LINGUISTIC STRATEGIES IN DAOIST ZHUANGZI AND CHAN BUDDHISM

The other way of speaking

Youru Wang

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LINGUISTIC STRATEGIES IN DAOIST ZHUANGZI AND CHAN BUDDHISM

As the first systematic attempt to probe the linguistic strategies of Daoist Zhuangzi and Chan Buddhism, this book investigates three areas: deconstructive strategy, liminology of language, and indirect communication. It bases these investigations on the critical examination of original texts, placing them strictly within soteriological contexts.

While focusing on language use, the study also reveals some important truths about the two traditions, and challenges many conventional understandings of them. Responding to recent critiques of Daoist and Chan Buddhist thought, it brings these traditions into a constructive dialogue with contemporary philosophical reflection. It "discovers" Zhuangzian and Chan perspectives and sheds light on issues such as the relationship between philosophy and non-philosophy, de-reification of words, relativizing of the limit of language, structure of indirect communication, and use of double negation, paradox, tautology, irony, and poetic language.

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TO MY FATHER, WANG DANRU
王澹如
(1904–1990)

AND MY MOTHER, CA XINRU
查心如
(1916–2003)

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

BG   *Baizhang Guanglu. GY*, fascicle 1. *CJ*, vol. 11.

CF   *Huangbo Chanshi Chuanxin Fayao. CJ*, vol. 13.

CJ   *Chanzong Jicheng.* Reprint of the collection of Chan school from *HTC*. 25 vols. Taibei: Yiwen Yinshu Guan, 1968.

DL   *Dongshan Liangjie Chanshi Yulu. CJ*, vol. 13.

DY   *Yuezhou Dazhu Huihai Heshang Yu. JCL*, fascicle 28, T, vol. 51, no. 2076.

GY   *Guzunsu Yulu.* 48 fascicles. *CJ*, vols 11–12.

HTC   *Xu Zang Jing/ Hsu Tsang Ching.* Reprint of *Dainippon zokuzōkyō* (Nakano Tatsue, ed. Kyoto: Zōkyō shoin, 1905–12). 150 vols. Taibei: Xinwenfeng Chuban Gongsi, 1968–70.

JCL   *Jingde Chuandeng Lu.* 30 fascicles. *T*, vol. 51, no. 2076.

LY   *Zhenzhou Linji Huizhao Chanshi Yulu. GY*, fascicle 4. *CJ*, vol. 11.

SL   *Shenhui Heshang Chanhua Lu.* Yang Zengwen, ed. Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1996.

T   *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō.* Takakusu Junjirō and Watanabe Kaigyoku, eds. Tokyo: Daizo shuppan kai, 1922–33. 100 vols.

WH   *Wudeng Huiyuan.* 20 fascicles. Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1984. 3 vols.

WL   *Huangbo Xiyun Chanshi Wanling Lu. CJ*, vol. 13.

WLL   *Huangbo Duanji Chanshi Wanling Lu.* Pei Xiu, ed. *T*, vol. 48, no. 2012B.

ZY   *Zhuangzi Yinde. A Concordance to Chuang Tzu*, Harvard-Yenching Institute Sinological Index Series, Supplement No. 20. Taibei: Chinese Materials and Research Aids Service Center, 1966.

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INTRODUCTION

A twofold task

Since the 1980s, the study of Daoist philosophy has faced new challenges and criticisms especially from Derridean thinkers and scholars who are under Derridean influence. Despite sporadic efforts to point out the analogy between Derrida's "trace" or "*differance*" and Zhuangzi's "*dao*" (in contrast to frequent discussions of deconstruction in Buddhism), and despite praise of the *Zhuangzi* as the ultimate text of the 1980s,[1] Daoism has been accused of logocentrism. Robert Magliola, among others, has asserted that to identify or even find analogous the classical Daoist and Derridean thought would be dishonest. Daoism, according to him, "in its characteristic form from the beginning down to contemporary times has been logocentric."[2]

Chan Buddhism has encountered a similar problem. Hitherto most discourses on Buddhist deconstruction have not significantly referred to Chan Buddhism, but rather to Nāgārjuna, Prāsangika, and Chinese Mādhyamika. Although a few scholars have suggested that Chan put into practice Mādhyamika Buddhist deconstruction,[3] the mainstream of Chan Buddhist tradition has been conspicuously censured for logocentrism one way or another. For example, Bernard Faure unhesitatingly located the mainstream of Chan Buddhism within logocentrism. He particularly singled out the Chan master Linji, considering him "clearly logocentric," and emphasized the connection of Linji's thought with Zhuangzi's in that regard.[4]

My work will, to some extent, address the issue of whether Zhuangzi and Linji are logocentric or not. However, my concern here is not merely with this specific question. The whole situation, as demonstrated by these two cases, has raised a more fundamental and more general task for contemporary Chinese thinkers and scholars of Chinese philosophy, especially of Daoism and Chan Buddhism. This task is twofold.

First, how to recontextualize and reinterpret Daoist and Chan Buddhist thought in terms of the postmodern condition? Given that there is no pure objectivity or full presence of an original movement of thought but only a web of textuality weaving human understanding and making impossible any escape from the alternation of context, every interpretation is a recontextualization. No interpretation can take place outside a context, but context is always on the move. The changeability and inexhaustibility of context are determined by the flux and contingency of human existence as being-in-the-world. In this view, living traditions are always in the process of reinterpretation and revitalization.

One of the major factors that makes our present context of interpreting Daoism and Chan different from that in the 1960s or 1970s is obviously the so-called postmodern condition, or what I term postmodern discourse, a large range of phenomena that recently has dominated the Western intellectual arena. This includes poststructuralism, postmodernism, neopragmatism, and so on, as well as those who respond to the ideas propounded by these currents and therefore contribute to this discourse.[5] No matter how divergent these currents are, they provide some similar vocabularies, metaphors, beliefs, or attitudes, indicating a departure from modern philosophy or the discourse of Enlightenment, and even from the entire tradition of Western metaphysics. Since the interpretation of Daoism and Chan in the West has largely become an inseparable part of the Western linguistic game, I doubt that it can ever escape every current context. Even in the East, the introduction of postmodern discourse, among other things, has increasingly constituted a new element in the context for reinterpretation of traditions. At any rate, Daoist and Chan Buddhist thought must meet the challenges of poststructuralist, postmodernist or neopragmatist views as well as the criticisms from thinkers or scholars who are under the impact of these views, in order to revitalize themselves. In other words, the postmodern condition demands that we use new vocabularies to retell old stories.

Second, how can Daoist and Chan Buddhist thought participate in postmodern discourse? It is hard to imagine that Daoist and Chan Buddhist thought could take part in postmodern discourse without recontextualization and reinterpretation. On the other hand, the revitalization of Daoist and Chan Buddhist thought could perhaps be advanced through participation in postmodern discourse. These two sides of the task are thus dialectically interrelated. Without taking up the first, the second would have no basis; in undertaking the second, the first would eventually be fulfilled. This relationship also

answers the question of whether Daoist and Chan Buddhist thought should or could participate in postmodern discourse. As suggested above, the context of reinterpretation of Daoist and Chan Buddhist thought has been increasingly global. In fact, a presentation of Daoist and Chan Buddhist thought in a Western language such as English cannot avoid using Western contemporary terms, ideas and concepts. Furthermore, the possibility of Daoist and Chan Buddhist participation in postmodern discourse is based on the following observations:

(1) Postmodern discourse creates new opportunities for a rediscovery of Daoist and Chan Buddhist traditions by renewing Western interest in the flux and contingency of the world and human existence, in multiperspectivism, in non-dualistic approaches, in dialectic negation and other linguistic strategies, in the paradoxical and ironic, etc., all of which have long been the foci of these two Eastern traditions. However, only when the West has begun to shift its focus, yield to new directions and adopt new vocabularies, can it acquire paradigms for understanding these Eastern traditions anew.

(2) Daoist and Chan Buddhist traditions do have something to say, to offer. They have a long history and a rich legacy of dealing with issues postmodern thinkers have just begun to tackle. Therefore, they can make unique contributions to postmodern discourse by addressing those issues from Daoist and Chan Buddhist perspectives.

My entire project thus echoes the call of this twofold task. Whether or not my treatise accomplishes the task will be left to reader's judgment.

Three related areas and a focus on the use of language

This book is a philosophical investigation of linguistic strategies in Daoist Zhuangzi and Chan Buddhism, specifically an investigation of the otherness of language use in these two traditions. However, the investigation is conducted in three areas or under three categories: deconstructive strategy, liminology of language, and indirect communication. Different linguistic strategies or different uses of language in philosophical and religious discourse have drawn contemporary Western thinkers' close attention and have entailed a variety of new discussions. Among various conceptions, deconstructive strategy, liminology of language, and indirect communication have become three important categories for the study of linguistic strategies. The exploration of these three areas has not only opened language possibilities for philosophical and religious discourse, but

has also helped to change the way of Western thinking. However, although the probe of linguistic strategies in Western traditions has been favored recently, very little has been done to investigate Eastern traditions in these three areas. The distinctiveness of language use in the traditions of Daoism and Chan Buddhism has been generally acknowledged by Western scholars, but it has not been closely examined in terms of the best contemporary theory and insight.

My investigation might be the first systematic attempt to take a close look at the linguistic strategies of Daoist Zhuangzi and Chan Buddhism and related issues. The work is divided into three parts, each of which investigates one of these three areas. Each part has a similar structure: the opening chapter discusses the definition of the category that is to be used in the ensuing chapters to investigate the *Zhuangzi* and Chan. A second and third chapter pursue its relevant investigation in the *Zhuangzi* and Chan. In addition to this main body of work, the book also includes an introductory chapter and concluding chapter for the whole investigation.

The first part investigates deconstructive strategies in the *Zhuangzi* and Chan Buddhism. The central point of this investigation indicates how the use of deconstruction as a linguistic strategy is demanded by soteriological/practical concerns and how its purpose or goal is beyond linguistic or textual spheres, a characteristic that we do not see in Derridean deconstruction. In chapter 2, based on an analysis of the Derridean and other Western philosophers' discussion on deconstruction, I define deconstruction as a contextual strategy or a situational operation of overturning oppositional hierarchies with the characteristic of self-subverting. I argue that this definition can be used to start the examination of deconstructive strategy in the *Zhuangzi* and Chan without falling prey to generalization. While deconstructive strategy in the *Zhuangzi* and Chan bears a family resemblance to Derridean deconstruction, it is a deconstruction in the other context, or is the topology and alterity of deconstruction. Examining the otherness of deconstruction in the *Zhuangzi* and Chan helps to explore deconstruction from these other perspectives and to reflect upon Derridean deconstruction and contemporary Western philosophy. For example, the *Zhuangzi* and Chan can shed light on the issue of the relationship between philosophy and non-philosophy, between a philosophical theme and a deconstructive strategy, an issue that contemporary Western philosophers are still debating. It also helps to rediscover and reinterpret the *Zhuangzi* and Chan.

In the preliminary remarks of chapter 3, I indicate that my investigation differs from the works of some other scholars in that

mine is not another comparison between Derrida and Zhuangzi, not confined to Zhuangzi's undoing of conceptual–linguistic hierarchies. Nor does it focus merely on Zhuangzi's deconstruction of Confucianism and Moism. To show the distinctiveness of Zhuangzi's deconstruction and the inner connection between his undertaking and his strategy, I first investigate Zhuangzi's philosophy of change involving three areas: infinite transformations of things, things transforming of themselves, and the dynamic interrelationship of things. The philosophy and its soteriological motif – accommodating one's mind to infinite changes of things – underlies his use of deconstructive strategy, and his strategy serves this theme in an illuminating way. In examining Zhuangzi's deconstruction of self, I reveal that Zhuangzi's teaching of "no-self" overturns the closure of self, but at the same time eludes falling into its opposite – non-self – while resting in the third category – "forgetting self." Finally, I explore how Zhuangzi performs a deconstructive operation on the primitive Daoist notion of *dao* as one or as nonbeing.

Chapter 4 is a systematic examination and constructive interpretation of Chan Buddhist thought concerning its attitude towards the notion of Buddha nature and its deconstructive strategy. Scholars of Buddhism have long debated over the issue of Buddha nature. Recently, it is again a central issue in the debate between Japanese scholars of Critical Buddhism and other Buddhist scholars. This chapter delves into the inner struggle between the reification and deconstruction of Buddha nature in Chan Buddhist thought as a critical response to the recent critique of Chan Buddhism. The chapter has three parts, the first of which analyzes how the notion of Buddha nature evolved in the Indian tradition of *tathāgatagarbha* thought, identifies reifying and deconstructive tendencies within that tradition, and reveals how further deconstruction is called for. It is a basic situation Chan Buddhists must face. Part two examines the deconstruction of Buddha nature in *The Platform Sūtra*. The target of Huineng's deconstructive operation is Shenxiu's reification of "the pure mind." Special attention is given to the inner connection between Huineng's strategy and his soteriological theme – free flowing together with all thoughts and things. His notion of no-thought thus opposes both the absence of thought and the attachment to thought. The pragmatic/functional context of the Chinese term *zixing* (self nature) is also clarified to dismiss any misunderstanding. Part three probes deconstruction in the school of Hongzhou Chan, a main target of which is Shenhui's reifying tendency. The Hongzhou notion of *renyun* (following along with the movement of all things and circumstances)

is particularly examined in relation to its strategy, including the use of both kataphatic and apophatic language.

The second part of the book investigates liminology of language in the *Zhuangzi* and Chan. Liminology is a new category which has recently appeared in Western philosophical discourse. My book is the first work that investigates the Daoist and Chan Buddhist liminology of language. In chapter 5, I utilize David Wood's coinage *liminology* to develop a new study of the limits of language and the strategies of dealing with them. In terms of the discussions of contemporary thinkers on these points, I formulate three major aspects of a liminology of language. (1) Radical problematization of the limit or boundary of language. (2) Insight into the mutual connection and transition between two sides of the boundary of language, between speaking and non-speaking, etc. (3) Play at the limit or boundary of language. These three aspects are three levels within the liminology of language. The first, the experientio-analytic level, can lead to a metaphysical or trans-metaphysical view of the limit of language. The second level reflects a completely trans-metaphysical wisdom, while the third is practical. The core of this liminology of language is to de-absolutize the limit of language, keeping it in a relational perspective and exploring novel linguistic strategies to negotiate the limit. All three aspects are useful in understanding, reinterpreting or rediscovering the *Zhuangzi* and Chan concerning their attitude towards the limit of language and their linguistic strategies.

Chapter 6 takes a liminological approach to Zhuangzi's view of language and his strategy of "speaking non-speaking." The contradiction between Zhuangzi's seemingly negative attitude towards language and his productive use of language is an age-old puzzle. Modern scholars either repeat this puzzle or completely neglect it. My liminological approach attempts to solve this problem by first analyzing all Zhuangzi's claims about the inadequacy of language. A careful reading and contextual analysis of these claims breaks the myth of Zhuangzi's complete negation of language. What appears as a negative attitude towards language is always related to his rejection of a conventional way of using language, which could be called descriptive, entitative, or metaphysical. Zhuangzi instead always calls for a different use of language. His notion of "speaking non-speaking" shows his profound understanding of the mutual connection and transition between speaking and non-speaking. Zhuangzi is a master of crossing the boundaries of language, a master of play at the limits of language, who is quite consistent. "Speaking non-speaking" thus promotes a marginal speech rather than retreating into a silence.

In chapter 7, I point out that the Chan Buddhist claims of the inadequacy of language have their root in Indian Mahāyāna Buddhism. However, a close examination of the context of Indian Mahāyāna Buddhist claims shows that they actually point to the inadequacy of referential, or cognitive language in religious/soteriological practice. My analysis reveals that the radical Chan emphasis on non-reliance on words aims particularly at freeing Buddhists from the restriction of the referential, entitative, or cognitive use of language. But Chan Buddhists also make very clear the necessity or inevitability of using language. The issue for them is not the abandonment of language but how to use it differently. Since the Chan masters penetrate into the non-dualistic relation between speech and silence, they demonstrate their profound understanding of the interplay between them. As a result, they are more flexible, more skillful in using and creating unconventional language that overcomes the limitation of conventional language and best serves their soteriological practice. Their strong objection to reliance on words and their creative use of words are simply two sides of one coin. The chapter translates and presents many textual materials from Chan recorded sayings to Western readers for the first time, concerning the Chan Buddhist notion of relativizing the limits of language and other important views. These materials and/or notions have long been neglected by modern scholars both in the West and in the East.

