫可通，只有一個木筏，乃木居士掌舵，灰侍者撐篙，不受金銀之謝，但遇有緣者渡之。

Jiǎ Bǎoyù's desire brings him to the verge of catastrophe, but because he belongs to "those who are fated" 有緣者, he does not in the end fall into the Ford of Error. In other words, he avoids, for the moment at least, the forces of karmic retribution.

That Bǎoyù belongs to "those who are fated" can be seen from the jade he carried in his mouth when he was born. The reverse side of the jade is inscribed with three lines describing its powers, the second of which is to "cure lovesickness" 療冤疾 (chapter 8, my translation).³⁶

³⁵ To what extent marriage between maternal cousins has been sanctioned in traditional China has varied with time and place. On incestuous relations in *The Story of the Stone*, see Andrew H. Plaks: "The Problem of Incest in *Jin Ping Mei* and *Honglou meng*", in Eva Hung (ed.): *Paradoxes of Traditional Chinese Literature*, Chinese University Press, Hong Kong 1994, p. 123-45; Andrew H. Plaks: "Self-enclosure and Self-absorption in the Classic Chinese Novel", in Halvor Eifring (ed.): *Minds and Mentalities in Traditional Chinese Literature*, Culture and Art Publishing House, Beijing 1999, p. 30-45.

³⁶ Hawkes translates *liáo yuānjí* 療冤疾 as "cures melancholy distempers".

The contrast to Jiǎ Ruì is instructive. The Taoist who gives Jiǎ Ruì the Precious Mirror for the Romantic “claims to specialise in curing lovesickness” 口稱專治冤業之症 (chapter 12, my translation) and tells him only to look into the reverse side of the mirror. Jiǎ Ruì is clearly not fated to avoid disaster and insists on looking into the front side of the mirror as well, leading to his death in a pool of semen. The numerous people who die from love in *The Story of the Stone* clearly do not belong to “those who are fated” and are therefore unable to cross the Ford of Error successfully. They are not, in the end, cured of their lovesickness.

One reading of *The Story of the Stone* is as a novel describing Jiǎ Bǎoyù's journey across the Ford of Error, where he gradually discovers the emptiness of his attachment to *qíng*. The two characters aboard the raft crossing the ford, called by Hawkes Numb and Dumb, but more literally translatable as the Lay-buddhist Wood 木居士 and the Attendant Ash 灰侍者, are sometimes seen as representing Bǎoyù's main objects of infatuation, Dàiyù and Skybright, who both die for their love for Bǎoyù. Bǎoyù's awakening from his dream at the end of chapter 5 may be seen as an anticipation of his eventual awakening from the illusory dream of the world of desires, when he leaves home to become a monk. Unfortunately, Bǎoyù's awakening takes place in the lost or unfinished chapters for which our only source is a few scattered remarks in the Red Inkstone commentary.

Qíng and the Sense of Shame

There is, however, one threat to the harmony of primary narcissism to which Jiǎ Bǎoyù is not immune: his sense of shame at being male, at being what the novel repeatedly calls “a bearded filthy creature”

However, though the word *yuān* 冤 is basically a negative term referring to enmity, it is also often used for love relations, especially in the collocations *yuānjiā* 冤家, *yuānyè* 冤業, and *yuānniè* 冤孽, all of which may refer either to enemies or, playfully, to lovers (which is the usage most prevalent in *The Story of the Stone*). Love and desire are seen as the results of karmic retribution for sins in earlier lives. The more elaborate term for *yuānjí* 冤疾, then, is *yuānyè zhī zhèng* 冤業之症 as used in chapter 12, where Hawkes translates “retributory illnesses”. I have chosen to translate both *yuānjí* 冤疾 and *yuānyè zhī zhèng* 冤業之症 as “lovesickness”, in order to make the connection between the two clear.

鬚眉濁物 (my translation). As mentioned above, *The Story of the Stone* is famous for its highly unconventional idealisation of femininity and contempt for masculinity. It is not the only Qīng dynasty novel emphasising women's reactions,³⁷ and it may be seen as reflecting the traditional Taoist preference for *yin* over *yang*, but *The Story of the Stone* is unique in linking this way of thinking to a deep-seated psychological sense of shame.

In the novel, the contempt for masculinity and the idealisation of femininity are primarily associated with Jiǎ Bǎoyù, as in the following quotation from chapter 2:

Girls are made of water and boys are made of mud. When I am with girls I feel fresh and clean, but when I am with boys I feel filthy and stinking.

女兒是水作的骨肉，男人是泥作的骨肉。我見了女兒，我便清爽；見了男子，便覺濁臭逼人。

(translation modified)

In the novel, masculinity is repeatedly associated with impurity. It contaminates the "fresh and clean" realm of femininity and thereby threatens the well-being associated with *qíng*, the state of primary narcissism, the primary source of which is, as we have seen, the presence of the girls.

A similar attitude is found in Jiǎ Boayu's mirror reflection Zhēn Bǎoyù 甄寶玉, also in chapter 2:

The word 'girl' is very precious and very pure. It is much more rare and precious than all the rarest beasts and birds and plants in the world. So it is most extremely important that you should never, never violate it with your coarse mouths and stinking breath. Whenever you need to say it, you should first rinse your mouths out with clean water and scented tea. And if ever I catch you slipping up, I shall have holes drilled through your teeth and lace them up together.

³⁷ See Keith McMahon: *Misers, Shrews and Polygamists: Sexuality and Male-Female Relations in Eighteenth-century Chinese Fiction*, Duke University Press, Durham 1995.

這女兒兩個字，極尊貴、極清淨的，比那阿彌陀佛、元始天尊的這兩個寶號還更尊榮無對的呢！你們這濁口臭舌，萬不可唐突了這兩個字，要緊。但凡要說時，必須先用清水香茶漱了口才可；設若失錯，便要鑿牙穿腮等事。

The author's own voice in the explicitly autobiographical passage at the beginning of the novel reveals that the idealisation of femininity and the contempt for masculinity is not restricted to fictional characters, but also (if this really is the author's voice) reflects the attitude of the author:

Now living in misery without a single achievement, I suddenly came to think of all the girls from bygone days. Weighing them carefully one by one, I found all of them superior to myself both morally and intellectually. Though a bearded man of no mean aspiration, I really cannot compare with those slips of girls!

