

## EAST ASIA

SHIRLEY CHAN (ed.):

*Dao Companion to the Excavated Guodian Bamboo Manuscripts.*

(Dao Companions to Chinese Philosophy, vol. 10.) xi, 375 pp.

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Over the last decades, scholars of early China have grown accustomed to the avalanche of new collections of ancient bamboo manuscripts. But the Guodian collection, discussed in the 18 essays assembled in this volume, remains special, for no other discovery has furnished a comparable wealth of new material relating to the formative age of ancient Chinese philosophy.

The Introduction provides an overview of the volume's contents and summarizes some technical and intellectual-historical problems surrounding the Guodian manuscripts. The rest of the book is divided into two parts, dealing with philological and philosophical matters, respectively. Nevertheless, the boundary is blurry, and most readers will probably be interested in both parts. Franklin Perkins investigates the philosophical system of the Guodian *Laozi*, examining whether, in terms of intellectual cohesion, it can be seen as an intermediate stage in the formation of the *Laozi* 老子 as we know it. He Ruyue and Michael Nylan examine the passages in the *Ziyi* 緇衣 and *Cheng zhi wen zhi* 成之聞之 that have counterparts in the *Shang shu* 尚書, showing that, at the time of composition of the Guodian materials, these passages were flexible and open to different, even contradictory interpretations. Dirk Meyer examines the role of the *shu* 書 in the overall argumentative structure of the same two Guodian texts, and he reaches a similar conclusion, showing that the "speech-components" of the *shu* were characterized by flexibility and modularity, adaptable to a variety of argumentative contexts. Michael Schimmelpfennig compares *Tang Yu zhi dao* 唐虞之道 and *Zhong xin zhi dao* 忠信之道, arguing that these texts cannot be seen as part of a single comprehensive intellectual project. Constance Cook investigates the uses of the key terms *dao* 道 and *de* 德 in the Guodian corpus, highlighting the diversity of argumentative positions reflected in the variety of adaptations of these terms. Liao Mingchun focuses on the expression *hengcheng* 恆稱, which appears in *Lu Mu Gong wen Zisi* 魯穆公問子思. While it is commonly interpreted as *changcheng* 常稱 (to remonstrate constantly), Liao argues for its interpretation as *jicheng* 及稱 (to remonstrate without reservations), which has important consequences beyond the Guodian corpus.

In her first essay, Erica Brindley provides a close reading of the *Taiyi shengshui* 太一生水 as a cosmogonic text composed within the framework of Daoist philosophy. Barbara Hendrichske's well-researched essay synthesizes the Daoist philosophical system as it appears in the manuscript *Laozi* (with some insights from the *Taiyi shengshui*). Brindley's second essay examines the central role of sagacity as a quality that connects Heaven and the human in the framework of moral cultivation outlined in the *Wuxing* 五行. Liang Tao approaches the question of the relationship between Heaven and man by reading *Qiong da yi shi* 窮達以時 against the *Mengzi* 孟子 and the *Xunzi* 荀子. Noting the complexity of this relationship in ancient texts and the different views regarding particular aspects of this relationship, he argues that the *Qiong da yi shi* emphasizes the division, and not unity, between Heaven and humans. Shirley Chan's first essay reconsiders the key interrelated concepts of *xing* 性, *xin* 心 and *qing* 情 in *Xing zi ming chu*. Lisa Raphals examines the

problem of the possible duality of the heart-mind and body in the Guodian texts, concluding that the available evidence shows “a range of views on relations between them”. Chan’s second essay focuses on the question of “nature and nurture” in the *Yucong* 語叢, suggesting that Daoist and Confucian elements form a complementary synthesis in these texts. In a broad analytical overview, Scott Cook examines the conspicuous arguments against governance based on normative punishments, while contemplating the social-historical developments that may have fuelled this debate. Tang Siufu investigates the possible connections between the Guodian manuscripts and the *Xunzi*, highlighting the similarity of prevalent themes and ideological positions. Li Rui traces the possible connections between the concepts of *liu wei* 六位 (six positions) and *san gang* 三綱 (three principles) and the accompanying developments in the social position of philosophers vis-a-vis rulers in the late pre-imperial and early imperial periods. In a concluding essay, Kenneth Holloway, taking inspiration from Prasenjit Duara, proposes an interpretation of the Guodian texts as a religious corpus united in “dialogical transcendence”.

Considering the broad range of topics and a well-balanced international team of contributors, this volume can be seen as a snapshot of the current state of research on the Guodian manuscripts. In this sense, it is somewhat disappointing that nearly all innovative points advanced by contributors are dismissed or denied by others. While disagreement is generally indicative of a healthy academic conversation, one wonders whether there is enough dialogue in the Guodian studies, as it seems that sometimes scholars are not willing to seriously consider each other’s opinions. This fragmentation may stem from disagreements on fundamental issues. Are the Guodian texts related to individual philosophers known from transmitted records? Or are they created by as yet unknown communities, whose ideas should be interpreted on their own, avoiding contamination from the received tradition? The different opinions on this matter determine different strategies of inquiry, and the outcomes are often incompatible.

Perhaps some additional editorial effort could have made the volume even better. Some essays are somewhat difficult to follow. And while misplaced punctuation usually does not incur significant problems, it becomes confusing in the primary source citations appearing in discussions dealing specifically with the nuances of textual transmission and interpretation. However, these minor problems do not diminish the value of this volume as a diverse and up-to-date summary of academic opinions on the most significant collection of ancient philosophical manuscripts discovered so far.

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SOPHIE LING-JIA WEI:

*Chinese Theology and Translation: The Christianity of the Jesuit Figurists and Their Christianized Yijing.*

xii, 151 pp. (Routledge Studies in Asian Religion and Philosophy, 26.)  
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It is no secret that the archives of Europe contain many manuscripts bequeathed by those remarkable Jesuit pioneers in China known as Figurists, subtle and learned