The third part of this book investigates pragmatics of indirect communication in the *Zhuangzi* and Chan. Chapter 8, on one hand, surveys contemporary Western philosophers' inquiries into the indirect feature of communication and, on the other, re-examines Kierkegaard's theory of indirect communication. Both inquiries deviate from the classical notion of communication as a direct conveyance of information or knowledge. They allow the repositioning of indirect communication within philosophical discourse, freeing it from the oppressive hierarchy of direct/indirect communication while paying more attention to various indirect strategies of communication. Based on this survey, indirect communication is defined as listener- or reader-oriented, and non-teleological; it assumes an interactive relation between the speaker and the listener; it abandons the correspondence theory of language; it is concerned with the existentio-practical dimension of what is communicated; it considers meaning open-ended and indeterminate; it adopts indirect language, such as metaphorical, poetic, paradoxical language. Although Zhuangzian and Chan Buddhist approaches are more analogous to Kierkegaard's, Zhuangzi and Chan do share some

important views with contemporary philosophers on the indirection of communication.

Chapter 9 contributes to the Zhuangzian pragmatics of "goblet words," words that accommodate themselves to endless changes. Zhuangzi's soteriological/philosophical theme – accommodating one's mind to endless changes – underlies his use of "goblet words." The goal of communication for Zhuangzi is to awake such a state of mind, which requires sharing and participation. The process of communication is open-ended: it opens to each person's situation and each person must realize it by him- or herself. Thus "goblet words" must be edifying, evocative, and different from direct, straightforward words, which Zhuangzi last rejects. The chapter examines Zhuangzi's manifesto of indirect communication as found in the last chapter of the book *Zhuangzi*. One of the characteristics of Zhuangzian communication is that the determinate role of the author disappears in the shifting and multiplying of meanings and viewpoints. The reader's active participation becomes central. There is no objective message to be conveyed. Based on such an understanding of the structure of communication, various strategies of "goblet words" are used by Zhuangzi, including denegation, paradox, and irony, as examined in this chapter.

Chapter 10 studies the Chan pragmatics of "never tell too plainly." This study of Chan linguistic strategies is first a critique of the modern orthodox interpretation of Chan, such as D. T. Suzuki's, that neglects the importance of linguistic strategies. In this regard the study could be seen as a late follow-up to Hu Shi's pioneering insight. The chapter argues that Chan "transmission from mind to mind" does not mean direct communication. Rather, it involves the rich resources of indirect communication. First, we must grasp the non-dualistic and existentio-practical dimensions of Chan enlightenment experience, which underlie all Chan communicative activities. In terms of these dimensions, the experience, realization or resonance of enlightenment is called communication. This long forgotten Chan definition of communication is found in an appendix to the text of Chan master Huangbo Xiyun's recorded sayings, which helps to explain why Chan Buddhists favor the strategy of "never tell too plainly." Since the primary goal is other sentient beings' own enlightenment and the realization of enlightenment is situational, the master cannot link his or her enlightenment directly with the students' and has nothing to impose on them. The master must say something to evoke, inspire or intrigue only. The listener must be creative, engaging and free to search out his or her own answer. This structure

determines the Chan preference for "living words." Three types of living words – paradoxical, tautological and poetic – are investigated in detail in this chapter.

Chapter 11, the final chapter, briefly addresses three issues to conclude the whole investigation. First, I point out that the focus on linguistic strategies in these two traditions should not be lost, despite the fact that this investigation is at the same time the investigation of many other things. It is important to note that linguistic strategy never becomes a solely linguistic issue in these two traditions. It is always demanded by, and is inseparable from, practical matters and concerns. Second, although this book might become a starting point for a closer comparison between Zhuangzi and Chan in these three areas, it is not a comparative study in its present form. My project is to let Zhuangzi and Chan Buddhists rediscover themselves and address postmodern issues from their own perspectives. However, I address two crucial aspects of difference between them concerning these three areas, supplementing preceding discussions for those who might be interested. Third, I stress that utilizing contemporary insights to rediscover old traditions has been proven to be not only important but also fruitful if we have the right methodology. Contemporary Western philosophy can certainly benefit from our investigation of these three areas in the *Zhuangzi* and Chan.

One crucial point I would like to make and add to this introduction is the underlying or intrinsic connection among these three areas. It is necessary to note that they are not put together arbitrarily. The linguistic twisting and detouring of liminological play are, by nature, indirect. Indirect communication is, therefore, intrinsic to the liminology of language. Both liminological play and indirect communication function deconstructively. Meanwhile, deconstructive operation indispensably leads to trans-conventional uses of language such as liminological play and indirect communication. These interconnections will be clearer in the ensuing investigation. It is quite obvious that the investigation of these three areas has one focus, that is, the use of language. If there is one thread running through the treatise, it is the study and exploration of different linguistic strategies, of the otherness of language uses. Western philosophy in this century has been marked by a "linguistic turn." Recently, Habermas and Rorty have talked about "the turn to pragmatics" and the pragmaticization of linguistic analysis.[6] Eastern philosophies and religions such as Daoism and Chan Buddhism might have no need for similar reorientations since, from the very beginning, the issue of language has been a central theme in their

philosophical and religious discourses. The remarkable opening paragraph of Laozi's *Dao De Jing* is a well-known illustration of this point. Furthermore, the long history of Daoist and Chan Buddhist discourses on language has been characterized by a predominantly pragmatic concern with language use. This is not to say that the Western turns are of no importance in recognition of Eastern traditions. On the contrary, they inspire us to investigate unique ways of using language in the *Zhuangzi* and Chan and to rediscover their significance.

A postmodern approach without postmodernism

The preceding discussion has partially indicated the methodology of my project. One might think that I take a postmodern approach to Zhuangzi's and Chan Buddhist thought. However, I myself might call it a postmodern approach without postmodernism. This needs to be further explained as follows:

(1) In utilizing postmodern terms and concepts, I do not conceal the fact that the project is somehow in line with what constitutes the main elements of postmodern discourse. These main elements are beliefs or attitudes such as anti-foundationalism, anti-essentialism, anti-realism, a post-metaphysical or post-epistemological standpoint, a rejection of correspondence theory of truth, knowledge, and language, a rejection of meta-narratives, of ahistoricity, etc., that are shared by different philosophical currents.[7] Some similar, if not the same, beliefs or attitudes were unmistakably held by the *Zhuangzi* and Chan, although under the shadow of modern Western discourse they were misconceived or misconstrued in one way or another. Hence, the postmodern approach here is meant to probe alternative interpretations, or to disclose additional dimensions, of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan. We perhaps have neglected these dimensions or interpretations under the influence of modern Western discourse. We can now pursue this examination by using certain terms or vocabularies of postmodern discourse in which the *Zhuangzi* and Chan may find new, or better, means of expression in Western language.

(2) Obviously, by taking a postmodern approach, my book deviates from various modern Western approaches. For example, in investigating uses of Chinese language and Chinese philosophical views of language, it keeps a distance from structuralist approaches. Structuralist approaches, such as a Chomskyan endeavor, attempt to establish a universal grammar or a deep linguistic structure "prior

to any linguistic experience," thereby providing a framework for theories and uses of language.[8] Such an undertaking treated linguistic analysis as a meta-science. Indeed, like finding a once-for-all solution, it sought, by theoretic abstraction, a contextless or changeless foundation at the price of concrete, dynamic features of language use. I share the radical view with contemporary thinkers that there is no nature of language outside concrete, contingent, dynamic uses of language.

My study of the pragmatics of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan also differs from Anglo-Saxon pragmatics, such as John Searle's study of speech acts. Although his account of illocutionary acts appears to be useful to my project in certain aspects, Searle's normalization of speech acts, his privileging of the speaker's intention, dismissing "the fringy," centering on rules and saturated contexts, and so on, certainly would not meet with my favor.[9] I consider his approach and much of Anglo-Saxon pragmatics another version of scientism as far as their methodology is concerned. The problem reveals that not only is "the linguistic turn" a continuation of Western metaphysical tradition, as Rorty has admitted,[10] "the turn to pragmatics" also requires deconstruction.

My adoption of the term *pragmatics* is rather close to Deleuze's or Lyotard's use of the term.[11] It comprises a critique of Anglo-Saxon pragmatics in the sense that neither intention nor conventional rules can ensure a shared structure for all language use. The pragmatics of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan, therefore, is one narrative among many, a narrative without *meta*-. It attempts to delineate the linguistic strategies of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan in their concrete, multi-factorial complexities, without imposing any fixated structure on them. In this light, it stands in sharp contrast to Chad Hansen's approach to Chinese views of language and the whole of Chinese thought. My contention here is not to define whether Hansen's understanding of the Chinese use of mass terms is correct or not. We need to pay attention to his methodology. As he acknowledged once, he was trained by an analytic tradition which regarded philosophical analysis of language as meta-science. He himself still follows that direction.[12] This most explicitly reveals the root of his linguistic determinism – a belief that a certain grammatical structure, in his case the mass noun syntax, underlies various Chinese uses of language and the Chinese way of thinking. It is a variation on the Chomskyan theme of scientism.[13] Although an inquiry into the linkage between linguistic features and language use is worthwhile, a holistic approach to language use is more fundamental and offers a better interpretation.

(3) A postmodern approach without postmodernism signifies, moreover, the following two points. First, it does not subscribe to all theories of postmodernism.[14] In dealing with postmodernism, it follows rather the principle of interpretation. That is to say, pragmatically, I select and adopt some terms, concepts, as interpretive devices. If I favor some terms or concepts that are created by postmodern thinkers, it is only because I can make use of them in exploring alternative interpretations of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan. Put it another way, for the purpose of interpreting the *Zhuangzi* and Chan, I take something useful from postmodernism, although I do not advocate all theories of postmodernism. In addition, I do not think that postmodernism or even postmodern discourse can exhaust the *Zhuangzi* and Chan, despite the fact that it is useful to borrow vocabularies from it for the development of alternative interpretations. Second, the approach tends to avoid falling prey to the weaknesses of postmodernism. It takes a critical stand towards postmodernsim and keeps pace with the most recent tendencies in superseding postmodernism. This attitude is also based on my belief that the *Zhuangzi* and Chan are among those great traditions that provide us with resources for superseding postmodernism. Therefore, this interpretation of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan proceed in such a way as to address, and not simply be addressed by, the concerns of postmodern discourse from a Daoist or Chan Buddhist point of view, as I suggested earlier.

The continuity/discontinuity between the linguistic strategies of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan

No one would deny the apparent fact that ideologically there is a close relation and even intimacy between the *Zhuangzi* and Chan. Reading the *Zhuangzi* helps us gain a deeper understanding of Chan, and reading the Chan stories and instructions helps us become better acquainted with Zhuangzi, as Kuang-ming Wu properly observed.[15] However, what draws our attention and brings our discussions of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan together here are their linguistic strategies, especially their deconstructive operation, liminological play, and indirect communication. If we intend to pursue a fruitful study of these kinds of linguistic strategy in the history of Chinese philosophy and religious thought, we must turn to the *Zhuangzi* and Chan. Zhuangzi and the Chan masters are, without question, the most outstanding and accomplished users of these strategies among all Daoist and Chinese

Buddhist schools. The employment of these strategies is part and parcel of the legacy of Zhuangzian and Chan Buddhist trans-metaphysical and trans-conventional wisdom. In the history of Chinese thought, "Confucian writings, in contrast, are generally prosaic, straightforward, and commonsensical."[16] The Confucian strategy serves Confucian moral metaphysics and conventionalism, despite the fact that Neo-Confucianism absorbs, more or less, Daoist and Chan Buddhist strategies.[17] Although a systematic investigation of different strategies employed by different schools would be quite helpful in understanding the entirety of Chinese philosophy, doing so would be beyond the reach of this treatise.

By putting the *Zhuangzi* and Chan together, I do not jump to the simple conclusion that Zhuangzi is a pre-Chan master or that the Chan masters are post-Zhuangzian Daoists. Rather, I center on the linguistic strategies themselves, on the development of these strategies, on similarity and difference, continuity and discontinuity, between the strategies of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan. In my view, similarity and difference, continuity and discontinuity, etc., are not only two inseparable sides, they are also contingent upon how we look at things or relations. From the point of view of continuity, the Chan linguistic strategy can be regarded as an echo of or an inheritance from Zhuangzi. The Chan strategy does remind us of Zhuangzi in many ways. No one can deny their similarities. As a matter of fact, Zhuangzi influenced Chan in such a profound way that one cannot imagine what the Chan linguistic strategy would be without Zhuangzi's imprint. However, from the point of view of discontinuity, the Chan linguistic strategy is, after all, a synthesis of Buddhist and Daoist teachings and strategies. In carrying into practice its own mission, Chan Buddhism enriches and develops Zhuangzi's strategy in an utterly Buddhist way. In this sense, the Chan masters are definitely not post-Zhuangzian Daoists. The *Zhuangzi* and Chan respectively make their own contributions to similar strategies. To reveal this continuity of discontinuity, or the discontinuity of continuity, in the study of the linguistic strategies of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan, is one of the purposes of this treatise.

Further methodological considerations

Redefining Western concepts or categories

Since we cannot avoid using Western concepts or categories when presenting the *Zhuangzi* and Chan in a Western language such as

English, we must carefully redefine the concepts or categories we are using if we are to avoid reading Western thought into the *Zhuangzi* and Chan. We must make clear in what sense those concepts or categories are being used. In other words, we must redefine them in such a way that the underlying differences are fully discernible. As the preceding discussions have shown, I attempt to define or redefine those concepts or categories in terms of the contexts of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan and our present context. The redefinition of each concept or category used in the interpretation of classical texts is indeed an integral part of a recontextualization. Such a redefinition might involve something similar to what Gadamer called "the fusion of horizons" of both the past and the present in a general understanding. There is no formation of one horizon merely belonging to the past or to the present.[18] A Derridean thinker might question "the fusion of horizons" by imputing it to a totalizing horizon. But is not every formation of a new horizon based on a fusion of horizons, although this new horizon is nonetheless a link within a chain of incessant formations of new horizons?

"The fusion of horizons" thus legitimizes the necessity of taking into account the tradition that has historically come down to us in an understanding or interpretation. From this point of view, redefining Western concepts or categories, making them fit into the contexts of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan, is an inseparable component of our interpretation of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan. Technically, those concepts or categories that cannot fit into the contexts of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan have to be left out. On the other hand, if our redefinition of Western concepts or categories cannot provide a basis for a coherent analysis of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan, our interpretation would probably fail.

Dimensional analysis

The methodology of dimensional analysis is of great importance in clarifying ancient thought such as is found in the *Zhuangzi* and Chan. It is helpful in solving age-old puzzles or difficulties that are due to being addressed by authors at very different levels. It is not only a methodology, but is in a way related to so-called perspectivism. This kind of perspectivism, or more exactly, multi-dimensional perspectivism,[19] remains an issue in postmodern discourse. From a Daoist or Chan Buddhist point of view, we might agree: "After metaphysics, the nonobjective whole of a concrete lifeworld, which is now present only as horizon and background, evades the grasp of theoretical

objectification."[20] However, we might still argue that this non-hypostatized dimension, horizon or background of the whole should not be totally abandoned. Alas! Deconstructionism keeps questioning the whole or the healthy.[21] It is fair to say, however, that in his famous essay "*Differance*," Derrida does mention the "unfolding of the same as *differance*," "the sameness of *differance*."[22] This view implies a dimension of sameness or even wholeness. Yet Derrida and his followers often privilege difference over identity, the divided over the whole. Zhuangzi or a Chan master would probably ask Derridean thinkers: if you appreciate perspectivism, why do you privilege the dimension of difference over the dimension of wholeness? Zhuangzi might be the earliest thinker to demonstrate a multi-dimensional perspectivism without privileging any single dimension, a perspectivism which allows for, among others, a dimension of wholeness without hypostatization.[23] Multi-dimensional perspectivism is also demonstrated by the Tiantai Buddhist school's three-dimensional truth, the Huayan Buddhist school's four-dimensional *dharma* realm and Chan Buddhist discourse. The application of dimensional analysis embedded in an understanding of multi-dimensional perspectivism is, it appears to me, an indispensable approach to Zhuangzi's and Chan Buddhist discourses themselves.

Textual studies

Even though this treatise relies heavily on my own reflections on deconstructive strategy, liminology of language and pragmatics of indirect communication, textual studies must be an essential part of the project. The reason is that a reinterpretation of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan is first of all an investigation of the texts of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan. Those who believe, under the impact of deconstructionism or postmodernism, that they can easily label something, for example a Daoist text, as "logocentrism" without justification on textual grounds, are naive. Deconstructionism or postmodernism has produced an ironic phenomenon. On the one hand, deconstructionism or postmodernism has radically blurred the traditional distinction between philosophy and literature, philosophical criticism and textual criticism. Deconstruction has largely become a strategy of reading or rereading texts. Philosophical criticism has gotten more involved with text-reading because of deconstructionism. On the other hand, postmodernism or deconstructionism has nurtured the tendency to dismiss or ignore the necessity of legitimation, including that of text-critical justification.[24] What I discern from this

phenomenon is an unnoticed dialectic. A hermeneutician, no matter how radical he or she is, cannot succeed without engaging in a careful reading of particular texts. One has to become familiar with a text before one can defamiliarize it. For this reason, I must secure my reinterpretation of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan on a firm textual ground. My treatise will include, as much as possible, a re-examination of the great exegetic tradition of the *Zhuangzi*, an assimilation of Japanese scholars' exegetic works on Chan, and etymological explorations. A seemingly trivial study of etymology might turn out to be the source of a philosophical insight or shed light on a new understanding of topics.