今風塵碌碌，一事無成，忽念及當日所有之女子，一一細考較去，覺其行止見識，皆出於我之上。何我堂堂鬚眉，誠不若彼裙釵哉？

(my translation)

As opposed to the statements of Jiǎ Bǎoyù and Zhēn Bǎoyù above, the author's words clearly express a self-deprecatory sense of shame, not just a general contempt for the male gender. In the cases of Jiǎ Bǎoyù and Zhēn Bǎoyù, it is not always clear that their contempt for masculinity leads to a sense of shame on their own behalf. On the contrary, it sometimes imbues them with a sense of superiority, since it seems to show that they have a much better understanding of the qualities of the female gender than other men have. Sometimes, however, Jiǎ Bǎoyù does use the terms "filthy creature" 濁物 and "bearded filthy creature" 鬚眉濁物 to include himself:

I only said she is a nice girl, suited to live in a big and wealthy household, instead of filthy creatures like us who actually live here.

我不過是贊他好，正配生在這深堂大院裡，沒的我們這種濁物倒生在這裡。

(chapter 19, my translation)

When nature has produced a great person like her, what's the use of bearded filthy creatures like me coming here to contaminate the world.

天既生這樣人，又何用我這須眉濁物玷辱世界。

(chapter 58, my translation)

In these two cases, Jiǎ Bǎoyù looks down upon himself after having met with beautiful and admirable girls. In chapter 5, when some fairies in the Land of Illusion complain that the fairy Disenchantment has "brought this disgusting creature to pollute our pure, maidenly precincts", Bǎoyù seems to agree entirely:

At these words Bao-yu was suddenly overwhelmed with a sense of the uncleanness and impurity of his own body and sought in vain for somewhere to escape to ...

寶玉聽如此說，便嚇得欲退不能退，果覺自形污穢不堪。

Clearly, Jiǎ Bǎoyù, like the author, does feel shame at his *own* filthiness, not only that of other males.

However, Jiǎ Bǎoyù does not idealise all female beings, nor does he feel contempt for all males. First of all, his idealisation of the female gender is basically restricted to girls that have not yet been tainted by male sexuality and, by association, male repressive conventionality. Most married women fall outside:

Strange, the way they get like this when they marry! It must be something in the male that infects them. If anything they end up even worse than the men!

奇怪，奇怪，怎麼這些人只一嫁了漢子，染了男人的氣味，就這樣混賬起來，比男人更可殺了！

(chapter 77)

Bǎoyù does have a close and affectionate relation to several married women, including Qín Kěqīng and Wáng Xífèng, but except for Jiǎ Liǎn's concubine Patience 平兒 and Xuē Pán's concubine Caltrop 香菱, who even moves into the garden, they do not belong to the highly idealised world of unmarried girls. Sometimes even unmarried girls have problems. When Xuē Bǎochāi or other girls try to admonish Bǎoyù, he complains:

Why should a pure, sweet girl like you want to go imitating that ghastly crew of thievish, place-hunting *career worms*, ... bothering her head about "fame" and "reputation" and all that sort of rubbish? All these notions you are parroting were dreamed up by meddling old men in days gone by for the express purpose of leading astray the whiskered idiots [bearded filthy creatures] who come after them. I really think it's too bad that I should have to live in an age when the minds of nice, sensible *girls* are contaminated by such idiocies. It's a rank abuse of the intellectual gifts that you were born with!

好好的一個清淨潔白女兒，也學的釣名沽譽，入了國賊祿鬼之流。這總是前人無故生事，立言豎辭，原為導後世的鬚眉濁物。不想我生不幸，亦且瓊閨繡閣中亦染此風，真真有負天地鐘靈毓秀之德！

(chapter 36)

Second, objects of idealisation also include some males. Bǎoyù's reaction on his first meeting with Qín Zhōng is similar to his reaction towards girls—he idealises the other while feeling contempt for himself:

How perfect he is! Who would have believed there could be such perfection? Now that I have seen him I know that I am just a pig wallowing in the mud, a mangy dog! ... Though I am so much richer and more nobly born than he, what use are my fine clothes but to cover up the dead and rotten wood beneath? What use the luxuries I eat and drink but to fill the cesspit and swell the stinking sewer of my inside?

天下竟有這等人物！如今看來，我竟成了泥豬癩狗了。……我雖如此比他尊貴，可知錦繡紗羅，也不過裹了我這根死木頭，美酒羊羔，也不過填了我這糞窟泥溝。

(chapter 7)

Qín Zhōng is a highly effeminate boy, probably with a bisexual tendency. Hints of similar feelings are found in Bǎoyù's relation to Bijou, the Prince of Běijìng 北靜王, and Liǔ Xiānglián. Bǎoyù's strong feelings towards the masculine gender are consistently aroused by unconventional boys or men of outstanding beauty, and usually

with highly effeminate traits. His admiration for them is an extension of his admiration for the girls.

In fact, Bǎoyù himself fits quite neatly with the description of boys or men he would usually admire. He is highly unconventional and extremely beautiful, he clearly has effeminate traits and probably a bisexual tendency. But while on some occasions he certainly leans towards self-admiration, on other occasions, as we have seen, he feels shame at his own maleness, which he sees as filthy and highly unaesthetic. In his own case, he seems to be aware of the lurking presence of some shameful element within himself that is at odds with his idealised picture of unmarried girls and admirable boys. But what is this element? What is this most fearsome threat to Jiǎ Bǎoyù's state of well-being and aesthetic pleasure?

Qíng and Male Desire

One possible answer lies in Wáng Guówéi's analysis of the term *yù* 玉 'jade'.³⁸ According to him, the term stands for the homophonous term written with the character 欲 (or 慾) and referring to 'desire' or 'carnal lust'. Jiǎ Bǎoyù was born carrying a jade in his mouth, a fact for which he is not always happy. When meeting Lín Dàiyù for the first time in chapter 3, upon hearing that she does not have a jade like his, he throws his own jade to the ground, calling it a "beastly thing" 勞什子 which "can't even tell which people are better than others" 連人之高低不擇:

None of the girls has got one. ... Only I have got one. It always upsets me. And now this new cousin comes here who is as beautiful as an angel and she hasn't got one either, so I *know* it can't be any good.