Comparative studies

The last point I would like to make concerning my methodology is that the aim of this treatise is not comparative philosophy, although it involves comparative studies. It attempts to transcend the limit of mere comparison while taking up comparative studies. In other words, it will not make comparison for the sake of comparison itself. As stated above, my major goal is to investigate the *Zhuangzi* and Chan, probing the possibilities of Daoist and Chan Buddhist perspectives with respect to postmodern discourse. In the encounter between Eastern and Western ideas, comparison is both unavoidable and mandatory. Nevertheless, the ground of my discussion is to be found in the Eastern tradition of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan. This awareness of our own ground or our own tradition can only benefit us, just as Rorty's awareness of his American pragmatist ground does not hinder him from participating in postmodern discourse, and is necessary in voicing our own opinions within the pluralism of postmodern discourse. If an Eastern critique of Western discourse, of which the Kyoto school is among the famous precursors, remains possible and renewable, I hope my treatise will somehow contribute to it.

Part I

DECONSTRUCTION IN THE *ZHUANGZI* AND IN CHAN BUDDHISM

2

UNDERSTANDING DECONSTRUCTION THROUGH THE *ZHUANGZI* AND CHAN

Much ink has been spilt over the topic of deconstruction. Now it is commonly recognized that deconstruction or deconstructive strategy used or exemplified by Derrida is intended to dismantle all totalizing attempts to establish a closed conceptual system for all theorizing and truth-claims. It is to subvert any maintaining of an originary foundation for the link of language and the world and any final vocabulary for presenting such a view. However, although three decades have passed after Derrida's first attack on Saussurean structuralism and Husserlian phenomenology, the philosophical scene around deconstruction continues to draw our attention. On the one hand, we see the unceasing articulation of high expectations and strong desires for "going beyond deconstruction." This articulation is based on the criticism of deconstruction as non-philosophy, as lack of constructiveness, as the narrowing down of the sphere of philosophy, and so forth.

On the other hand, we witness that Derrida is still going strong – to borrow Rorty's words uttered in 1991.[1] Derrida has become more articulate in addressing ethical, political, and religious issues and in applying deconstructive operations to these areas. His recent works continue to be thought-provoking and have acquired wide attention. We also observe that the impact of deconstruction has spread from literary criticism and philosophy to religious thought, from the humanities to various social sciences. It has given rise to numerous new studies, new examinations and new discussions. All these facts indicate that what Christopher Norris calls "the deconstructive turn" might be much broader, and more profound, than we have acknowledged.[2]

Perhaps the very idea of "going beyond deconstruction" could be both right and wrong. It could be right to say that deconstruction

will eventually have had its day, if this means that deconstruction will not *dominate* our intellectual arena forever. The philosophical scene will move on, once the deconstructive turn runs its course, once deconstructive operations become an integral part of our philosophical tradition. In this sense "going beyond deconstruction" will be somewhat like Hegel's *aufheben*. However, it would be wrong to think that we should turn our back on deconstruction in order to move forward. David Wood has correctly pointed out that going beyond deconstruction should not be understood as "going round deconstruction, as one might take a detour round a traffic accident."[3] In my understanding, something beyond deconstruction must grow out of deconstruction. It must be so, if we assume that deconstruction "is based on a move which can be constructed within philosophical discourse, and that once this has happened, there is no going back."[4] There is no way to simply supersede deconstruction from the outside, just as deconstruction has not fallen from the sky but is a continuation of the critique of Western metaphysics from within. The view that deconstruction is not only interruptive but also continuous with the philosophical tradition of Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, Husserl, and Heidegger is clearly revealed by many recent studies.[5] The source of deconstruction is affirmed as well by the discovery of the strategic link between deconstruction and negative theology. Of similar significance is the strategic compatibility between deconstruction and Eastern religio-philosophical discourses such as Daoism and Buddhism, as explored by some scholars. This compatibility plainly shows the topology and alterity of deconstruction.

So much so, as indicated in the above discussion, that a further study of deconstruction, particularly like the present one, would have to face a sharp question: "What are you going to add to this repertoire?" My general answer will be twofold. First, to understand deconstruction through the *Zhuangzi* and Chan Buddhism. Second, this understanding of deconstruction through the *Zhuangzi* and Chan Buddhism will also be an attempt to understand the *Zhuangzi* and Chan Buddhism through deconstruction. This interweaving or interrelationship will unfold in the following elucidation of the theme. However, before we move on, it is necessary to clarify our concept or definition of deconstruction.

This leads us to a difficult task. As Christopher Norris has noticed, any attempt to define deconstruction must soon run up against the obstacles that Derrida has shrewdly placed in its path.[6] For example, Derrida has claimed that deconstruction is neither an analysis nor

a critique. It "is not a method," "not even an *act* or an *operation*."[7] Similarly, *differance* "is neither a word nor a concept."[8] We may have reason to conclude that Derrida prefers defining deconstruction in a negative manner, namely, in terms of what deconstruction is not. But Derrida also drives this negativity home. If deconstruction is not . . . , it is not anything. Therefore, if the question – "What is deconstruction?" – is to be imposed, Derrida must say that it is "nothing."[9] A main purpose of this negative strategy is of course to avoid, if he possibly can, presenting deconstruction as a generalized idea assumed to comprehend all differences in its local application. It opposes any attempt "to reduce deconstruction to a *concept* definable in terms of method or technique."[10] Derrida himself makes this even more explicit: "All sentences of the type 'deconstruction is X' or 'deconstruction is not X' a priori miss the point."[11]

My understanding of Derrida's point is that deconstruction, as a provisional name, designates a singular event of overturning. In this event, any hierarchical system of thought must inevitably be reinscribed within a different order of textual signification. Deconstruction, in this sense, is always detailed, contextual, specific, and differential. Once it sediments or is generalized into a concept, it must be deconstructed as well. Since the name *deconstruction*, even when presented in the negative form "is not," is inscribed in the language of predication, it is deconstructible.

Derrida's situation becomes one in which, on the one hand, he must use the language of predication; on the other hand, he must constantly deconstruct it even if he uses the name of deconstruction. This is the way that Derrida keeps himself both inside and outside. In his own words, he stays "neither inside nor outside." He explains it as follows:

> In a certain sense it is true to say that "deconstruction" is still *in* metaphysics. But we must remember that if we are indeed *inside* metaphysics, we are not inside it as we might be *inside* a box or a milieu. We are still *in* metaphysics in the special sense that we are *in* a determinate language. . . . Accordingly, we cannot really say that we are "locked into" or "condemned to" metaphysics, for we are, strictly speaking, neither inside nor outside.[12]

Deconstruction is thus on the threshold. It functions and inscribes itself inside predicative language and at the same time opens and points to the outside. It connects the inside with the outside.

Derrida acknowledges that while his deconstruction puts aside all the traditional philosophical concepts, it reaffirms "the necessity of returning to them, at least under erasure."[13] Elsewhere he mentions, as he always insists, that one must always, economically and strategically, borrow the syntactic and lexical resources of the language of metaphysics at the very moment that one deconstructs this language.[14] Derrida, obviously, does not believe in any decisive ruptures, any unequivocal breaks, with the tradition of Western metaphysics. "Breaks are always, and fatally, reinscribed in an old cloth that must continually, interminably be undone."[15]

These statements indicate, it seems to me, two fundamental elements in Derrida's deconstruction. First, the recognition of the necessity and inevitability of using or borrowing predicative, referential, metaphysical language. Second, the different, transformative way of using or borrowing this language. These two intermingled elements determine that there will always be a risk in this special using or borrowing of predicative, metaphysical language, a risk of being reappropriated by oppositional conceptualization. It is true that deconstruction attempts to make reappropriation difficult by marking "intervals,"[16] but these intervals do not warrant the impossibility of reappropriation. They only anticipate continuous deconstruction.

To realize this as being risky and precarious is to realize the profound contingency and flux underlying all philosophical discourses. This recognition can bring about two consequences significant to our present discussion. First, in its negative aspect, since the discourse of *what deconstruction is not* runs, nonetheless, the risk of being reappropriated, it has no ultimate superiority over the discourse of what deconstruction is. This point is also supported by the fact that every discourse of *what is not* presupposes, implies, and inherently involves its other – the discourse of what is. Second, in its positive aspect, the necessary repetition or return of predicative language opens the possibilities of its different use. "Under erasure" is one alternative, one possibility (if it means negative); "under restriction" might be another possibility (if it means positive). In fact, Derrida himself has defined deconstruction positively as "a kind of general strategy," or "a double gesture."[17] This general strategy includes two basic phases according to him. First, it "must traverse a phase of overturning."[18] "To deconstruct the opposition . . . is to overturn the hierarchy at a given moment."[19] Second, it "must also mark the interval between inversion . . . and the irruptive emergence of a new 'concept,' a concept that can no longer be, and never could be, included in the previous regime."[20] Elsewhere Derrida also identifies

deconstruction with "critical operation,"[21] "internal critique,"[22] and so forth.[23]

The problem then becomes why Derrida switches from this positive manner to that negative manner, if we do not simply follow Rorty's conclusion that the early Derrida is still somewhat on the wrong track.[24] John Caputo's interpretation may provide a better hint for solving this problem. Caputo thinks that *differance*, at least the first three or four times Derrida used it, is not a word or a concept; after that it increasingly becomes a familiar word and a generalized concept. "But at least the first couple of times he uses you see what he is up to, what he is pointing to. Once it sediments and becomes part of the established vocabulary of 'deconstruction,' he has to move on and try it another way."[25] Although Caputo here is referring to the stylistic change between Derrida's early writings and his later writings, this interpretation fits, too, the strategic shift in Derrida's defining of deconstruction. This interpretation suggests that Derrida's strategies for defining deconstruction are completely contextual, situational, and pragmatic. The different contexts and situations demand different strategies. We must not understand this differentiation as merely external. It is at the same time internal. The internality lies in that either what deconstruction is or what deconstruction is not is always inscribed "in a chain of possible substitutions" and is determined by its other.[26]

Now let me demonstrate by an analysis how Derrida's account of *what deconstruction is not* could be substituted by an account of *what deconstruction is* without losing proximity to what he means. For instance, when Derrida clarifies the statement "deconstruction is not an analysis," he points out: "[T]he dismantling of a structure is not a regression toward a *simple element*, toward an *indissoluble origin*. These values . . . are themselves philosophemes subject to deconstruction."[27] In other words, deconstruction is not an analysis that inquires into a final factor or an indivisible source of any system of thought. This implies that deconstruction can be a kind of *analysis* aiming at subverting all oppositional hierarchies and showing the baselessness of these hierarchies. When Derrida discusses his notion that deconstruction is not even an operation, he explicates: "[I]t does not return to an individual or collective *subject* who would take the initiative and apply it to an object."[28] "[I]t is an event that does not await the deliberation, consciousness, or organization of a subject. . . . *It deconstructs it-self. It can be deconstructed*."[29]

This emphasizes that first, deconstruction is not context-free. It cannot be reduced to a simple method, a set of rules or procedures

applicable to every text, every theme, every situation. Second, there is no determining subject able to escape from deconstruction. The deconstruction that a subject employs is itself deconstructible. This implies that deconstruction can be a contextual strategy or a situational operation of overturning that carries at the same time a trace of self-subverting. Thus deconstruction can be defined, in positive terms, as analysis, critique, operation, or event, under certain restrictions.

Putting all these discussions together, it now seems legitimate to claim what deconstruction is. It is *a contextual strategy or a situational operation of overturning oppositional hierarchies with the characteristic of self-subverting*.[30] This is the definition of deconstruction from which I will start to examine deconstruction in the *Zhuangzi* and in Chan Buddhism. One may object: "Isn't it inappropriate to apply the concept of deconstruction to the different traditions of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan Buddhism, if you accept that deconstruction should not be a generalized concept?" Our reply is that although our definition of deconstruction runs the risk of generalization, we have imposed some restrictions on it. In other words, we admit that there is a kind of deconstruction in the *Zhuangzi* and in Chan Buddhism, but this deconstruction is contextual and different.

We could justify our position by appealing to Wittgenstein's notion of family resemblance. There are strategic similarities between Derridean deconstruction and the traditions of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan Buddhism. Deconstruction in the traditions of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan Buddhism bears, therefore, a family resemblance to Derridean deconstruction. We maintain this family resemblance as far as their strategies are concerned. On the other hand, we could insist that deconstruction in the traditions of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan Buddhism is deconstruction in the other context, or, is the other deconstruction – to use Derridean terminology. It is the topology and alterity of deconstruction. It is the same of non-identity.

Obviously, our study of deconstruction in the *Zhuangzi* and in Chan Buddhism is not intended simply to find out Chinese precursors for Derridean deconstruction, nor to produce a Chinese version of Derridean thought. We have no intention of putting the mantle of Chinese thought on Derridean deconstruction. That would be not only meaningless, but also ridiculous. Our investigation of deconstruction in these two traditions, on the contrary, will be conducive to reflection upon Derridean deconstruction itself. The intention is to see and to understand deconstruction through other eyes and other minds, to explore deconstruction from other perspectives. Let me use an example to illustrate this point.

Controversies about the nature of Derrida's work have been on-going. On the one hand, Christopher Norris and Rodolphe Gasche have argued that Derrida's work is a genuinely philosophical inquiry. It continues the tradition of modern Western philosophy, taking seriously the standard rules of philosophy, making philosophical arguments, and doing philosophical critiques. Norris even writes: Derrida's arguments, "amount to a form of Kantian transcendental deduction. . . . [T]hey pose the question: what must be the necessary *presuppositions* of our thinking about language if language is to make any kind of coherent or intelligible sense?"[31] Gasche asserts: "Derrida is primarily engaged in a debate with the main philosophical question regarding the ultimate foundation of what is."[32] This interpretation conveys a partial truth, since it bases itself solely on the fact that Derrida does have a philosophical theory or a philosophical thesis, as others have maintained.[33] Despite this, it polarizes its claim – the continuity of Derrida's thought with the well-established tradition of Western philosophy – so conspicuously as to jeopardize the originality of Derrida's work.[34] It entails Rorty's question: "Is Derrida a transcendental philosopher?"

Rorty, on the other hand, attempts to dismiss this aspect of searching for the transcendental conditions of possibility of language in Derrida. Rorty thinks that if this aspect really exists as Norris and Gasche have portrayed it, it is a mistake made by the early Derrida. But, thankfully, Derrida has moved away from this wrong direction, from the standard rules of philosophy.[35] Rorty rests this argument mainly upon his reading of Derrida's later, more playful writings. Rorty's view may also, it seems to me, be supported, to a certain degree, by Derrida's own claim that deconstruction attempts to find a non-philosophical site "from which to question philosophy."[36]

My purpose here is not to pursue a close examination of Derrida's writings or to define more accurately the nature of Derrida's work, which would be beyond the scope of this study. I want to draw attention first to the point that the polarization in defining the meaning of Derrida's contribution may well mirror the domination of oppositional thinking even over those who are sympathetic to Derrida. Deconstruction is presented by them either as standard philosophy or as non-philosophy, as complete continuity or as radical disruption, and so forth. Peter Dews, in addressing the difficulty of seeing deconstruction as both a continuation of the tradition and a radical break with the tradition, raises a question: can you both have your cake and eat it?[37] Although I am not engaging myself in a debate with

Dews, my comment on Dews' question would probably be: Why not? Why should we not have both or neither?

John Caputo, on the other hand, has tried to mediate between these opposing views. His attempt is worth mentioning for our discussion. Caputo, if I understand him correctly, argues that Derrida is very close to the edge of transcendental philosophy, insofar as he addresses the conditions of the possibility of speaking and writing by the notion of archi-writing or *differance*. But this being almost transcendental or quasi-transcendental is a "broken, split transcendental."[38] Derrida's quasi-theory "is a theory which says that you cannot have a theory in a strong sense, without the 'quasi'."[39] For Derrida believes that sooner or later the differential play in what your theory is trying to stick together will make it come undone. That goes for *differance*, for archi-writing, for deconstruction, too. Therefore, Derrida is a philosopher, a certain kind of philosopher. But "Derrida is also *not* a philosopher, not a transcendental philosopher."[40] What constitutes Derrida's "transcendental" motif is precisely this marginality, this non-positionality of being inside/outside. In other words, Derrida borrows transcendental argument to perform the deconstruction of philosophy, including the deconstruction of transcendental philosophy.

Caputo's interpretation indicates that the debate about the nature of Derrida's work involves how one should understand the relationship between philosophical inquiry and deconstructive strategy, especially the strategy of self-erasing. It involves as well how one should understand the relationship between philosophy and non-philosophy, continuity and discontinuity, and so forth. Caputo's discussion at the same time raises, it seems to me, the following questions: Do philosophy and deconstruction absolutely conflict with each other? Must we choose only one of them? Why should we not both have our cake and eat it?

Joseph Margolis also has pointed out: deconstruction "serves Derrida's philosophical purpose."[41] "Deconstruction does not preclude philosophy: it serves it by non-philosophical means."[42] This view, along with Caputo's,[43] suggests to me that philosophy and non-philosophy, inquiry and deconstruction, continuity and discontinuity, could both be integral elements of one project. They could be inseparable, indispensable to each other. Moreover, one may ask that if deconstruction serves philosophy, if it forcefully questions philosophy from the other side of philosophy, can we ultimately justify saying that they are completely disjunctive? Can we justify saying that they do not involve each other, nor rely on each other?

The question could also be: why cannot an undertaking be both philosophy and non-philosophy or be neither? Does not the polarization in understanding the relation of philosophy and deconstruction mirror, nonetheless, the clinging to oppositional thinking in Western philosophy?

It is here that our investigation of deconstruction in the *Zhuangzi* and Chan Buddhism will be particularly instructive, although the meaning of this investigation will not be confined to this aspect. Zhuangzi's thought and Chan Buddhist thought are typical of both philosophy and non-philosophy, or better, of neither philosophy nor non-philosophy. Zhuangzi and Chan Buddhist thinkers are well known for their attempt to overturn every binary distinction and for their use of the strategy of self-cancellation or self-erasure. They present a kind of therapeutic philosophy. While being critical, this philosophy does not avoid addressing the relational understanding of the structure of the world in which human beings exist. However, their strategies of self-cancellation interrupt the fixation on any philosophical theory, doctrine, or method.

This philosophy/non-philosophy serves their soteriological practices – to be awakened to *dao* or to realize Chan Buddhist enlightenment. In other words, the deconstructive strategy not only serves their therapeutic philosophies. Both philosophy and deconstruction serve their soteriological practices. From their perspective of ultimate liberation, everything, including philosophy, can and must be transcended. Even the perspective of ultimate liberation itself can be deconstructed. Therefore, if you think Zhuangzi is a philosopher or is doing philosophy, Zhuangzi would laugh at you. If you believe that the Chan masters just cancel out everything, you would probably get hit by their sticks. This way of non-attachment enables Zhuangzi and the Chan masters to open their minds to endless philosophies and endless deconstructions. They would not see any necessity to put philosophy and deconstruction in complete opposition. As a matter of fact, philosophy and deconstruction are inseparable in their discourse. They function holistically. This demonstrates that the investigation of deconstruction in the *Zhuangzi* and Chan Buddhism may provide inspiration and insight for our contemporary philosophical discourse.

As I stated earlier, our task is twofold. In addition to our effort to understand deconstruction through the other eyes of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan Buddhism, this investigation will allow us to see the *Zhuangzi* and Chan Buddhism anew. It will allow us to use new vocabularies to tell the old stories for contemporary audiences. More than that, it

will throw new light on our understanding of these two traditions. David Loy has correctly observed that

> Buddhism includes a strong ontotheological element, yet it also contains the resources that have repeatedly deconstructed this tendency. Thanks to sensitivities that Derrida's texts have helped to develop, it is possible to understand the Buddhist tradition as a history of this struggle between deconstructive delimitation and metaphysical reappropriation, between a message that undermines all security by undermining the sense-of-self that seeks security, and a countervailing tendency to dogmatize and institutionalize that challenge.[44]

The same holds true for Chan Buddhism and Daoism. Rather than simply putting one label of logocentrism on a whole tradition, as Magliola once did,[45] Loy's view allows us to see each tradition as an ever-renewing process of inner struggles between the sedimentation of its vocabularies and their deconstruction. It urges us to undertake more analysis within each tradition. Thus the history of Chan Buddhist thought, in large part, can be viewed as a history of the struggle between the metaphysical appropriations of such soteriological–functional terms as Buddha nature or Buddha mind and their deconstruction. Many movements in the history of Chan Buddhist thought can be reviewed in this light and acquire new meanings. By the same token, the *Zhuangzi* can be regarded not only as the criticism of other traditions, such as Confucianism and Moism, but also as the deconstruction of the metaphysical appropriation of *dao* within its own tradition – Daoism. The continuity and discontinuity of Zhuangzi's thought with that of Laozi and that of primitive Daoists then can be better understood in terms of the deconstructive operation that Zhuangzi performed on them.

When I use the term *metaphysical appropriation*, I use it in a broad sense. In other words, there is no exact counterpart to Western metaphysics in the traditions to which we are referring. Therefore, I use it in the sense of being almost metaphysical or quasi-metaphysical. It denotes the move from a soteriological–pragmatic employment of words to an ontological understanding of words based on an oppositional or binary conceptualization. My ensuing investigation will carry out this contextual difference, making it clear as this term is applied.

An important contextual difference between Derridean deconstruction and Zhuangzi's and Chan Buddhist deconstruction is that the latter does not start its deconstructive project with subverting an intralinguistic structure. To be fair to Derrida, we must say that although Derrida starts with a theory of language, with the overturning of an intralinguistic structure, he reaches out toward something beyond the merely linguistic. Derrida's deconstruction has profound ethical and social–political implications, as contemporary thinkers now have increasingly recognized.[46] However, we must also acknowledge that what characterizes Derrida's enterprise, to a large extent, is nonetheless a rereading of philosophical texts. It seldom directly addresses the problems within our life and practice.

It is at this point that the uniqueness of Zhuangzi's and Chan Buddhist deconstruction comes to light. Zhuangzi and Chan Buddhists consider that the self-identity of the human subject is the root for the pursuit of self-identity in all things, words, or meanings. They, therefore, concern themselves primarily with existentio-practical transformation or liberation from any egocentric appropriation, with how one should become a selfless person, a "true person." In other words, deconstruction in these traditions is first and foremost the deconstruction of self. It is in this sense that we may say that their critique of logocentrism always pertains to their critique of egocentrism.[47] Although they subvert all conceptual hierarchies in such a radical way that even Derridean philosophers may be amazed, their deconstruction always serves the purpose of soteriological practice. Thus the starting point and goal of their deconstruction are always beyond linguistic and textual spheres. As a consequence, the deconstructive operation in the *Zhuangzi* and Chan Buddhism is never restricted to merely rereading of texts. This otherness of deconstruction in the *Zhuangzi* and Chan may also pave the way for a possible critique of Derridean deconstruction from a Daoist or Chan Buddhist point of view.

3

ZHUANGZI'S *DAO* DECONSTRUCTS . . . AND ZHUANGZI DECONSTRUCTS HIS *DAO*

Preliminary remarks

Despite Magliola's claim that Daoism is logocentric, scholars such as Michelle Yeh, Chi-Hui Chien, and Wayne D. Ownes have done a serious and good job of recognizing a similar strategy of deconstruction in the *Zhuangzi*.[1] They draw our attention to the possibility of contemporary rediscoveries or reinterpretations of the *Zhuangzi*. The ensuing discussion of deconstruction in the *Zhuangzi* might be regarded as a follow-up to their precursory works. However, my study will be different from, and also complementary to, theirs in three main aspects.

First, these previous works inquire into the deconstructive operation of the *Zhuangzi* mainly by demonstrating the parallels between Derrida's notion of *differance* or trace and Zhuangzi's notion of *dao*, between Derridean strategy and Zhuangzi's. They take a comparative approach between Derrida and Zhuangzi, which has the vantage point of revealing the striking similarities between the two undertakings. When deconstructive strategy had not yet been commonly established as a new paradigm for rediscovering other traditions, this approach had the merit of calling attentions. However, the weakness of mainly drawing parallels is that it may neglect or insufficiently explicate the unique characteristics of Zhuangzi's deconstructive operation. Since both our understanding of deconstructive strategy and that of Zhuangzi's thought are, generally speaking, more advanced, it is possible for us to do something more than mere comparisons, to probe more systematically the otherness of Zhuangzi's deconstruction. Therefore, this chapter will not take the form of yet another comparison between Derrida and Zhuangzi (even though it

cannot avoid comparison at certain points). Rather, it will use redefined terms or concepts to examine more closely the different context and different characteristics of Zhuangzi's deconstruction, to find internal connections between Zhuangzi's undertaking and his strategy.

Second, to show similarities between Derrida and Zhuangzi, most of the previous works focus on Zhuangzi's undoing of conceptual–linguistic hierarchies, on his deconstruction of the self-identity of any word sign. This approach does make a contribution to our understanding of Zhuangzi, since Zhuangzi's thought does involve this important aspect. However, this aspect is only a part of what Zhuangzi deconstructs through his project. Zhuangzi's soteriological or therapeutic philosophy is concerned primarily with the existentio-spiritual transformation of personhood. For this reason Zhuangzi's deconstruction of conceptual–linguistic hierarchies is always related to, becomes a part of, and serves the deconstruction of the self-identity of the human subject. In other words, the deconstruction of egocentrism is the goal of Zhuangzi's deconstruction of logocentrism. This indicates the uniqueness of Zhuangzi's deconstructive operation. Wayne D. Ownes, in his comparative study of Derrida and Zhuangzi, has paid more attention to this existential–transformational feature of Zhuangzi's deconstruction. My study will go further to reveal how Zhuangzi subverts the notion of self and self-existence, and how Zhuangzi's notion of "forgetting self" eludes the binary distinction of self/non-self. It also will reveal how Zhuangzi closely relates his deconstruction of the self-identity of things and words with his deconstruction of the self-identity of the human subject.

Third, the previous works on Zhuangzi's deconstruction have noticed Zhuangzi's overturning of conceptual hierarchies or binary distinctions, such as those of Confucianism and Moism. But they have not yet explored how Zhuangzi subverts the concepts or ideas that he inherited from primitive Daoists, and how Zhuangzi makes a difference within his own tradition – Daoism. This subversion or differentiation of one's own tradition, it seems to me, is essential for a genuine deconstructive operation. It is a virtually indispensable and vital element of Zhuangzi's deconstruction.

Some more conventional studies of Zhuangzi's thought have addressed the relationship between Zhuangzi's thought and that of other Daoists.[2] However, at the very most, they only present certain explanations of the difference between Zhuangzi and Laozi, or between Zhuangzi and primitive Daoists. They have not critically examined how Zhuangzi's *dao* defamiliarizes and goes beyond other Daoist notions of *dao*.

Recently, Chad Hansen has attempted to offer an analysis of Zhuangzi's thought by regarding Zhuangzi's notion of *dao* as the refutation of Shendao's absolute Monism.[3] This approach allows us to see more clearly the development of philosophical debate and criticism within Daoist tradition. As a matter of fact, Zhuangzi not only deconstructs Shendao's monistic *dao*, but also deconstructs Laozi's "constant *dao*." Although Zhuangzi does not make direct comments on the text of the *Dao De Jing*, several of his important statements can be definitely seen as a critique or a discontinuation of Laozi's quasi-metaphysical or quasi-reifying notion of *dao*. This chapter will thus investigate those deconstructive operations that Zhuangzi performs upon other Daoist notions of *dao*. The investigation of this deconstruction of *dao* within Daoist tradition will lead us closer to the self-deconstructing character of Zhuangzi's notion of *dao*.

As we have indicated, Zhuangzi's deconstructive strategy serves his main philosophical thesis. Both his strategy and his philosophy serve his goal of soteriological practice. What, then, is his main philosophical thesis that lays the foundation for his deconstruction? We must investigate this thesis before we can turn to his deconstructive operation.

Zhuangzi's philosophy of change

Scholars have admitted that among the pre-Qin philosophers, Zhuangzi is the one who most noticeably explicates the notion of change.[4] Fung Yu-lan's *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, in explaining Zhuangzi's thought, uses a special section to introduce Zhuangzi's "philosophy of change."[5] Unfortunately, this brief section consists mainly of several quotations from the *Zhuangzi* without the author's interpretation. Fung's general view of Zhuangzi's philosophy of change, however, can be observed from his comment on Guo Xiang's "Commentaries on the *Zhuangzi*." Fung regards this Daoist philosophy of change as "Heraclitean."[6]

Chad Hansen has expressed strong objection to seeing Zhuangzi's philosophy of change as "a Heraclitus-like metaphysical theory of change in the world of appearance" for two main reasons.[7] First, the conceptual scheme of Zhuangzi's philosophy of change is different from the Western or Greek one. Heraclitus identifies the flux and change of things with the manifestation of ultimate reality – Logos itself. His notion of change works within the Greek framework of searching for the epistemic truth of the individual object.[8] Zhuangzi's philosophy of change deals with the fluidity and relativity of things

and perspectives themselves. It works within the Chinese conceptual scheme of making pragmatic sense of part–whole relations rather than the epistemic truth of the individual object. Second, Hansen thinks that Zhuangzi's philosophy of change amounts to no more than "a sociolinguistic theory" about "changing our modes of dividing and distinguishing."[9] It concerns only linguistic change, not objective change. Therefore, it is "radically different" from a Heraclitus-like problem of change.[10]

Hansen is right in making a distinction between Chinese and Greek conceptual schemes, between Zhuangzi and Heraclitus. He is also right in pointing out that Zhuangzi's philosophy of change does not focus on recognizing the "real" change of objects. In my view, Zhuangzi lets us face any natural change, the change of the natural world, including the change within human beings. However, Zhuangzi does not lead us to an epistemic or scientific theory of change in objects. His philosophy attempts to make pragmatic sense of these changes, namely, advises us to accommodate our mind to infinite changes, changes of things, words, and perspectives. Thus Zhuangzi's philosophy of change involves a theory of language, but it does not confine itself to such a theory.

I define Zhuangzi's philosophy mainly as a soteriological or therapeutic philosophy,[11] a philosophy freeing human minds from any fixation and guiding them in going along with all changes. From this standpoint, my interpretation of Zhuangzi's philosophy differs from Hansen's. Zhuangzi's philosophy of change is obviously more than a "sociolinguistic theory" of change. The ensuing examination of Zhuangzi's philosophy of change will place this philosophy strictly within its soteriological context, and attempt to expose the soteriological meaning of Zhuangzi's discourse of change. It is from this soteriological meaning of flux and change that Zhuangzi starts his deconstructive operation. Zhuangzi's philosophy of change contains the following essential notions.

Infinite transformations of things

A central notion of Zhuangzi's philosophy is called *wuhua*, the transformation of things. This notion of *wuhua* involves several important aspects. First, Zhuangzi holds that the change and transformation of things is universal. All things undergo changes and transformations all the time and without exception. This "transformation of things" encompasses the change of natural things as well as that of human beings. Neither things nor human beings can ever escape change and

transformation. What we identify as a thing involves various changes. It is always transformed from, and into, the other. Thus transformation takes place among myriad things and also within each and every thing. For example, Zhuangzi observes:

> Pleasure and anger; sorrow and joy; worry and regret. . . . These are all like musical sounds from empty tubes, like fungi produced from mere vapors – day and night they replace each other before us, and no one knows where they sprout from.[12]

> [T]hings have their life and death – you cannot rely upon their fulfillment. One moment empty, the next moment full – you cannot depend upon their form. . . . The life of things is a gallop, a headlong dash – with every movement they alter, with every moment they shift.[13]

With these statements Zhuangzi announces the impossibility of any static, unchanging existence (or non-existence). He equates existence and the world with movement, change and transformation.