家裡姊姊妹妹都沒有，單我有，我說沒趣，如今來了這們一個神仙似的妹妹也沒有，可知這不是個好東西。

Bǎoyù obviously feels that he is inferior to the girls, and that things that he has and the girls do not are somehow inherently bad. Bǎoyù's

³⁸ See his famous "Hónglóumèng pínglùn" 紅樓夢評論, reprinted in Xú Bànchī 徐半痴 (ed.) *Hónglóumèng yìshùlùn* 紅樓夢藝術論, Lǐrén shūjú, Taipei 1984.

aversion towards his jade (yù 玉), then, may reflect an aversion towards male desire (yù 欲 or 慾). David Hawkes comments on the passage above saying that “Xuěqín’s eighteenth century insights can be quite startling”, and adds that “I do not think the fact that he is actually referring to his jade talisman makes this passage psychologically any the less interesting”,³⁹ clearly suggesting that Bǎoyù’s behaviour is a kind of Freudian self-castration. If Jiǎ Bǎoyù were able to get rid of the lust and desires that are associated with maleness, he might become immune to his sense of shame and other threats to his state of well-being and aesthetic pleasure, his primary narcissism.

While the notion of *qíng* appears very frequently in *The Story of the Stone* and is explicitly said to be one of the novel’s main themes, the notion of *yù* ‘desire, carnal lust’ only occurs a few times (except as a modal verb ‘to be about to; to want to’) and is never highlighted. In Wáng Guówéi’s analysis, however, *yù* ‘desire, carnal lust’ is still one of the novel’s main themes, though it does not appear directly, but is instead hidden behind the homophonous word meaning ‘jade’, which is indeed a frequently recurring motif in the novel. Wáng Guówéi’s analysis may seem speculative and is not based on much concrete evidence, apart from the general fact that many words and names in the novel clearly have a double meaning based on homophony. However, there is plenty of evidence that a fear of male desire underlies much of the novel.

I mentioned above that the fairy Disenchantment’s distinction between “a shallow, promiscuous kind of lust” 皮膚淫濫 and a “lust of the mind” 意淫 more or less corresponds to the traditional distinction between *qíng* ‘love, emotions’ and *yù* ‘desire, carnal lust’. Disenchantment’s version acknowledges “lustfulness” 淫 as an integral part of both, and this actually makes the delineation between the two much more tricky. The problem is not so much to distinguish Bǎoyù’s *qíng* from the *yù* of the novel’s numerous lechers, since they tend to be selfishly concerned with fulfilment of sexual desire without much consideration for the girls or women (or, in some cases, boys) involved, in stark contrast to Bǎoyù. The tricky problem is the distinction between the more or less purified *qíng* that Bǎoyù represents and the *qíng* with a strong admixture of *yù* represented by, for instance, his

³⁹ *The Story of the Stone*, vol. 1, p. 32, footnote 8.

good friend Qín Zhōng. Qín Zhōng starts out as a paragon of *qíng*, but ends his life because of his lustful association with the young nun Sapiaientia.⁴⁰

Jiǎ Bǎoyù's "lust of the mind" clearly includes an erotic component. Whether the object of his love is Lín Dàiyù, Xuē Bǎochāi, Golden, Patience, or Skybright on the female side, or Qín Zhōng or Bijou on the male side, his feelings for them are partly erotic.⁴¹ For instance, in chapter 28 when Bǎoyù sees Bǎochāi's arm...

...a feeling rather warmer than admiration was kindled inside him.

'If that arm were growing on Cousin Lin's body,' he speculated, 'I might hope one day to touch it. What a pity it's hers! Now I shall never have that good fortune.'

Suddenly he thought of the curious coincidence of the gold and jade talismans ... He looked again at Bao-chai -

that face like the full moon's argent bowl;

those eyes like sloes;

those lips whose carmine hue no Art contrived;

and brows by none but Nature's pencil lined.

This was beauty of quite a different order from Dai-yu's. Fascinated by it, he continued to stare at her with a somewhat dazed expression, so that when she handed him the chaplet, which she had now succeeded in getting off her wrist, he failed to take it from her.

……不覺動了羨慕之心，暗暗想道：「這個膀子要長在林妹妹身上，或者還得摸一摸，偏生長在他身上。」正是恨沒福得摸，忽然想起「金玉」一事來，再看看寶釵形容，只見臉若銀盆，眼似水杏，唇不點而紅，眉不畫而翠，比林黛玉另具一種嫵媚風流，不覺就呆了，寶釵褪了串子來遞與他，也忘了接。

But though the sight of a beautiful girl may kindle inside him "a feeling rather warmer than admiration", his "lust of the mind" does not seem to lead to any clearly sexual behaviour after his dream

⁴⁰ Martin W. Huang (*Desire and Fictional Narrative in Late Imperial China*, Harvard University Asia Center, Cambridge 2001, p. 271ff.) shows convincingly how hidden sexual desire consistently threatens to emerge not only in Jiǎ Bǎoyù, but also in Lín Dàiyù and, in sometimes surprising ways, Xuē Bǎochāi.

⁴¹ Cf. Hé Bǐngdì "Cóng ài de qīyuán" p. 21ff.

initiation into sexuality in chapter 5 and his first sexual intercourse with Aroma (which was officially sanctioned) in chapter 6. In chapter 77, Skybright's cousin's wife makes the following observation concerning the relationship between Bǎoyù and Skybright:

I was listening to you two for quite a while outside the window. You two were alone in the room, and if you had been secret lovers, I am sure you would have talked about it. But it turns out you and she have nothing between you.