Second, Zhuangzi emphasizes that the transformations of things are infinite. He repeatedly points out: "Myriad transformations never begin to reach an end."[14] "The four seasons rise one after the other, the ten thousand things take their turn at living. . . . At the end, no tail; at the beginning, no head . . . the constancy of change is unending, yet there is nothing that can be counted on."[15] Zhuangzi makes quite clear that all things are in the process of constant change and transformation. The world of things is the world of flux and flow. This flux has no beginning and no end. It is limitless. This infinity of change and transformation, according to Zhuangzi, is due to the infinity of time, due to temporality and temporization. As he observes, "The years cannot be held off; time cannot be stopped."[16] "There is no limit to the capacities of things, no stopping to time, no constancy to the differentiation of lots, no [fixed] reason for beginning and end."[17] Zhuangzi further writes:

> I look for the roots of the past, but they extend back and back without end. I search for the termination of the future, but it never stops coming at me. Without end, without stopping, it is the absence of words, which shares the same principle with things themselves.[18]

Here Zhuangzi's principle inquires into the condition of the possibilities of limitless things, limitless words, limitless capacities, limitless differentiations, limitless beginnings and ends. This condition is the temporization of existence. It is time or temporization that always makes possible the absence of things, the absence of words, and so forth. Meanwhile, it is time or temporization that always brings into being different things, different words, and so on. The differentiation of things and words, the coming-and-going of different things and words, is limitless because of eternal temporization.[19] Since existence and time are inseparable, as Zhuangzi always mentions them together, temporization is differentiation, and differentiation is temporization. Zhuangzi uses reason to show that there is no fixed reason for this eternal transformation of things. Zhuangzi's reason is *dao*, his understanding of the sameness of differentiation, the way of change.[20]

Things transforming of themselves

A logical consequence is implied in Zhuangzi's emphasis on "no beginning and no end" of myriad transformations. If there is no beginning and end for the world of changes, any notion of a First Cause, a Creator, or an Origin behind all changes is inevitably undermined, or must be simply refused. As we know through Western onto-theologies, the notion of a First Cause, a Creator or an Origin presupposes a beginning or an end of the changing world. Zhuangzi, in fact, refutes a similar notion. He does several things to undercut this notion. First, he questions the existence of a True Ruler (*zhenzai*) as the cause or source of all changes. As we have noted, after his discussion of various phenomena of change, Zhuangzi asserts that no one knows where these changes come from.[21] This denial of a primordial knower of all changes is followed by his questioning of True Ruler:

> Let it be! Let it be! Morning and evening we have these changing things. What about their origins? . . . we do not know what cause them to be so. It seems as though there were some True Ruler, but we have no particular evidence for it. We may have faith in it, yet we cannot make out its features . . . Do they really have a True Lord over them all?[22]

This skeptical attitude toward the True Ruler is consistent with his insistence on no beginning and end of myriad transformations. It

indicates that Zhuangzi's interest is not to identify a First Cause, a Creator or an Origin, which explains all changes, but to see myriad transformations as they are, as living situations themselves.

Second, Zhuangzi clarifies that the Daoist sage, the authentic person (*zhenren*), does not control those changes with supernatural powers. "In the process of change, he has become a thing [among other things], and he is merely waiting for some other change that he doesn't yet know about."[23] The authentic person, like any other human beings, was just born from and into endless changes. He is only a part of the change. This clearly shows that Zhuangzi's discourse of change is concerned with change as existential condition, as the condition of possibilities of more changes. Every human being is caught in a web of change and in the flux of change. The difference between the authentic person and ordinary people is that the former opens his or her mind to endless changes. He or she lives with a positive attitude toward changes and without any fear or worry about losing self.

Finally, Zhuangzi brings to the fore the point that change or transformation is immanent in all things themselves. He tells us: "Things will transform of themselves, that is certain!"[24] "You have only to rest in no-action and things will transform themselves. . . . Things will live naturally and of themselves."[25] The "no-action" of Zhuangzi's naturalism here involves, theoretically, the refusal of the metaphysical fabrication of any transcendent Origin, Creator, or First Cause. This "no-action" also allows the dissolving of the center – human subjectivity – into the flow of myriad transformations.

The dynamic interrelationship of things

The above-mentioned views – that changes are immanent in all things and that things are always on the move – provide Zhuangzi with a dynamic perspective of the interrelationship of things. This perspective on the dynamic interrelationship of things is an integral part of Zhuangzi's philosophy of change. It further justifies the possibility of infinite transformations of things. This dynamic interrelationship of things lies in the following aspects. First, everything and its other are mutually conditioned and mutually dependent. Zhuangzi uses his category "this (*shi*)" and "that (*bi*)" to denote this relationship of a thing and its other. The word "thing (*wu*)" refers to different pairs of things, qualities, functions, feelings, views, and so forth. For example, the various pairs of things that Zhuangzi mentions in his discourse involve day and night, being and nonbeing,

life and death, big and small, fullness and emptiness, usefulness and uselessness, completion and destruction, and so on. All these pairs can be put under the category of "this" and "that," namely, one thing and its other. Zhuangzi points out:

> "[T]hat" comes out of "this" and "this" depends on "that" – which is to say that "this" and "that" give birth to each other. But where there is birth there must be death; where there is death there must be birth. Where there is acceptability there must be unacceptability; where there is unacceptability there must be acceptability. Where there is recognition of right there must be recognition of wrong; where there is recognition of wrong there must be recognition of right.[26]

In a word, without "this" there is no "that"; without "that" there is no "this." Neither "this" nor "that" can be independent, isolated from each other. This implies that when one thing transforms, the other would inevitably follow, and vice versa.

However, Zhuangzi's perspective of the interrelationship of things shows more insights into the inner dynamism of things. Things are not only mutually dependent but also mutually involved. This mutual involvement means that everything has its "other," or the trace of its "other," within itself. The other has its absent presence in the one. This absence, this trace of the other, paves the way for the transformation of everything, and makes possible the subversion of everything. Since everything involves its other, there is no absolute distinction between them. As Zhuangzi rightly observes, everything has a "this" and a "that."[27] When we identify a thing as "this," we just suppress its inherent "that." By discriminating something, we conceal something else.[28] But when we shift to the angle of "that," "that" still can be seen.[29] Thus by spacing and temporization, a "this" is also a "that," a "that" is also a "this."[30] "One moment empty, the next moment full."[31] A thing is transformed from and into its other because of this mutual involvement. This interchangeability (*tong*) is essential to the chain of infinite transformations, to the constancy (*yong*) of changes, and is pragmatically significant (*yong*). "To have achieved this understanding . . . is called *dao*."[32]

This is our general depiction of Zhuangzi's philosophy of change. Two issues need to be further addressed here. First, it is true that Zhuangzi has a main philosophical thesis – the infinite transformations of things. His writings make possible a certain kind of

philosophical theory of change, and he gives reasons. But Zhuangzi is a typical marginal figure. He stays on the margin of philosophy. He plays at the borderline between philosophy and non-philosophy. He is not serious in pursuing any system or theory of philosophy. This is illustrated by the fact that Zhuangzi's discourse of change does not tend to provide an epistemic or scientific theory of the change of objects. As we know, Zhuangzi focuses on the pragmatic sense of infinite transformations of things.

Furthermore, Zhuangzi does not regard his discourse of change as "final vocabularies," to borrow Rorty's words, or as a closed theory, about change. His perspective of change inquires into the condition of possibilities of all changes. Nevertheless, it is still only one perspective among many perspectives, and this perspective mainly has its soteriological use. Zhuangzi even questions any fixed distinction of change and non-change. After his discussion of the authentic person's positive attitude toward change, he asks: "Moreover, when he is changing, how does he know that he is really changing? And when he is not changing, how does he know that he hasn't already changed?"[33] This amounts to saying that you cannot even have your theory of change after presenting a quasi-theory of change. It demonstrates Zhuangzi's typical way of self-interrogating and self-canceling. Although Zhuangzi makes possible a philosophy of change, he is fully aware that what makes it possible also makes it impossible. He does not see any necessity of fixing himself on a theory. He consistently keeps himself in motion.

This leads us to another issue. What is the inner connection between Zhuangzi's thesis – the infinite transformations of things – and his deconstruction, including the above-mentioned self-effacement? First, without his thesis there would be no deconstruction. Zhuangzi's notions of change and transformation provide theoretic justifications for his soteriological motif – to accommodate one's mind to endless changes of things, words or perspectives. His understanding of the relativity and infinity of things even becomes, we may say, part and parcel of his soteriological motif. This is to say that his use of deconstructive strategy is determined, to a large extent, by his motif. The strategy and the motif are inseparable. For example, because Zhuangzi understands the trace of the other within everything and the interchangeability between a thing and its other, he deconstructs the self-identity of everything. He shows the possibility of returning to the surface for every repressed other, the always-already-being-there of the other, such as his subversion of the useful (*youyong*) by exposing its uselessness (*wuyong*).

The notion of infinite transformations of things also determines the thoroughness or depth of Zhuangzi's deconstruction. Negative theologians such as Pseudo-Dionysius in the West use quasi-deconstructive strategies. The Pseudo-Dionysius subverts every predicate, but he cannot deny the existence of the First Cause, the God.[34] His theological motif limits his use of the strategy. Zhuangzi's notion of things transforming of themselves, on the contrary, allows him to deconstruct every transcendent Cause or Origin without reservation. He, therefore, can even deconstruct *dao* itself if anybody understands it in a reifying way (we will further discuss this aspect later). Zhuangzi's profound understanding of the infinite self-transforming of things likewise facilitates his radical self-canceling or self-deconstructing. Only when he is awakened to the ineluctable undoing of every closed theory by infinite changes can he deliberately elude every possibility of closure through self-effacement.

Second, deconstruction serves his thesis in an illuminating way. If Zhuangzi's motif demands his use of deconstructive strategy, his use of the strategy makes a unique contribution to his motif. For one thing, after revealing that a repressed "that" can always rise to the surface and overturn a privileged "this," Zhuangzi proposes the notion of *dao*, which privileges neither "this" nor "that," locates its pivot in the center of the circle of things and responds to their infinite transformations, to endless "this" and "that."[35] This is typical of Zhuangzi's deconstructive strategy. It forcefully demonstrates Zhuangzi's thesis – to go along with infinite transformations of things – and shows the pragmatic meaning, the application, of this thesis.

Also, as we have indicated, Zhuangzi's motif is a soteriological or therapeutic motif. In carrying out its therapeutic effect, deconstructive strategy as negative strategy has its irreplaceable role to play. We will discuss this therapeutic function and effect of Zhuangzi's various negative strategies in detail in the later sections of this treatise. Here suffice it to say that deconstruction, in serving Zhuangzi's motif, is not passive but active, not negative but positive. This will be clearer in the following examination of Zhuangzi's deconstruction of self and his deconstruction of *dao*.

The deconstruction of self

Zhuangzi's thesis of infinite transformations of things regards the transformation of human being as one among myriad transformations of things. However, Zhuangzi pays special attention to the change that all human beings inevitably undergo. This observation

of the constant changes that human beings undergo constitutes the foundation and the essential content of Zhuangzi's teaching of "no-self." In the first chapter, Zhuangzi declares that the perfect person has no self.[36] The second chapter also begins with Zhuangzi's description of the state of "losing self."[37] This notion of no-self is based on Zhuangzi's deconstruction of the identity of self or the self-identity of the human subject. For Zhuangzi, there is no permanent self over and above all everyday personal changes. Even the commonly supposed identity or continuity of a person, which persists through changes, is only an illusion. Zhuangzi pointedly asks: "[W]e go around telling each other, I do this, I do that – but how do we know that this 'I' we talk about has any 'I' to it?"[38] Zhuangzi deconstructs the self in the following main aspects.

First, Zhuangzi undercuts the identity of self by showing that no human physical form can ever escape from change. As far as their physical forms are concerned, human beings consist of change. They are born from and into various changes. Only in the process of change do they become human beings, and they are just waiting for some other changes that they have not known about. These changes "never come to an end."[39] For instance:

> Intermingling with nebulousness and blurriness, a transformation occurred and there was vital breath; the vital breath was transformed and there was form; the form was transformed and there was birth; now there has been another transformation and she is dead. This is like the progression of the four seasons.[40]

Zhuangzi indicates that once we look at human existence with this relational eye, we discover that human existence is caught in a web of change. Once we find that human existence is nothing but a process of change, we have no reason to attach ourselves to the illusory self-identity and to complain about change.

Second, if physical form does not provide grounds for the identity or continuity of self, neither do feelings or emotions. Zhuangzi, as we have noted, holds that feelings or emotions, such as pleasure and anger, sorrow and joy, worry and regret, are just like different things replacing each other day and night[41]:

> Our joy has not ended when grief comes trailing it. We have no way to bar the arrival of grief and joy, no way to prevent them from departing. Alas, the people of this world are no

> more than travelers, stopping now at this inn, now at that,
> all of them run by "things." . . . And yet there are those who
> struggle to escape from the inescapable – can you help but
> pity them?[42]

Zhuangzi suggests that feelings or emotions, like all other things, are transient. The coming and going of these feelings or emotions, the changes in them, will never reach an end. However, people who attach to "self" attach to these feelings or emotions. They mistakenly think that self stands behind these feelings or emotions. They do not know that they are run by these feelings or emotions, run by "things," without any self-identity. To stabilize the unstable is what they are desperately pursuing.

Third, Zhuangzi dismantles the identity of the self as thinking subject. The identity of the thinking subject presupposes two things. First, the identity of thought, or of conceptual system. Second, the identity of subject as opposed to its other, the object of thought. Zhuangzi points out: "Without other there is no I; without I no choice between alternatives."[43] This clearly states that the existence of any "I," any subject, is possible only with the existence of "other," the object. There is no independent, self-existent "I," or subject. Every "I" is relative to, and dependent on, the other. Therefore, any absolute distinction between subject and object, between "I" and "other," is completely rejected by Zhuangzi. A perfect example of this rejection is Zhuangzi's blurring of the person, who is dreaming of being an object, and the object, of which the person is dreaming.[44] It illustrates Zhuangzi's view that the borderline between subject and object has never been clear-cut. Another example is his questioning of the distinction between the person who is awake and the person who is dreaming.[45] These examples demonstrate Zhuangzi's ironic way of subverting the identity of the self as thinking subject.

Moreover, the saying, that without I there is no choice between alternatives, indicates that the supposed self-identity of the thinking subject is the root of various formations of privileged distinctions. This thinking subject, the *cogito*, functions as the mind of privileging hierarchical concepts (*chengxin*), always asserting or denying something to establish and sustain its self-identity. Zhuangzi's subversion of the self then focuses on the subversion of this privileging mind, on the subversion of all conceptual hierarchies. Zhuangzi explicates, as we have noted above, that every privileged binary distinction always involves the suppressed other within its closure. Since no conceptual closure can stay outside the process of change, outside spacing, and

temporization, its alleged identity is only built on running water. At any time it can be subverted from within.

With respect to the thinking subject, Zhuangzi points out that whenever you discriminate and argue for something, you lose sight of something else.[46] Something else is just covered by your discriminating thinking. Therefore, your discrimination does not secure the self-identity of your privileged concepts. However, you believe that you are different from others in what you privilege and wish to enlighten others through your privileging.[47] This is to use your privileging mind to justify your privileging, "but who will not have such a privileging mind?"[48] Since everybody has this privileging mind and can privilege something, your mind and your privileging are not different from others. As a consequence, it is not legitimate for anyone to claim that he or she is able to judge what is absolutely right or absolutely wrong. Zhuangzi's point is very clear: a person's privileging cannot justify the self-identity of privileged concepts, nor can this privileging justify the self-identity of this person as thinking subject.

Facing the conflicts of various privileged distinctions, such as "the rights and wrongs of the Confucians and the Moists,"[49] Zhuangzi's criticism shows his profound insight into the root of the problem. He does not establish one more privileged distinction or conceptual hierarchy among many, but attempts to eschew any dualistic way of thinking. His criticism centers on the problem of self-identity and the privileging mind. The key to solving the problem is the practice of no-self. However, Zhuangzi distinguishes his notion of no-self from the opposition between self and non-self, between self-identity and the annihilation of self.

Zhuangzi vehemently opposes any self-attachment or egocentrism based on an illusory self-identity. This does not mean that Zhuangzi advocates a nihilistic notion of self that denies the existence of empirical self[50] and negates the possibility of spiritual progress and freedom. For example, Shendao, the primitive Daoist, has a notion of "abandoning self (*quji*)."[51] This notion admires a state of being that is none other than mere things, without any possibility of spiritual progress and freedom. It leads to an ideal "not for the conduct of the living but only for the dead."[52] Therefore, it is said in the *Zhuangzi* that Shendao does not "really understand *dao*."[53] Zhuangzi's own notion of no-self avoids this extremism.

To avoid falling into the trap of oppositional category while subverting the closure of self, Zhuangzi appeals to the third category – "forgetting self (*wangji*)" which asserts neither self nor non-self.

Zhuangzi's notion of no-self is precisely the notion of forgetting self. Sigmund Freud once included the action of forgetting in the phenomena of parapraxis.[54] Mark Taylor further defines this parapraxis as "the inscription of the boundary, threshold, margin, or limit."[55] Zhuangzi's "forgetting" is a similar marginal notion.[56] It plays at the boundary between self and non-self. While it transcends the closure of self, it dose not attempt to annihilate all individual lives. It merely opens their closure and leads them to the authenticity of life that lies precisely in the absence of the distinction between self and other. The point is to change people's minds. The Chinese word *wang* consists of two components, the upper part *wang*, meaning "to lose," and the lower part *xin*, meaning "mind." To forget is to lose one's discriminating and privileging mind.[57]

Therefore, by emphasizing "forgetting self," Zhuangzi first asks people to free their minds from the distinction between subject and object, between self and other, between right and wrong, and between other things. It is important to note that Zhuangzi's teachings of forgetting right and wrong (including forgetting Confucian virtues), forgetting things, forgetting people, forgetting life (and death), forgetting the world, forgetting Heaven, etc.,[58] all point to the root – "forgetting self (and other)."[59] They are the components of Zhuangzi's teaching of "forgetting self." As Guo Xiang's *Commentaries on the Zhuangzi* rightly observes, Zhuangzi's "forgetting self" means to do away with the distinction between other and self, thing and person. "Once forgetting self (*wo ziwang*), what thing is left in the world for cognition?"[60] Zhuangzi's teaching of "sitting down and forgetting" as "casting off form and doing away with knowledge"[61] points to the same thing. "Casting off form" means forgetting the physical distinction between self and other. "Doing away with knowledge" means forgetting the self as knowing subject and the thing as known object. Once self is forgotten, what object is there left for grasping, and who is the subject of privileging and craving?

However, second, Zhuangzi plainly states that forgetting self is not an annihilation of conventional self, but merely a radical transformation of the latter. Transcending the distinction of self and other does not mean abandoning the world and socio-individual life. It means to be open to the dynamic relationship of self-other, to the relativity and mutual involvement of self and other, and to the infinite transformations of the world. This is called "the fitting of the mind (*xinzhishi*)."[62] Zhuangzi advises people that instead of fixing the mind on binary distinctions, "it would be better to forget binary distinctions and to go along with the transformation of *dao*."[63] People

should forget each other in the art of *dao*, just as fishes forget each other and enjoy the rivers and lakes.[64] The purpose of this forgetting is obviously to achieve freedom – a free embracing of changes, a free transformation with others (either with people, things or opinions), a free flowing together with others.

This openness to the other, to changes and differences, has, without doubt, strong socio-ethical implications, even though its tone is soteriological.[65] It de-legitimizes any egocentric concern, any self-attachment. It encourages an attitude of "following along with things (*shunwu*)" or "following along with people (*shunren*)"[66] under various circumstances. For example, Zhuangzi recommends: "If he acts like a baby, then you act like a baby along with him. If he acts unconventionally, then you act unconventionally along with him. If he acts without restraint, then you act without restraint along with him."[67] This is not a suggestion for a completely negative or passive strategy. For Zhuangzi observes very clearly: "If you can accomplish this, then you can (lead him and) enter into the ideal state."[68] The ideal state for Zhuangzi is "following along with things the way they are and admitting no personal preference."[69] In other words, the realized spontaneity (or naturalness) and relativity is the ideal state in which conventional self is deconstructed and transformed. Everyone is able to ramble in the realm of infinity via this realized spontaneity and relativity, and make it his or her home.[70]

In this general picture of Zhuangzi's discourse of "no-self," we see a typical deconstructive strategy employed by Zhuangzi: overturning the hierarchy of self/non-self and appealing to the third category that eludes the previous binary distinction. However, the otherness of Zhuangzi's deconstruction is also quite clear. First, deconstruction here is not confined to the reading of a particular philosophical text. The target is the conventional idea of self or self-identity. Second, the deconstruction of self or self-identity is the core of Zhuangzi's deconstruction of all linguistic–conceptual hierarchies. By focusing on the issue of self, Zhuangzi's deconstruction has more direct bearing on existentio-practical affairs, on soteriological or therapeutic practices.

The deconstruction of *dao*

The notion of *dao* occupies a central place in Daoist discourse. Chad Hansen has argued that *dao* is not exactly a metaphysical concept in Shendao's, Laozi's, or Zhuangzi's Daoism. Their primary use of *dao* is prescriptive and pragmatic, namely, seeing it as the guidance for human action or behavior. However, Hansen admits that a reality

concept nonetheless stands behind Shendao's use of *dao*. Laozi, to some extent, does not overcome Shendao's influence, but is "less metaphysical than Shendao." Only Zhuangzi reaches maturity in completely refuting primitive Daoists.[71] This suggests to me that while the overall context for the discourse of *dao* in Daoism is not metaphysical but pragmatic and prescriptive, there are reifying or totalizing expressions of *dao* involved in Daoism, which can be regarded as metaphysical or quasi-metaphysical elements. In this light, it is appropriate to see the related discourse of Zhuangzi as the deconstruction of these metaphysical or quasi-metaphysical elements. Zhuangzi's deconstruction involves his deconstruction of Shendao's notion of *dao*, his deconstruction of some of Laozi's expressions of *dao*, and his self-deconstruction when he attempts to elude any metaphysical reappropriation of his notion of *dao*.

The deconstruction of dao *as nonbeing*

The *Dao De Jing* shows that Laozi is ambiguous concerning his view of being and nonbeing. On the one hand, Laozi is aware that *dao* transcends the distinction of being and nonbeing. For instance, Laozi holds that being and nonbeing "spring forth from the same source, and yet they differ in name. This sameness is called 'profoundly dark'."[72] He also points out: "being and nonbeing give birth to each other."[73] These statements indicate that the distinction between being and nonbeing is relative. Being and nonbeing involve each other. *Dao* subverts the self-identity of either being or nonbeing. In this sense there is no priority of nonbeing over being. On the other hand, Laozi privileges nonbeing over being, identifying *dao* with nonbeing, one way or another. In chapter 40, Laozi writes: "The ten thousand things in the world originate in being; being originates in nonbeing."[74] This clarifies his early statement that nonbeing is named the origin of heaven and earth, while being is named the mother of ten thousand things.[75] However, this contradicts the claim of the sameness and relativity of being and nonbeing. Elsewhere Laozi gives the following description to *dao*:

> We look but see it not;/It is named "the invisible."/We listen but hear it not;/It is named "the inaudible."/We try to seize it but find it not;/It is named "the intangible."/These three elude our scrutiny, /And thus are intermingled into one./ . . . /Continuous, unceasing, and unnamable;/It returns to "no-thing."[76]

From this statement and some others, we see quite clearly that the movement of *dao* is regarded by Laozi as starting from nonbeing (or nothingness) and returning to nonbeing. Although being and nonbeing are both included in the movement of *dao*, *dao* is allied to nonbeing. *Dao* privileges, and resides in, nonbeing. It sounds like a dialectic of nonbeing. The text of *Dao De Jing* does not allow us to conclude with this aspect of Laozi's thought. As we have mentioned, the other side of Laozi's thought can subvert this dialectic closure of nonbeing. However, this privileging of nonbeing over being could easily lend itself to a metaphysical appropriation of Laozi's thought, one that will deviate further from Laozi's pragmatic concern.

Zhuangzi pushes ahead with Laozi's subversive side of *dao*, and forcefully questions the legitimacy of the priority of non-being to being. Zhuangzi states:

> There is being. There is nonbeing. There is a not yet beginning to be nonbeing. There is a not yet beginning to be a not yet beginning to be nonbeing. Suddenly there is nonbeing. But I do not know, when it comes to nonbeing, which is really being and which is nonbeing.[77]

Zhuangzi is emphasizing that we cannot find a reason to support such a logocentric closure of nonbeing. First, the distinction between being and nonbeing, just like all binary distinctions, can never, and will never, be clear-cut. Being and nonbeing always rely on each other and involve each other. Each transforms itself from and into the other. They can by no means establish their own identities within changing situations. If we keep up with living flux, how can we isolate and distinguish being from nonbeing, and vice versa?

Second, the vulnerability of the imagined priority of nonbeing also lies in the fact that there are always third possibilities outside any closure of nonbeing and being. Nonbeing is caught in the chain of infinite transformations. If nonbeing is prior to being, then "a not yet beginning to be nonbeing," namely, nonbeing of nonbeing, is prior to nonbeing. This nonbeing of nonbeing is neither nonbeing nor being. It is the third possibility.[78] It makes all closures open to change, to disruption. Zhuangzi's *dao* apparently is allied to this third possibility. However, even this third possibility is part of the chain of further transformation, according to Zhuangzi. It can be replaced by another possibility or by other possibilities without exception.

A primary meaning of Zhuangzi's *dao* then, in my understanding, is this chain and process of transformation itself. It has no beginning

and end. Transformation is always possible, even before any single possibility of transformation is found. Therefore, "*Dao* cannot be thought of as being, nor can it be thought of as nonbeing. In calling it *dao* we are only adopting a temporary expedient."[79] By calling *dao* "a temporary expedient," Zhuangzi suggests that even the term *dao* is ineluctably in the chain of transformation and substitution. As a matter of fact, it is replaceable by a series of other terms such as *tianni* (the balancing of nature), *tianlai* (the piping of nature), *baoguang* (shaded light), *lianghang* (double walking), and *ming* (enlightenment) in the *Zhuangzi*.[80] By this de-sedimentation of the term *dao*, Zhuangzi eschews any reifying appropriation of *dao*, and maintains the prescriptive and pragmatic character of his *dao*. His main purpose in doing so is to free our minds from any fixation either on being or nonbeing, to keep up with living flux and transformation.

The deconstruction of dao *as one*

In the above-quoted verses from chapter 14 of the *Dao De Jing*, Laozi not only shows his preference for nonbeing, but also for oneness in interpreting his *dao*. In other words, *dao* is considered one as opposed to many. Elsewhere Laozi says: "The ten thousand things are alive by virtue of the one."[81] This notion of oneness is prominent in Laozi's thought of *dao*. As Zhuangzi correctly observes, Laozi heads his doctrine of *dao* "with the concept of great oneness."[82]

Chad Hansen has tracked this preference for the oneness of *dao* back to Shendao, the primitive Daoist. For Shendao asserts: "The great *dao* can embrace but it cannot distinguish. . . . *Dao* is that which leaves nothing out."[83] Hansen calls Shendao's thesis a thesis of "All is one," and defines it as an absolute monism.[84] In Hansen's view, Zhuangzi is critical in refuting Shendao's monism. Thus, some important passages in the *Zhuangzi* are seen simply by Hansen as commentaries on Shendao's thought.

I do not want to deny Hansen's contribution to distinguishing Zhuangzi's thought from Shendao's monism, for it is insightful. But what about its relationship with Laozi's *dao*? Those passages in the *Zhuangzi*, it seems to me, are more likely the commentaries on some passages in the *Dao De Jing*. To facilitate his own interpretation of Laozi, Hansen either neglects those passages showing Laozi's quasi-monistic view or simply emphasizes their prescriptive function.[85] However, this neglect is inconsistent with his position that a prescriptive or pragmatic theory can involve a certain kind of metaphysical point of view or element, as in the case of primitive Daoism. My view

is that Zhuangzi refutes both Shendao's and Laozi's preference for oneness. As far as their influences in the Daoist tradition are concerned, Laozi is, without question, greater than Shendao. As our textual evidence indicates, Laozi hence becomes reasonably the primary target of Zhuangzi's deconstructive operation.

The oneness of Laozi's *dao* contains two major meanings. First, *dao* as one is the origin, source or foundation of myriad things. Look at the following passages in the *Dao De Jing*:

> Bottomless,/It seems to be the "ancestor" of the ten thousand things.[86]

> *Dao* is "something" elusive and evasive./Evasive and elusive!/Yet within it there is "image."/Elusive and evasive!/Yet within it there is "something."[87]

> There is "something" nebulously complete in and by itself,/Which comes before Heaven and Earth./Silent, boundless, standing alone, and changeless;/ . . . /It may be considered the mother of the world./I do not know its name;/I give it the name "*dao*."/I am compelled to name it "great."[88]

Although scholars have ruled out the accountability of these metaphorical expressions of *dao* as cosmic origin, these statements do involve the ontological implication of *dao* as the primordial source of the world.[89] Although we should not see Laozi's notion as purely "metaphysical" in the Western sense of this word,[90] the problematic of the reification of this oneness should not be simply ignored.

Second, *dao* as one is the totality or the whole of myriad things. Laozi says: "The great *dao* flows everywhere,/ . . . /The ten thousand things derive their life from it,/ . . . /It accomplishes its task without claiming anything."[91] "*Dao* in the world is likened to the sea,/Into which flows rivers and streams."[92] This amounts to saying that *dao* is the whole within which everything thrives. *Dao* as totality embraces everything, leaving nothing outside. Here we see the overlapping of Shendao's monistic view and Laozi's. We also see that the two meanings of Laozi's oneness of *dao* are closely interrelated. *Dao* for Laozi is both the original source and the whole of everything. Now let us see how Zhuangzi performs a deconstructive operation upon them.

Zhuangzi's deconstruction of *dao* as one is a part of his deconstruction of all conceptual oppositions between nonbeing and being, one and many, self and other, and the like. For Zhuangzi, *dao* cannot be reified, since *dao* is neither an entity nor a concept. *Dao* designates the absence of things, namely, the absence of fixed distinctions

between things such as between one and others. *Dao* denotes the chain and process of infinite transformations, denotes dynamic inter-relations. This chain or process brings everything into being, makes possible all distinctions, but does not claim anything for itself or attempt to fixate on anything. Laozi's *dao* of *wuwei* (no-action) has implied this meaning.

However, Zhuangzi tries to make clear that not only does *dao* claim nothing, but *dao* itself is not a thing. When we conceive *dao* as one or as nonbeing, we have already fallen into the realm of things, the realm of fixed binary distinctions. We have distorted *dao*. Therefore, Zhuangzi insists that *dao* cannot be identified as anything. "That which treats things as things is not limited by things."[93] Things have their limits such as that all things have their beginning and end. But "*dao* has no beginning, no end."[94] The conception of *dao* as an origin or source presupposes a beginning of all transformations, and affirms an original presence. Contrary to Laozi's saying that there is some-thing which comes before heaven and earth, Zhuangzi asks:

> There is that which comes before heaven and earth, but is it a thing? That which treats things as things is not a thing. Things that come forth can never precede all other things, because there were already things existing then; and before that, too, there were already things existing – so on without end.[95]

In other words, we have no way to break the chain of substitution and interrelation. Even if we assume something original or primordial, this "something" or one thing nonetheless is caught in the relation with its other. Its other and its other's other are always traceable without an end. The closure of any "great one," any divine origin or source, has always already been leaking away. Here Zhuangzi uses the same strategy he employed in overturning Laozi's privileging of nonbeing.

Zhuangzi is fully aware of the problems inherent in Laozi's and Shendao's preference for oneness. Zhuangzi himself never declares that everything is one in the way Shendao does, unless he is quoting something like Hui Shi's opinion.[96] The dismantling of their prefer-ence for oneness culminates in one of Zhuangzi's most powerful philosophical criticisms:

> Since all things are one, how can there be anything to talk about? But since I have already *said* that all things are one, how can there be nothing to talk about? One and speech

makes two, two and one makes three. Continuing on in this fashion, even the cleverest mathematician couldn't keep up, how much less an ordinary person! Therefore, if in proceeding from nonbeing to being we arrive at three, how much farther we shall reach when proceeding from being to being. We need not proceed at all if we understand the mutual dependence of "this" and "that."[97]

Zhuangzi first reveals the difficulty of Shendao's, and also Laozi's, monistic view that *dao* includes everything, but itself cannot be distinguished. Zhuangzi's point is that you claim that *dao* cannot be distinguished but actually you make the distinction – *dao* is one. Once you make the distinction that *dao* is one, the original one and the one you talk about become two.

However, Zhuangzi does not say that we should stop speaking completely. Rather, he discloses that whether *dao* is one or not is really a way of talking about things. Since the distinction of *dao* as one is none other than a way of talking about things, it is part of the chain of substitution and interrelation. In this sense Zhuangzi talks about the relation among one, two and three. It seems like a direct commentary on the first line of chapter 42 in the *Dao De Jing*: "*Dao* gives birth to one; one gives birth to two; two gives birth to three; three gives birth to ten thousand things."[98] Zhuangzi suggests that we cannot justify such a theory of *dao* as origin. It is nothing but a human calculation or fabrication that comes out of the privileging mind. It does not represent any reality. Zhuangzi urges us to use such "final vocabularies" no more!

This is not yet the end of Zhuangzi's deconstruction. Zhuangzi does two more things to dismantle the preference for oneness. First, contrary to the monist's claim that many are one, Zhuangzi sometimes emphasizes that one is many. For instance, Zhuangzi insists: "Dao has no boundaries."[99] "Dao is everywhere. . . . It is in the ant . . . in the panic grass . . . in the tiles and shards . . . even in the piss and shit."[100] If *dao* is the chain of infinite transformations, it does not claim its own existence. It de-centers itself and becomes inseparable from all things. On the other hand, no thing can escape from this chain. Thus everything can have its own *dao*. Various *daos* are the same of difference, the same of no self-identity. *Dao* is the presence of absence. It is not a closure but an open chain – the crucial point that let us distinguish Zhuangzi's *dao* from any monism.