我進來一會在窗下細聽，屋內只你二人，若有偷雞盜狗的事，豈有不談及於此，誰知你兩個竟還是各不相擾。

(my translation)

The relationship between Bǎoyù and Skybright is extremely close and affectionate, and before Skybright was driven out of the household, they often slept in the same room. Still their relationship clearly did not include sexual intercourse, indicating that Bǎoyù's relation to the girls, apart from the single incident with Aroma, is not a sexual one. After his first intercourse in chapter 6, he simply stops his own explorations of sexual desire.

Perhaps the most astonishing thing is not Bǎoyù's lack of sexual behaviour, which we might understand as a conscious choice to show consideration towards the girls he loves. The most surprising thing is his apparent lack of sexual fantasies or impulses beyond the aesthetic pleasure described in scenes like the one where he is admiring Bǎochāi's arm. After chapter 6, there is hardly a trace of such impulses, nor of the inner struggle that would normally accompany, consciously or unconsciously, the decision to abstain from sexual behaviour or fantasising.⁴² From this point, Bǎoyù appears as an idealised character, far less realistic than many other characters in the novel.

This cannot be ascribed to a general avoidance of such themes in the novel, since elsewhere *The Story of the Stone* does not shun

⁴² In chapter 31, which untypically shows Bǎoyù's anger with Skybright as well as his unsuccessful attempt to make her lie down beside him, Skybright hints at Bǎoyù's sexual relation with Aroma and also mentions a long-lasting and most suspicious bathing scene with Bǎoyù and Emerald 碧痕. Nowhere else in the novel, however, is there any indication that the sexual relation between Bǎoyù and Aroma continued beyond their first intercourse, or that Bǎoyù had a sexual relation to any of the other girls.

concrete descriptions of sexual fantasies and behaviour. It seems, rather, to stem from a need to keep Bǎoyù pure from a kind of desire that the novel conceives of as both dangerous and shameful. A person as full of *qíng* as Bǎoyù is in constant danger of ending up like Jiǎ Ruì, Qín Kěqīng, Qín Zhōng, and all the other characters who die for love. He is also in constant danger of being reduced to a more vulgar and therefore shameful type of male lover than the ideals of “lust of the mind” would allow. In a sense, he is in constant danger of having his *yù* spill over and merge too strongly with his *qíng*, transforming his purified *qíng* (meaning variant ii) into the more strongly eroticised *qíng* (meaning variant i) discussed in the section on “Meanings of *Qíng*” above. In order to make him immune to these dangers, the author has to give him special treatment. This treatment consists in a kind of purification that rids Bǎoyù of much of his *yù*. The story of how Bǎoyù throws his jade (his *yù*, which “only I have got” and “none of the girls has got”) to the ground in chapter 3 is an anticipation of this attempted eradication of male desire.

Ironically, both the fierce repression of impulses in Confucians like Jiǎ Zhèng and Jiǎ Dàirú on the one hand and the novel’s attempt to purify *qíng* in Jiǎ Bǎoyù on the other hand consider the impulses associated with *yù*, with desires and carnal lust, as their principal foes. Jiǎ Zhèng and Jiǎ Dàirú represent the repression of unwanted impulses by means of cruel, punitive action, in fact much like the typical images of the Freudian castrator, a super-ego in its early development, primitive and threatening. Jiǎ Bǎoyù, on the other hand, meets the same impulses not with repression, but with denial. With the possible exception of his throwing to the ground of the jade in chapter 3, Bǎoyù’s solution to the problem of male desire is self-inflicted blindness rather than aggressive self-castration. Denial and avoidance are deeply rooted features in Jiǎ Bǎoyù’s psychology (as seen in his many attempts to run away from unpleasant situations), and the denial of his sexuality after chapter 6 seems to reflect a blind spot in the author as well, as it is never openly thematised. The idealisation of *qíng* is based on a willingness to close one’s eyes for the lack of a clear demarcation line between carnal lust and a “lust of the mind”.

Wáng Guówéi’s idea that *yù* 玉 ‘jade’ stands for *yù* 欲 (or 慾) ‘desire’ may be speculative, but ties in neatly with Bǎoyù’s denial of male desire. In fact, the almost complete absence of the term *yù*

'desire' in the novel may be seen to reflect Bǎoyù's blindness to his own lustfulness. Desire is always disguised as something else. While the ultimate destination of Bǎoyù's *qíng* is a state of primary narcissism, his special relationship with the girls is the most important means to reach that state, and it should come as no surprise that male desire lies at the root of this relationship. Such desire, however, constantly threatens to contaminate *qíng* and break the spell that makes Bǎoyù's relation to the girls so unique and must, therefore, never be given its proper name.

Qíng and Non-attachment

The main events narrated in the *The Story of the Stone* are framed by and occasionally interspersed with stories from a mythological realm that lies beyond, but is in constant interaction with this world.⁴³ The most important inhabitants of this realm are a Buddhist monk and a Taoist sage, who both choose to enter this world for a while to save a few souls, and the fairy Disenchantment, who guards the Land of Illusion and its not inconsiderable bureaucracy of souls. The mythological realm is also the place of origin of the stone left unused by the goddess Nǚwā 女媧 when she repaired Heaven, transformed into an inscribed jade and brought into this world as Bǎoyù's jade talisman (and, some would say, as Bǎoyù himself). It is the realm of the Divine Luminescent Stone-in-Waiting in the Court of Sunset Glow and the Crimson Pearl Flower, who enter this world as Jiǎ Bǎoyù and Lín Dàiyù. It is the realm of the Taoist Vanitas, alias the Passionate Monk 情僧, who—apparently still in the otherworldly realm—becomes the first reader, critic and publisher of *The Story of the Stone*, and who eventually attains enlightenment and changes his name into the Passionate Monk. And it is the realm of guardians fetching the souls of those who are about to die, such as Jiǎ Ruì and Qín Zhōng, and probably also the abode of dead souls like those of Qín Kěqīng, Golden, Yóu sānjiě, and Skybright, who are able to enter into the dreams and thereby communicate with mortals while they are on

⁴³ See the distinction between the allegoric, realistic and narrative modes in Lucien Miller: *Masks of Fiction in Dream of the Red Chamber: Myth, Mimesis, and Persona*, The University of Arizona Press, Tucson 1975.

their way to the other side, but who then seem to lose contact (only in the anonymous sequel do some dead souls return as ghosts).