However, as we can see now, Zhuangzi privileges neither one nor many. An essential step that Zhuangzi takes to distinguish himself

from both monism and, may I call it, blind pluralism is to see the whole as perspective only. In other words, while we disagree with monism, we do not have to utterly abandon the perspective of whole, or to avoid addressing issues such as the condition of the possibilities of things. Zhuangzi emphasizes that we can look at things "from the point of view of their differences," but we can also look at them "from the point of view of their sameness."[101] It is in this perspectival context that Zhuangzi talks about oneness or wholeness. However, this oneness or wholeness is only one perspective among many. We can have this perspective of oneness just as we can have other perspectives. This does not mean that all perspectives have equal use. The perspective of wholeness has its unique use in liberating people from their limited views or perspectives, in making them open to limitless changes. It is a kind of soteriological or therapeutic use. In this aspect, Zhuangzi shares nothing with some contemporary Western philosophers, such as postmodernists. He would probably criticize the latter's view as one-sided, namely, as privileging many over one.

4

THE DECONSTRUCTION OF BUDDHA NATURE IN CHAN BUDDHISM

Preliminary remarks

Although much has been said about deconstruction in Mādhyamika Buddhism, very little has been done in the study of deconstructive strategy in Chan Buddhism. In his study of deconstruction in Nāgārjuna's thought, Magliola adds several passages which discuss the same topic in Chan/Zen Buddhism. Magliola's major contribution is his distinction between logocentric and differential trends in Chan/Zen Buddhism.[1] This distinction allows us to take a fresh look at, and to re-examine, those inner struggles in the evolution of Chan Buddhist thought. However, Magliola's study of deconstruction in Chan is not systematic despite its insights. He uses only a few cases to show the deconstructive tendency in Chan, without applying his distinction to a closer examination of the different schools of Chan thought. Thus his study leaves only the impression that the deconstructive or differential trend is connected with the Southern School of Chan. He does not justify this thesis through a closer doctrinal and textual–contextual investigation.

Bernard Faure, on the other hand, touches upon the issue of logocentric and differential trends in Chan in his comprehensive critique of the Chan tradition. Faure's study has two main problems. First, since his study is a criticism, he only shows what he thinks is the logocentric side of Chan, without providing a constructive study of deconstruction in Chan. Second, he criticizes Magliola for relating his logocentric/differential distinction to the historically well-defined distinction between Northern and Southern Chan. Faure believes that this hasty connection is "counterproductive."[2] His own approach, as opposed to Magliola's, is to suggest that it is impossible to identify one school or one figure in the Chan tradition as either logocentric or deconstructive. He asserts that there are "only

combinations" of these two types in the Chan tradition.[3] It appears that this position of "combination only" avoids a one-sided view and the error of jumping-to-a-conclusion. However, by concluding that there are only combinations, Faure turns away from the necessity and possibility of analyzing and identifying individual deconstructive trends in Chan Buddhism, and from the necessity and even the possibility of a coherent interpretation of Chan thought. The coherent interpretation and reconstruction of Chan thought obviously demands more than a mere criticism. It is true that the thought of one school or one figure may involve elements of two trends. But this fact does not preclude the possibility of its being coherently interpreted as representative of one trend.

The present chapter, therefore, will attempt to investigate a major deconstructive trend in Chan Buddhism, namely, that of the Huineng and the Hongzhou Chan.[4] This investigation will aim to accomplish the following things. First, it will reveal how it is possible to rediscover or reinterpret the mainstream of Chan. I am fully aware that this investigation will run the risk of being accused of relying on traditional oppositions, since the Huineng and the Hongzhou Chan are part of Southern Chan. However, the Hongzhou Chan not only subverts the logocentrism of Northern Chan, but also performs its deconstructive operation upon the logocentric trend within Southern Chan itself. Therefore, our investigation will not be confined to the opposition between Northern and Southern Chan. Moreover, a critical examination, it seems to me, should not be restricted to overturning the hierarchy of orthodoxy/non-orthodoxy, as the critical historians have done. It should also make possible a reinterpretation or rediscovery of orthodoxy itself. Here we want to make a distinction between the historical orthodox form of Chan and the modern orthodox interpretation of Chan. Our interpretation will definitely be different from the modern orthodox interpretation, but this does not mean that the orthodox thought in the history of Chan is necessarily and completely wrong. In this sense Faure's equation of the historical orthodox form of Chan with the modern orthodox interpretation of Chan in his criticism of Magliola is hermeneutically incorrect.[5]

Second, our investigation will be about the deconstruction of Buddha nature in Chan Buddhism. There are many Buddhist terms and concepts, such as *nirvāṇa*, *paramārtha*, *śūnyatā*, the uses of which are soteriological and functional, not metaphysical. The concept of Buddha nature is one of them. The advent and prevalence of this concept in the Buddhist world, especially in East Asia, constitute one episode in the long evolution of Buddhist thought. The notion of

Buddha nature originates from the doctrine of *tathāgatagarbha* and is nurtured by the Chinese transformation of Buddhist thought. Like all other Buddhist soteriological terms, the words "Buddha nature" can be easily reified or sedimented into a logocentric term, since the words, after all, come out of the conventional vocabularies of binary discrimination. Chan Buddhism, like other sinitic Buddhist schools, uses the notion or concept of Buddha nature. The central Chan notion of "self nature" may appear nothing but a Chan version of the idea of Buddha nature. However, upon closer inspection, one may note that the mainstream of Chan Buddhism does not engage so much in developing a theory of Buddha nature as in deconstructing the concept of Buddha nature. The Chinese adaptation of the *tathāgatagarbha* thought eventually evolved into the deconstruction of Buddha nature in Chan Buddhism, as demonstrated by Huineng, the Hongzhou school and others. What a dialectic of history!

In deconstructing Buddha nature, Chan Buddhists, to some extent, restore the spirit of the *Prajñāpāramitā* and Mādhyamika, while transcending their limits in echoing the call of practice. In other words, Chan Buddhists use a deconstructive operation as a negative strategy inherited both from their Indian predecessors and from indigenous Daoists, but with noticeable flexibility and simplicity. They are even more thoroughgoing in self-deconstructing. We will see how Chan Buddhists use a deconstructive strategy to serve their soteriological thesis and practice, and how they elude the dichotomy of self and non-self.

Third, the investigation into the deconstruction of Buddha nature in Chan Buddhism will be an inquiry into the context of inner struggles within the evolution of Chan Buddhist thought. We will provide a contextual analysis of those inner struggles between the reification of soteriological terms and the deconstructive operation. Here we raise the question of the contextual analysis of Chan Buddhist sayings. For even a "careful" textual reading may not be necessarily a persuasive contextual understanding. Recent critical readings of major Chan texts by Matsumoto Shirō, a figure from Critical Buddhism, is just one example. Matsumoto does a great deal of philological work to draw parallels between the Chan master Linji's words and the Upanishadic terminology of *ātman*. He concludes that Linji's thought is under the Hindu influence of *ātman*.[6] This premature conclusion ignores or even cancels out the entirely different context of the Chinese use of Buddhist soteriological terms.

Closer attention is thus called for in the analysis of context in understanding culturally–historically deferred/different Buddhist

discourses. For our present purpose, we will analyze *in what specific context* a Chan Buddhist criticism can be called a deconstructive operation, and a Chan Buddhist saying a reifying expression – the target of that deconstruction. This Chan context of struggles between reification and decomposition is certainly different from the European context of struggles between metaphysical appropriation and deconstruction, and from the Indian context of struggles between Buddhism and Brahmanism. Outside this historically–culturally specific context, there would be no Chan deconstruction but only the imposition of labels. Therefore, our investigation will start with an analysis of this specific context of Chan deconstruction. We will reveal what Chan Buddhists have inherited when they utilize Buddhist doctrines, what happened in the world of Chan thought, and what called for a Chan deconstructive operation. To do this, we must backtrack to Indian *tathāgatagarbha* thought, which has important bearings on the Chan reification of Buddha nature and its ensuing deconstruction by Chan.

Context: the necessity of deconstruction

The rise of the *tathāgatagarbha* thought of Mahāyāna Buddhism met the need to complement the emptiness teaching of the Mādhyamika school. This need involves two interrelated areas: the practical and the theoretical. First, practically, Buddhist thinkers, especially those of *tathāgatagarbha* thought and the Yogācāra school, feel that the relentless denial and negation of Nāgārjuna in destroying all wrong views is effective but not sufficient for conveying the positive value of Buddhist practice. In other words, although the teaching of emptiness is not negative or nihilistic, its apophatic language and its strategic avoidance of any constructive view have their limits in affirming soteriological purposes or benefits. It does not provide direct answers or solutions to some crucial questions of soteriological practice. For example, one question *tathāgatagarbha* thought tries to answer is how it is possible to find the link between sentient beings, who are actually wandering in the *saṃsāra*, and their practical goal – the attainment of *nirvāṇa*.[7] Apparently, this is not the central concern of Mādhyamika philosophy. Yet it is of soteriological importance to many practitioners and has a great bearing on the thrust of their practice.

This example points to the theoretical aspect as well. Theoretically, it is far from the case that Mādhyamika has accomplished so much that other Buddhists have nothing more to say. The teaching

of emptiness constitutes foundational work for Mahāyāna discourse in correcting wrong views, and is open to the affirmation of authentic existence and the world as such. However, it focuses on demolishing all metaphysical views and leaves the latter somewhat unfulfilled or insufficiently explained.[8]

These issues also can be viewed from the angle of language use. Mahāyāna Buddhists, after Mādhyamika, face the question "Is apophatic language the only language we can use?" This question, put another way, asks whether there is any possibility of using other kinds of language. Mādhyamika philosophy claims that negative terms such as emptiness are only useful conventional designations for soteriological purposes.[9] Mahāyāna Buddhism, including Mādhyamika, regards the use of all terms or concepts as *upāya*. This implies that neither apophatic nor kataphatic language should be privileged ultimately. Negative language, therefore, has no absolute priority over positive language. Understood in this way, the possibility of using positive language is unhesitatingly explored by the expounders of *tathāgatagarbha* thought and the Yogācāra school in echoing their practices.

Another point is that negative terms, like all other terms, can be reified or substantialized. This is precisely the reason Mādhyamika thinkers constantly invoke the strategy of self-deconstructing to empty emptiness. It proves from the other side that negative language has no ultimate superiority over positive language. The point, then, is not what kind of language can be appropriately used, but how to avoid reification or substantialization. Are there any possibilities of using positive language while avoiding reification by imposing restrictions on it? The Buddhists of *tathāgatagarbha* thought and the Yogācāra school think there are. Although Mādhyamika deconstruction has made constructive discourse more difficult – similar to what Derrida has done to Western philosophy – the Buddhist thinkers nonetheless persevere with intellectual courage and subtlety.

This is the general background of the venture of *tathāgatagarbha* thought. The fundamental concern of *tathāgatagarbha* thought is to assert the possibility or potential of attaining *nirvāṇa* or liberation for all human beings. This concern is represented by the common teaching of this tradition that all sentient beings have the *tathāgatagarbha* within themselves, which enables them to be eventually enlightened. *Tathāgatagarbha* literally means the womb or matrix of the *Tathāgata*, the Buddha. The Chinese translation of this word is *rulaizang* (the embryo-container of Buddha) or *foxing* (Buddha nature). Takasaki Jikidō has observed that the meaning of the word *tathāgatagarbha* in the

use of this tradition is closely related to other words such as *tathāgatago-tra*, *buddhadhātu*, *dharmadhātu*. From this observation he suggests that what is called Buddha nature involves the nature (*dhātu/svabhāva*) of the Buddha and the cause (*hetu*) of the Buddha, as these Sanskrit words signify.[10] Since *tathāgatagarbha* or Buddha nature appears to involve something like the "essence" of Buddha, it entails the question of whether it is a substantialist concept. Also since *tathāgatagarbha* thought reintroduces the notion of self, along with other kataphatic terms, into Buddhist discourse, from the very beginning it runs the risk of being reappropriated by the Brahmanical metaphysical notion of Self (*ātman*).

However, things are not as simple as they appear. Mādhyamika claims that all things are devoid of self-existence, and refuses to take a stand concerning the existence of things. Historically, scholars have argued: is it not itself a position concerning the nature of things to claim that all things are devoid of self-existence? Is emptiness not itself an interpretation of the nature of things?[11] Although Mādhyamika claims that to avoid substantialization, emptiness is only a conventional designation manifesting dependent co-arising, it cannot be denied that this claim addresses, after all, the issue of the nature of things. If Mādhyamika nonetheless refers to the nature of the existence of things in a certain way, why cannot the *tathāgatagarbha* tradition try another way? The point again is not that some words cannot be used, but how to use them. The exponents of *tathāgata-garbha* thought are fully aware of the risk and understand that they must use positive language differently. They make various efforts to impose restrictions on their use of kataphatic terms. Although in a few cases *tathāgatagarbha* is equated with Self without clarification,[12] in most cases some kind of restriction is apparent. Of course, we must examine carefully whether their efforts have been successful.

The main clarifications made by the exponents of *tathāgatagarbha* thought can be divided into two interrelated kinds. One I like to call strategic, as far as the content of this clarification is concerned. Another kind is theoretical, namely, of restrictions more substantially imposed upon the explanation of *tathāgatagarbha* thought. Both are crucial to a non-substantialized *tathāgatagarbha* thought.

First, some *tathāgatagarbha* texts clarify that the teaching of *tathāgata-garbha* is nothing but a temporary expedient (*fangbian*) and a practical/soteriological strategy. For instance, the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* mentions that ordinary people do not understand the Buddha's teaching of no-self and ask if there is no self, who keeps the rules of discipline, and who transgresses those rules. To those who have a

deep attachment to the sense of self and worry about the loss of self, the Buddha says: "I have not preached that all sentient beings are without self. [On the other hand,] I always proclaim that all sentient beings possess the Buddha-nature. What else can the Buddha-nature be if not the self?"[13] However, the Buddha continues: "The Buddha-nature is in fact not the self. For the sake of [guiding] sentient beings, I describe it as the self."[14] The text also shows how effective this strategy is in attracting non-Buddhists to Buddhist practice.

This point is supported by other *tathāgatagarbha* texts. The *Ratnagotravibhāga* points out that the teaching of *tathāgatagarbha* is intended to win sentient beings over to abandoning "affection for one's self" – one of five defects caused by non-Buddhist teachings.[15] The *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, though representing a syncretism between *tathāgatagarbha* thought and the Yogācāra school, regards the teaching of *tathāgatagarbha* as one form of skillful means (*upāya*), just as the teaching of no-self is. However, the purpose of *tathāgatagarbha* teaching "is to make the ignorant cast aside their fear when they listen to the teaching of egolessness," and "to awaken the philosophers from their clinging" to the Self.[16] Finally, the text emphasizes that *tathāgatagarbha* thought should not be considered identical to the metaphysical Self. Rather it is identical to the teaching of no-self.[17] These clarifications show us that the context of *tathāgatagarbha* thought is pragmatic and soteriological. The purpose of this teaching is not to reintroduce the metaphysical Self into Buddhism, or to smuggle the Brahmanical Self in by the back door, through an investigation of the ontological structure of self. Rather it is to lead more people to the Buddhist path and to the teaching of no-self more effectively through something that looks like a notion of self, namely, appears to presuppose something within each self.

Noticing this context is important. It will help to avoid jumping to the conclusion that *tathāgatagarbha* thought is simply another case of metaphysical imagination. However, a soteriological theory also can be based on a metaphysical notion or seek support from a metaphysical notion, just as the metaphysical theory of Brahmanism can entail its own soteriology. Merely giving strategic reasons is not sufficient in defining a teaching of *tathāgatagarbha* as clearly distinguishable from any metaphysical notion of self or from any theory of essence. Thus, the thinkers of the *tathāgatagarbha* thought must provide more substantial reasons for the non-substantialized explanation of this teaching.