The philosophy underlying these parts of the novel is a syncretist mixture of Buddhism and Taoism, with emphasis on the transcendence of worldly desires.⁴⁴ According to this way of thinking, both *qíng* and *lǐ* are basically illusory (Buddhism), and they are parts of a never-ending circle of change that makes human striving futile (Taoism). It is only because we have not yet reached enlightenment that we still set such store by them. Thus, while Bǎoyù favours *qíng* over *lǐ* and his father favours *lǐ* over *qíng*, the mythopoetical parts of the novel go for a third alternative: the transcendence of both *qíng* and *lǐ*. Wáng Guówéi concluded that this is a novel about “the path to liberation” 解脱之道, and this path “lies in renouncing the world” 存於出世.⁴⁵

The Story of the Stone gives two alternative paths to liberation. The first path is the traditional one, represented in the mythological realm by the Buddhist monk and the Taoist sage and in the more or less realistic parts of the novel by the retired official Zhēn Shìyīn 甄士隱, who attains enlightenment towards the end of chapter 1, after his daughter has been kidnapped, his house burnt down, and he has been completely ripped off by his greedy father-in-law. After losing everything he feels attached to, he is able to look through the vanity of his own attachments.

The second path, which originates in late Ming literature and thought (with philosophical ties to the Mahayana Buddhist doctrine of non-dualism⁴⁶), is one in which *qíng* in its narrow meaning of ‘love, desire, passion’ (meaning 3, usage c, variants i and ii above) plays a much more central role. It helps a person to transcend the narrow confines of *lǐ*, though it is just a station along the way to final liberation. In the mythological realm, this is the path of the Taoist Vanitas, who in chapter 1, upon reading *The Story of the Stone*, “start[ed] off in the Void (which is Truth)[,] came to the contemplation

⁴⁴ For an investigation of this aspect of the novel, see Lene Sønderby Bech: “Images of Wisdom and Foolishness: Stages in the Progression from Ignorance to Enlightenment in the *Honglou meng*”, Ph.D. dissertation, Aarhus University n.d.

⁴⁵ “Hónglóumèng pínglùn” p. 10.

⁴⁶ See Bernard Faure: *The Red Thread: Buddhist Approaches to Sexuality*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1998.

of Form (which is Illusion); and from Form engendered Passion; and by communicating Passion, entered again into Form; and from Form awoke to the Void (which is Truth)” 因空見色，由色生情，傳情入色，自色悟空。 It is also the path outlined in chapter 5, where the fairy Disenchantment tries to “initiate [Jiǎ Bǎoyù] in the pleasures of the flesh and all that sort of thing in such a way as to shock the silliness out of him” 以情欲聲色等事警其痴頑, in the hope that this may “succeed in bringing about an awakening in him some time in the future” 或冀將來一悟, and, in the words of the 1754 甲戌 edition, help him “attain enlightenment through *qíng*” 以情悟道。 In the semi-realistic parts of the novel, then, the *qíng*-based path to liberation is the path of Jiǎ Bǎoyù. Note, by the way, that in late Ming authors like Tāng Xiǎnzǔ 湯顯祖, the *lǐ* that *qíng* helps us to transcend is 理 ‘reason, moral order’, while in *The Story of the Stone* it is primarily 禮 ‘ritual propriety’.

Transcending *qíng* is not the same as ridding oneself of *qíng*. For instance, although the fairy Disenchantment stands for ideals of transcendence, she does not object to holding Bǎoyù by the hand, prompting the following comment from a Red Inkstone commentator: “Great! Even Disenchantment herself is a lovely creature!” 妙，警幻自是個多情種子。 And she says to Bǎoyù: “The reason I like you so much is because you are full of lust. You are the most lustful person I have ever known in the whole world!” 吾所愛汝者，乃天下古今第一淫人也。

Nor is transcending *lǐ* the same as ridding oneself of *lǐ*. Disenchantment makes, as we have seen, exhortations about “the teachings of Confucius and Mencius” and “the betterment of society”. And the Buddhist monk and the Taoist sage seem to support the *lǐ*-based relation between Bǎoyù and Bǎochāi rather than the *qíng*-based relation between Bǎoyù and Dàiyù, to judge from the fact that Bǎoyù wakes up from his dream crying:

Why should I believe what those old monks and Taoists say? I don't believe in the marriage of gold and jade [Bǎochāi and Bǎoyù]. I believe in the marriage of stone and flower [Bǎoyù and Dàiyù]. 和尚道士的話如何信得？什麼是金玉姻緣！我偏說是木石姻緣！
(chapter 36).

Clearly, the monk and the Taoist had suggested that "the marriage of gold and jade", which would be based on *lǐ* rather than *qíng*, might be preferable (or, perhaps, unavoidable).

Rather than getting rid of *qíng* and *lǐ*, the core issue in the ideals of transcendence seems to lie in avoiding the *attachment* they easily bring with them. Both the search for emotional fulfilment by means of *qíng* and the quest for order by means of *lǐ* are, in the end, futile attempts to change the natural flow of things. But so is the attempt to get rid of *qíng* and *lǐ*, which are, in the end, simply just parts of this flow. *Qíng* and *lǐ* and the conflict between the two need to be accepted as facts, but not to be taken for important goals in life. "The path to liberation" seems to lie in accepting them without getting attached to them. Or so, at least, goes the theory.

It is hard to read *The Red Chamber Dream*, however, without noticing the immense sense of *attachment* running through the whole novel, a nostalgic bond to the past, to its beautiful girls and even some boys and married women, to its extravagant clothing and its delicious food, to its poetry and art, its imposing buildings and magnificent garden, its games and its playfulness, its freedom and its more or less well-protected innocence. We know, of course, that the author came from one of Nanjing's richest and most powerful families at the time, whose entire property, unfortunately, was confiscated by the emperor when the author was probably around 13 (though some scholars insist he was 5), so that, when we meet him almost 30 years later trying to finish his novel in the outskirts of Beijing, he has become a poor drunkard trying to feed his family by doing rock painting. But even without this knowledge, just by reading the novel, we can sense the massive feeling of loss underlying the whole narrative, the nostalgia for days that will never return, and the horror and desperation felt at the inevitability of the terrible destiny of the family. According to its first chapter, Cáo Xuěqín worked on the novel for ten years in what David Hawkes has translated as Nostalgia Studio 悼紅軒, but which is literally the studio for the mourning of everything that used to be red: the mansions (only very rich families have red mansions), the girls (red mansions is a conventional way of referring to the dwellings of the young girls of rich families, or the young girls themselves), the flowers (symbols of girls and of desire), and desire itself (red is the colour of desire). In the attempt to recapture bygone wealth and beauty there is a strong element of sentimental exaggeration

and lyrical idealisation. For instance, the amount of beauty, talent, intelligence, sensitivity, and skilfulness amassed in the girls of the novel is impressive beyond any probability. All the equally impressive details of imposing buildings, delicate furniture, elegant clothing, precious jewellery, lovely make-up, exquisite food, and delightful drink—not to mention the vastness of the mansions and the garden—also bear witness to a nostalgic mind dreaming up a lost world far beyond any realistic measures. The underlying feeling, then, is by no means one of non-attachment, and if there is at all an attempt at accepting the flow of life, it is done with “hot and bitter tears” 辛酸淚 (chapter 1), simply because there is no other way, as indicated by the ubiquity of the phrase *wú nài* 無奈 (or one of its many variants: *nài* 奈, *nài hé* 奈何, *zěn nài* 怎奈 or 爭奈, *qǐ nài* 豈奈), referring to a feeling of helplessness and powerlessness, an unwilling acceptance of a reality that is forced upon one. If *The Story of the Stone* is suggesting that non-attachment and acceptance of the flow of life are a good cure to the losses brought upon one by life itself, it is prescribing a medicine which does not seem to have helped its author a lot.

The two characters who are described as being able to overcome their own attachment in the course of the narrative, Zhēn Shìyīn and Liǔ Xiānglián, simply just leave the scene along with the Taoist sage as soon as they have come to their realisation. The only intimation of the actual psychology behind the idea of non-attachment comes in Jiǎ Bǎoyù's pseudo-enlightenment in chapter 21, where he is able to regain his state of well-being by pretending that the girls who have hurt him are dead. One might see this as an aggressive reaction, a revenge against those who have hurt him. The main point in our context, however, is the fact that Bǎoyù's pseudo-enlightenment is built on denial, a pretense that the objects of his own *qíng* and the conflicts surrounding them no longer exist. To the extent that the novel gives us any clue at all to the psychology behind the ideals of transcendence, it seems to be very close to the psychology of denial, especially the denial of male desire, a reaction the basic aim of which is to recapture the state of primary narcissism. If this is correct, the attempt to transcend *qíng* is little more than a more advanced step in the endeavour to retain or regain this childlike state of undisturbed well-being and unity.

The Presence and Absence of Irony

To what extent does *The Red Chamber Dream* really suggest that the ideology of non-attachment and acceptance of the mythological realm is a valid approach to life? A closer look at the role this view plays within the novel as a whole suggests that the transcendence of *qíng* and *lǐ* does not necessarily have prominence over the views favouring *qíng* over *lǐ* or *lǐ* over *qíng*.

First, transcendental wisdom belongs exclusively to the mythological realm and is not in this novel a part of real life. The Buddhist monk, the Taoist sage, the fairy Disenchantment, and the Taoist Vanitas, who are all portrayed as bearers of transcendental wisdom, belong to the mythological realm, though they do pay visits to the world of mortal beings. In chapter 1, Zhēn Shìyīn is originally a thisworldly character, but after he has reached enlightenment, we hear no more of him. In chapter 66, Liǔ Xiānglián "slashes through the unnumbered strands that bind us to the world and its annoyances" 將萬根煩惱絲一揮而盡, and after that we see or hear no more of him. In addition, some of the dead or dying characters of the novel also arguably represent a kind of transcendental wisdom, such as Qín Kěqīng in her admonitions to Wáng Xīfèng in chapter 13, Qín Zhōng in his admonitions to Jiǎ Bǎoyù in chapter 16, and Yóu sānjiě in her parting words to Liǔ Xiānglián in chapter 66 and in her little dream visit to Yóu èrjiě in chapter 69. But Qín Kěqīng's and Qín Zhōng's deathbed messages are actually more in favour of *lǐ* than transcendence, and when Yóu sānjiě visits her sister in a dream, she sounds much more vengeful than one would expect of a person of transcendental wisdom. Any wisdom that they do have, however, is a wisdom acquired at the very moment of leaving this world, presumably to enter the mythological realm.

Second, although stories from the mythological realm frame the whole novel, their way of thinking only occurs in an exceedingly small portion of the whole narrative. In other parts of the novel, there may be reminders of their existence, but most of the time they are simply quietly forgotten. For instance, to judge by the descriptions in chapter 1, the stone that was left unused by Nǚwā has a central role in the narration, the whole narrative being first inscribed on it (before being copied by the Taoist Vanitas), and we are reminded of this role in small passages in chapters 4, 8, and 17-18. Most of the time,

however, the role of the stone as a quasi-narrator is not even hinted at, and the stone's only presence in other chapters are in the form of Bǎoyù's jade talisman. As for the Buddhist monk and the Taoist sage, they mainly appear in chapters 1 and 25, the Taoist sage also towards the end of chapters 12 and 66 (continuing into the beginning of chapter 67); in other chapters they are only mentioned a few times by other characters and do not appear in person. The fairy Disenchantment mainly appears in chapter 5, and the Taoist Vanitas only occurs in chapter 1. Even if Zhēn Shìyīn in chapter 1, Qín Kěqīng in chapter 13, Qín Zhōng in chapter 16, Yóu sānjiě in chapter 66 and 69, and Liǔ Xiānglián in chapter 66-67 are counted, there is in the vast majority of chapters no direct use of mythopoetical elements or reference to transcendental wisdom at all.

Third, the mythopoetical passages are full of humour and irony, of what the Chinese critical tradition calls "a playful pen" 遊戲筆墨. The first chapter, which has several mythopoetical passages, uses the term "absurd" 荒唐 three times—in addition to calling the mythical mountains from where the stone originates and to which it eventually returns "the Mountains of Great Absurdity" (my translation) 大荒山. The stories of the goddess Nǚwā repairing Heaven, the block of stone left unused and therefore howling and wailing in shame and lamentation, the "scabby" 癩頭 Buddhist monk and the "limping" 跛足 Taoist sage behaving like madmen, and the Taoist Vanitas engaging in overly serious conversation with the stone on the nature of good literature, are all witty and jocular, as is the folksy tone of the "Won-Done Song" 好了歌 and its poetic commentary. Even the story of the Divine Luminescent Stone-in-Waiting in the Court of Sunset Glow and the Crimson Pearl Flower, though markedly more lyrical in sentiment, has a humorous side. In chapter 5, Bǎoyù's dream visit to the Land of Illusion is also full of playful elements, and the obvious lustfulness of the fairy Disenchantment has more than a touch of comedy. In chapter 12, the whole story of Jiǎ Ruì is almost farcical, including the parts where he is visited by the limping Taoist. In chapter 16, the leader of the demons fetching the dying Qín Zhōng to the other side is quite comical in his fear of the name Bǎoyù. Etcetera, etcetera. It is as if the novel is telling us all along not to take the wisdom of these passages too seriously.

Fourth, transcendental wisdom often occurs in stylistically marked passages, such as:

- the rhymed verse of the “Won-Done Song” and its poetic commentary (chapter 1)
- the rhymed verse of the registers of the beauties of Jinling 金陵十二釵正冊、副冊、又副冊, the song suite “A Dream of Golden Days” 紅樓夢, and other poetry in chapter 5
- couplets of parallel lines, like the one marking the entrance to the Land of Illusion in chapters 1 and 5 (Truth becomes fiction when the fiction’s true; Real becomes not-real when the unreal’s real 假作真時真亦假，有為無處無還有) and the one marking the entrance to the Temple of Perfect Knowledge 智通寺 in chapter 2 (As long as there is a sufficiency behind you, you press greedily forward. It is only when there is no road in front of you that you think of turning back 身後有餘忘縮手，眼前無路想回頭)
- lines from chapter headings, such as “shock leads a cold-hearted young gentleman to renounce the world” 冷二郎一冷入空門 (chapter 66) and “beautiful actors sever all bonds and enter nirvana” 美優伶斬情歸水月 (chapter 77, my translation).

Passages written in these styles often contain exaggerations and do not imply mimetic realism. For instance, the heading of chapter 22 contains the line “Bao-yu finds Zen enlightenment in an operatic aria” 聽曲文寶玉悟禪機, which seems to imply that Jiǎ Bǎoyù reaches enlightenment in the course of the chapter, while it is quite clear, even to Bǎoyù himself, that his “enlightenment” was just a drunken stupor after his having been rejected by the girls. Furthermore, semi-poetic language also gives ample room for ambiguity and alternative interpretations. For instance, the line from the heading of chapter 77 that I have translated as “beautiful actors sever all bonds and enter nirvana” is translated by Hawkes as “three young actresses seek to escape matrimony in the cloister”. While my translation takes *zhǎn qíng* 斬情 to refer to a renouncement of all attachment, of all *qíng*, Hawkes’s translation makes it refer quite concretely to the actresses’ refusal to marry; and while my translation takes *guī shuǐyuè* 歸水月 in its conventional meaning ‘to enter nirvana’, Hawkes’s translation takes it, again quite concretely, to refer to the Buddhist temple called Water-moon Priory 水月庵, where the young actresses actually end up. The Chinese chapter heading plays on this ambiguity between a lofty philosophical interpretation and a concrete down-to-earth one.

The same type of ambiguity is found in the following line in chapter 1 of the 1754 edition 甲戌本:

究竟是到頭一夢，萬境歸空。

A. "Basically it is all a dream [i.e. illusory], and the world in its myriad manifestations is nothing but emptiness."

B. "In the end, it will all be like a dream [i.e. a distant memory], and nothing will be left of this myriad of things."⁴⁷

A is a general philosophical statement about the illusory nature of everything, while B is a specific prophecy about the future disappearance of present prosperity. The first reading adds to the novel's philosophical depth, while the second reading more or less sums up the concrete events that are about to be narrated. Both are equally valid.

The exaggerations and intended ambiguities of semi-poetic passages sometimes makes it hard to know their concrete implications. For instance, the Red Inkstone commentary mentions how a now lost chapter describes Jiǎ Bǎoyù "letting go of his hold onto the precipice" 懸崖撒手 (see the commentaries to chapters 21 and 25⁴⁸). This phrase is usually understood to imply that Bǎoyù renounces the world, and the commentary uses the same phrase about Zhēn Shìyīn's enlightenment in chapter 1 (p. 33). The commentary to chapter 21 does contain concrete statements about Bǎoyù leaving his wife and concubine to become a monk, but the phrase itself tells us very little about the concrete circumstances of his decision. Although "letting go" seems to imply some kind of deeper spiritual insight or enlightenment, it is impossible to know whether this is meant to reflect Bǎoyù's actual state of mind or is just a part of poetic language use.

One possible, though in my opinion improbable, conclusion would be to read the mythopoetical elements framing and interspersing the narrative of *The Story of the Stone* as nothing more than a literary device of a type not unknown from earlier Chinese fiction. In this

⁴⁷ Both translations are mine, since Hawkes's translation is not based on this edition.

⁴⁸ *Xīnbiān Shítoujī Zhīyànzhāi píngyǔ jíjiào* p. 416 and p. 494.

perspective, the philosophical ideas of these passages are just literary ornamentation and should not be taken seriously at all.

More plausibly, I will suggest that the irony of the mythopoetical passages serves to relativise the transcendental wisdom they express. Although theoretically the idea of transcending both *qíng* and *lǐ* should lie on a "higher" level than the ideas of favouring *qíng* or of favouring *lǐ*, its actual position within the novel is weakened by the various factors mentioned above, and the mythopoetical passages should be read with a considerable amount of ironic distance. They represent, to return to Kundera's terms, "not a single absolute truth", but one among "a welter of contradictory truths".

The playfulness of the mythopoetical passages is quite similar in tone to that of the passages expressing regret, remorse and repentance (see the section on "*Qíng* and the Sense of Guilt" above). In both cases, humour creates an ironic distance to ideas that might otherwise appear as overly serious and trite.

In comparison, the humour of other parts of the novel does not usually create ironic distance at all. For instance, the humour found here and there in the long stretches of narrative describing life in the Prospect Garden and Bǎoyù's *qíng* for the girls is an integrated part of a huge lyrical and arguably quite sentimental web spun around a *qíng*-laden core of wonder and amazement, praise and admiration, longing and lamentation. As for the slapstick humour in some of the chapters describing the dangers of *qíng*, while allowing the reader to lean back and be amused by Jiǎ Ruì's blind and helpless love for Wáng Xīfèng in chapter 12 and Wáng Xīfèng's outrageous and uncontrollable jealousy in chapters 43 and 68-69, still does not tend to undermine the utter seriousness of the sense of fear and danger involved. Many of Bǎoyù's eccentric traits, especially his love for the girls and his contempt for everything masculine, are certainly described with humour, but again a humour that contributes to the impression of what an extraordinary boy he is rather than one creating ironic distance.

The Psychology of Qíng

If *The Story of the Stone* is a psychological novel built around a core of conflicting inner impulses, as indicated at the beginning of this

paper, we now begin to see the contours of some of the emotional conflicts involved. Whether the novel represents a defense of *qíng*, a warning against it, or an attempt to transcend it, there is no doubt that *qíng* is one of its main obsessions. This obsession has, I have indicated, its root in a psychological resistance against boundaries and responsibility, an unwillingness to let go of the sense of well-being and unity associated with the child's early state of primary narcissism and with its privileged relation with a number of girls.

The attempt to retain or regain this state is encouraged by the lack of restrictions represented in the novel by Grandmother Jiǎ's dotting for Bǎoyù, by the carefree life in the Prospect Garden, and by the extreme freedom with which Bǎoyù moves among girls who are virtually always delighted with him. The resistance against boundaries is also stimulated by the association between restrictions and the cruel and punitive strictness represented in the novel by Jiǎ Zhèng in relation to his son, Jiǎ Dàirú in relation to his grandson, Lady Wáng in relation to goodlooking maidservants and actresses, and by the terrible forces punishing genuine but illicit love with death as soon as it becomes too strongly eroticised or sexualised. The attempt to hold on to the state of primary narcissism also aims at retaining a kind of purity and aesthetic pleasure untainted by the ugliness and shame associated with male sexual desire (and, by extension, with career-oriented masculine values). The main sources of this idealised state of mind are a flock of young and mostly unmarried, and hence pure, girls (and a few effeminate boys), who combine purity and intelligence with beauty and erotic attractiveness.

When facing the various threats to the state of primary narcissism, *The Story of the Stone* seems to reflect a basic psychological tendency towards avoidance or denial. These are Jiǎ Bǎoyù's instinctual reactions whenever trouble looms, usually in the form of other people's anger or accusations, whether they come from his father, his mother, the Prince of Zhōngshùn's chamberlain, Bijou and Golden in his dreams, or the girls. This article has argued that a similar form of denial underlies the strange lack of sexual behaviour and fantasies in Jiǎ Bǎoyù, which within the perspective underlying the novel is the only way to enable him to avoid the deadly dangers of love and (less successfully) the shame associated with male desire.

As indicated above, the passages of *The Story of the Stone* most directly describing *qíng* and the fear and shame surrounding it have

little of the irony that is so typical of the passages expressing self-reproach on the one hand and non-attachment on the other. The lack of ironic distance reflects a lack of psychological distance. These parts of the novel, which actually constitute the bulk of the narrative, are much more expressive than reflective. The conflicts relating to *qíng* dominate the mental universe of the novel to such an extent that there is little room for the smiling afterthought that is typical of irony. This may be seen as a weakness, since it contributes to the novel's tendency to uncritical and sentimental idealisation. But it may also be seen as a strength, making the novel more directly psychologically expressive than any previous work of Chinese fiction, and giving us an intimate view of the emotional battlefield underlying the narrative.

The irony of the passages expressing self-reproach or non-attachment seems to represent an attempt at stepping out of this self-enclosed universe. Some (though not all) of these passages are more reflective than expressive, thereby creating some cracks in the closed and self-contained lyrical world that dominates long stretches of the novel.

Admittedly, some of the passages that can be read as expressions of remorse or self-reproach have their own form of regretful sentimentality. Still, they are consistently humorous and ironic in a way the bulk of the narrative is not.

With regard to the mythopoetical passages, I have already voiced the suspicion that the philosophical idea of non-attachment, as expressed in the novel, in part represents psychologically little more than an elevated variant of the basic tendency towards avoidance and denial of the inner conflicts threatening the state of primary narcissism. It is as if the same psychological impulses that dominate the self-contained universe of *qíng* pop up again even within the attempts to overcome it.

Let us return, finally, to Milan Kundera's characterisation of the novel as "the great prose form in which an author thoroughly explores, by means of experimental selves (characters), some great themes of existence". There is no doubt that Kundera, both in his own novels and his literary thinking, prefers a reflective form to a directly emotional one. One might argue that the self-contained lyricism that dominates most of the narrative of *The Story of the Stone* is not really exploratory in Kundera's sense, since its lack of ironic distance leaves so little

room for reflection. One might also argue, however, that the very lack of a self-conscious reflective voice in large parts of *The Story of the Stone* allows us more direct access to the psychological impulses involved and brings them up in a more naked, unmodified form. Just as the direct expression of free associations with a minimum of self-criticism provides the basis for insight in psychoanalysis, the non-reflective form of these parts of *The Story of the Stone* brings us right into the middle of the emotional conflicts surrounding the great theme of existence called *qíng*.

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