One further clarification of *tathāgatagarbha* thought made by some texts is the emphasis on the meaning of *tathāgatagarbha* or Buddha

nature as cause or causal element. The *Ratnagotravibhāga* plainly states that the *tathāgatadhātu* (the synonym for *tathāgatagarbha* in the text) is the cause of the acquisition of the Buddhahood. The Sanskrit word *dhātu* here, it underscores, "is especially used in the sense of '*hetu*' (a cause)."[18] Thus the *tathāgatagarbha*, or Buddha nature, is at the same time called "the cause of Buddha nature (*rulaixingyin* or *foxingyin* in Chinese)."[19] The *Ratnagotravibhāga* also quotes a passage from another *tathāgatagarbha* text, the *Śrīmālādevīsiṃhanāda* (hereafter *Śrīmālā*) *Sūtra*, to explain the notion of the Buddha nature as cause: "[I]f there were no [*tathāgatagarbha*], there would be neither aversion towards suffering nor longing, eagerness, and aspiration towards [*nirvāṇa*]."[20] According to this *sūtra*, although the *tathāgatagarbha* is obscured by defilements in unenlightened beings, this *tathāgatagarbha* nonetheless determines their possibility or potential of attaining Buddhahood. In this connection, the notion of *tathāgatagarbha* is nothing but a soteriological notion of the inner cause or thrust for liberation within all sentient beings. It serves the soteriological purpose of affirming the possibility and potential of realizing enlightenment within sentient beings and encouraging them to move forward on the Buddhist path. This accent on the soteriological–causal dimension of the *tathāgatagarbha* thought is undeniable.

However, the problem with these two texts is that they declare a *tathāgatagarbha* not only responsible for the final liberation, but also for samsaric life.[21] Soteriologically, this view explains that when defiled or covered by defilement, the *tathāgatagarbha* entails *saṃsāra* as well. What is underlined is thus a turn from defilements to the original purity. In this aspect it reflects an early attempt of the tradition to stress the importance of existential transformation for every human being through soteriological practice. However, the texts themselves do not warrant this soteriological understanding. They open themselves to ontological or even cosmological interpretation due to their implications of the *tathāgatagarbha* as the only basis of the world. The problem demonstrates that if a causal theory is to be non-substantialist, it must clarify itself in such a way as to avoid lending itself to any interpretation of a metaphysical essence or cosmological origin.

A better clarification of the Buddha nature as non-substantialized causal element or relation comes in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*. This scripture considers the Buddha nature to be identical to the twelvefold chain of interdependent arising (*dvādaśāṅga pratītyasamutpāda*). "This twelvefold chain of interdependent arising is called Buddha nature."[22] "Because there is cause, or cause vis-à-vis cause, . . . it is

called Buddha nature."[23] "All sentient beings must have such a twelvefold chain of interdependent arising; therefore it is said that all sentient beings have Buddha nature."[24] Since the statement that all sentient beings have Buddha nature may leave the impression that it presupposes something permanent, the scripture explains that it is said thus because the chain of interdependent arising is permanent.[25] This amounts to saying that change and causal relation are permanent. It does not affirm any entity as permanent. The Buddha nature thus is none other than a web of causal relations and the realization of this.

Once the Buddha nature is regarded as cause and causal relation, the scripture continues to propose two types of cause – the Buddha nature as direct cause and the Buddha nature as auxiliary cause. The *tathāgatagarbha* is direct cause (*zhengyin*), and the practice of the six *pāramitās* is auxiliary cause (*yuanyin*).[26] Causal analysis of this kind makes the theory of Buddha nature more tenable as well as distinguishing it from a metaphysical theory of essence or origin. However, in the *tathāgatagarbha* tradition the Buddha nature is described not only as a cause, but also as an effect or fruit. In describing this fruit or the reality of Buddhahood, *tathāgatadhātu* or *buddhadhātu* is used also in the sense of nature or *svabhāva*. To avoid substantializing Buddha nature, something more must be done to clarify the special meaning of this "nature." This awareness leads to another effort at de-substantialization.

The effort is to identify the Buddha nature with emptiness. The *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* maintains: "What is empty is Buddha nature."[27]

> When you see the Buddha nature, you see no more the inherent nature of all *dharmas*. . . . Because you do not see the inherent nature of all *dharmas*, you see the Buddha nature. . . . If you still see this inherent nature, you do not see the Buddha nature. . . . *Prajñāpāramitā* is empty, . . . *tathatā* is empty, *nirvāṇa* is empty, . . . all *dharmas* are empty.[28]

This is a good example of integrating *tathāgatagarbha* thought with the teaching of the *Prajñāpāramitā* and Mādhyamika. Emptiness is maintained in the original sense of being without self-existence or inherent nature. The Buddha nature is empty in nature, just like other Buddhist soteriological terms – *Prajñāpāramitā*, *tathatā*, *nirvāna*, and so on. The Buddha nature is also beyond the dichotomy of existence and non-existence. "For the sake of accommodating the conventional world, it is said that *nirvāṇa* exists."[29] So is the Buddha nature. The Buddha

nature abides nowhere. Because it is good for being a temporary expedient, it is said that the Buddha nature can be seen in sentient beings."[30] These statements make *tathāgatagarbha* thought resistant to any understanding of the Buddha nature as substance or essence.

Another forceful clarification is the identification of the Buddha nature and the Middle Way. The *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* declares: "The Middle Way is called Buddha nature. . . . You do not follow the Middle Way, therefore, you do not realize the Buddha nature."[31] "The Buddha nature is the ultimate meaning of emptiness and this ultimate meaning of emptiness is called Middle Way."[32] Here we see a perfect accord with Nāgārjuna's *Kārikā* 24:18, the identification of emptiness, interdependent arising, and the Middle Way. The scripture just extends this identical relation to the Buddha nature. In explaining this relation of identity among emptiness, the Middle Way and the Buddha nature, the scripture emphasizes something typical of *tathāgatagarbha* thought, asserting that the Buddha nature and the ultimate meaning of emptiness must go beyond both "empty (*śūnya*)" and "nonempty (*aśūnya*)." The Middle Way has neither fixation on "empty" nor on "nonempty." A dialectic result of freeing oneself from the attachment to any one-sided views is that the wise attain the skillful or situational use of either term. In other words, the supreme wisdom transcends conventional binary distinctions, but nonetheless makes use of them strategically in the world of conventions. This point obviously is supported by Nāgārjuna's famous statement about the relation of *paramārtha* and *saṃvṛti*.[33] Nāgārjuna's thought implies as well that as conventional designation, emptiness, just like nonemptiness, cannot be privileged ultimately.

Derived from, and complementing, the thought of Mādhyamika, the following notion is expressed by the scripture: "Only seeing that all are empty without seeing the nonempty side – this cannot be called Middle Way. Only seeing that all have no self without also seeing the self – this cannot be called Middle Way."[34] This is to say that empty and nonempty, self and nonself, are equally partial in terms of the ultimate Middle Way. From the transcendent perspective of the Middle Way, one should not fix on one side while ignoring the other. Thus the scripture provides legitimation for, and also restriction on, the use of terms, such as nonemptiness, self, permanence, purity, and existence, in *tathāgatagarbha* thought. The restriction is that, although their use is inevitable, these terms must be used in a relational perspective. They must be de-sedimented and regarded as expedient only. In this way the *tathāgatagarbha* or Buddha nature eschews reification.

However, in the texts of the *Ratnagotravibhāga* and the *Śrīmālā Sūtra*, it is said that the *tathāgatagarbha* or Buddha nature is only empty of adventitious defilements that cover it, but not empty of its own innate purity.[35] It is appropriate, and even necessary, to talk about the existence (or nonemptiness) of purity, permanence, joy, and so on, as practical virtues from a soteriological perspective.[36] However, without insisting at the same time on its strategic nature or the ultimate transcendence of both *aśūnya* and *śūnya* in the sense of the Middle Way, the texts lose the capacity to resist reification.

One *tathāgatagarbha* text of extreme importance for East Asian Buddhism worth mentioning here is the *Dacheng Qixin Lun* (*The Awakening of Faith in the Mahāyāna*), a blending of Indian Mahāyāna Buddhist thought and indigenous Chinese mind–nature theory.[37] Some scholars have suggested that this text contributes to the further substantialization of *tathāgatagarbha* thought.[38] However, this is not true. At least two crucial points made by the text contribute to the de-substantialization of the Buddha nature. First, while the text, following its Indian precursor, describes the *tathāgatagarbha* or the mind of suchness as both "truly empty" and "truly nonempty," it places both of these terms strictly in the sphere of conventional conceptualization and binary distinction. The higher meaning of suchness, however, is beyond both:

> All words and speeches are dependent designations without [corresponding] reality. . . . What is termed suchness is without any form of existence as well. Suchness is, so to speak, the limit of conceptualization wherein the word is used to put an end to other words. But the whole [or the body] of suchness has no existence to be put an end to, for all things truly exist as they are; nor is there anything to be established particularly, for all things are equally in the state of suchness.[39]

This passage clearly shows that it is not legitimate to regard the *tathāgatagarbha* or the mind of suchness as an entity, substance or essence. The Buddha nature itself is not an entity over and above the true existence of all things, namely, over and above the interdependent arising of all things. The Buddha nature merely denies or empties the self-existence of all things, while at the same time affirming the interrelated, non-self-identical existence of all things through this denial or emptying.

This "double character" also is made clear by the discussion of "truly empty" and "truly nonempty" as provisional distinctions. The

so-called "empty" side is not a form of existence, nor is it a form of nonexistence. Because the minds of all unenlightened beings are deluded by binary conceptualization, emptiness is taught. "Once they are free from their deluded minds, they will find that there is nothing to be emptied."[40] The so-called "nonempty" side manifests the dharma body empty of delusion, but nonetheless "has no form of existence to be grasped."[41] Thus "empty" and "nonempty" intrinsically involve each other. The double character is not "hardly conceivable" in this text, as Gadjin Nagao claims,[42] but more skillfully maintained than in the *Śrīmālā Sūtra* and the *Ratnagotravibhāga*.

Second, the text identifies the one mind of suchness with "the mind of the sentient being."[43] This one mind thus has two aspects: the mind of suchness and the mind of the cycle of life and death, namely, the enlightened mind and the deluded mind. The enlightened mind and the deluded mind are the same mind. They are non-dualistic. Since this one mind has these two aspects, the text stresses: "What is called enlightenment means that the whole of the mind frees from [deluded] thoughts. The characteristic of that which is free from thoughts is equal to the sphere of emptiness."[44] "One instant of thought corresponds to suchness. . . . Because it is far away even from subtle [deluded] thoughts, the insight into the nature of the mind [the suchness] is gained."[45] Notice the clarification made here concerning the whole of the mind – it is equal to emptiness.[46] More importantly, these statements suggest a way of existentializing the issue of Buddha nature. As a Chinese commentator later elucidates:

> This one mind is none other than the presently deluded mind of the sentient being. . . . When it is deluded, the circle of life and death starts and the whole of the mind of suchness is in the state of life and death; when it is enlightened, the circle ends and this mind of life and death itself is the whole of [the mind of] suchness.[47]

The central concern of the notion of one mind, according to this understanding, is the existential–practical transformation of the human mind from the deluded to the enlightened. In other words, it is the transformation of the human subjectivity from the inauthentic, illusory self-existence to the authentic, relational existence. The notion of one mind is just a provisional means to encourage this existential transformation. All the uses of other similar terms are basically related to this existential–soteriological dimension, and this dimension is underscored and supported by the notion of one mind.[48]

Since the Buddha nature is non-dualistic from "the presently deluded mind of the sentient being," it is not regarded as substance or essence *behind the existential function of ordinary minds*. In this aspect the notion noticeably bridges the gap between *tathāgatagarbha* thought and Chan Buddhist ideology.

This survey of *tathāgatagarbha* thought shows that it is premature to see the whole *tathāgatagarbha* tradition as the metaphysical reappropriation of Buddhist thought. Rather, the articulation and evolution of *tathāgatagarbha* thought involve the very effort to resist any metaphysical appropriation. In this aspect, it can even be said that *tathāgatagarbha* thought involves the use of certain deconstructive, or even self-deconstructive, strategies. However, this struggle within *tathāgatagarbha* thought becomes or provides the context for further struggles between metaphysical appropriation and deconstruction. In other words, *tathāgatagarbha* thought, on the one hand, meets the need of Buddhist soteriological practice, and on the other, calls for its further deconstruction. We may cautiously define this call or necessity for deconstruction as follows in terms of the above survey of *tathāgatagarbha* thought:

First, any attempt to equate *tathāgatagarbha* thought with the metaphysical Self without any clarification amounts to a metaphysical appropriation; it inevitably calls for a deconstructive effort.

Second, the terms used in *tathāgatagarbha* thought, such as Buddha nature, self, nonempty, permanence, purity, rely heavily on the restriction or clarification of their soteriological context and dimension. They must be regarded as temporary expedients. Apart from this context and dimension, or without being treated as temporary expedients, they lead to a kind of reification or sedimentation that calls for deconstruction.

Third, theoretically, *tathāgatagarbha* thought needs a series of careful clarifications or modifications to resist any metaphysical appropriation. Due to the insufficient clarification or explanation of non-substantialist *tathāgatagarbha* thought present in some texts, an ensuing deconstructive operation may be necessary.

Fourth, even when its soteriological context is clear, the emphasis on its strategic use is present, and the theoretical explanation is sufficient, possibilities always exist for misunderstanding or misinterpreting it as something quasi-reifying or quasi-metaphysical. The deconstruction of these understandings or interpretations is always required.

Fifth, as we have indicated, the advent of *tathāgatagarbha* thought meets the need of Buddhist soteriological practice. When practice

moves forward, it may change the needs, and theories may always fall behind practice. The call for the deconstruction of Buddha nature may be rooted in the development of Buddhist soteriological practice itself that is, in turn, determined by various social-cultural and historical factors.

All these necessities are of two kinds – one is internal to *tathāgata-garbha* thought; another is external. They are interrelated. Those internal elements or external appropriations that become the target of deconstruction may be defined as quasi-reifying or quasimetaphysical, since the context determines that they are nonetheless different from a metaphysical notion in the Western sense. What we have surveyed thus becomes the overall background and context for the Chan Buddhist deconstruction of Buddha nature. Chan Buddhism cannot have fallen from the sky without inherited intellectual or spiritual resources. The thought of Buddha nature is part of that heritage. Thus Chan Buddhism, almost from the beginning, was involved in the struggle between the substantialization of the Buddha nature and its deconstruction.

Dao must flow freely – the deconstruction of Buddha nature in the *Platform Sūtra*

Huineng's deconstructive operation and its target – Shenxiu's doctrine of *linian* – in terms of the *Platform Sūtra*, all concern the understanding of Buddha nature. Huineng's famous verse about enlightenment most clearly shows his subversion of Shenxiu's tendency to reify enlightenment and the Buddha nature. "Originally there is no tree of enlightenment,/Nor is there a stand with a clear mirror./From the beginning not a thing exists;/Where, then, is a grain of dust to cling?"[49] This verse radically denies the Buddha nature as something entitative or substantial by undermining the dichotomy that Shenxiu's verse maintains between the Buddha nature and the deluded mind in the metaphor of mirror and dust. However, to see more completely Huineng's deconstructive endeavor, we must examine more details of Huineng's and Shenxiu's doctrines.

Shenxiu draws his idea of *linian* (being free from thoughts) from the text of the *Dacheng Qixin Lun*. In a treatise on the five expedient means of the *Mahāyāna*, which is believed to be the collection of his teachings, Shenxiu quotes passages directly from the *Dacheng Qixin Lun*. For example, "What is called enlightenment means that the whole of the mind is free from [deluded] thoughts. . . ."[50] The use of

the term *linian* (being free from thoughts) here thus appears to be the starting point of Shenxiu's own interpretation of *linian*. As we have discussed, the *Dacheng Qixin Lun* identifies the Buddha nature, or the mind of suchness, with emptiness in an effort at de-substantialization. By emphasizing *yinian xiangying* (the corresponding of one instant of thought) or *linian*, and by identifying suchness with the minds of sentient beings, it also suggests a way of existentializing the issue of Buddha nature. However, that is only a suggestion in the text as it stands. It relies on further interpretation. Moreover, despite this treatise's identification of the mind of suchness with the mind in *saṃsāra*, it puts a great deal of emphasis on this mind of suchness and its purity.[51] As a result, the idea of *linian* could entail very different understandings.

Shenxiu's interpretation is a quasi-reifying one. It is not utterly reifying, mainly because the general context of his doctrine is soterio-logical–practical and he maintains certain non-dualistic clarifica-tions, though not always clearly, as some critical historians have tried to reveal.[52] Nevertheless, the criticisms from other Chan Buddhists should not be seen as merely polemic and sectarian. There are obvious doctrinal and practical reasons that require the deconstruc-tion of Shenxiu's interpretation in the history of Chan Buddhism. Let us look at how Shenxiu interprets *linian* first:

> The mind of the Buddha is pure and detached from being as well as nonbeing. If the body and the mind are not aroused, one constantly maintains the true mind. What is suchness? When the mind does not move, that is suchness; when the form is not in motion, that is also suchness.[53]

> The whole [or essence] and the function are clearly distin-guishable: being free from thoughts is the whole; seeing, hearing, feeling and knowing are the function.[54]

> *Question:* By what means can one achieve Buddhahood?
> *Answer:* One achieves Buddhahood with the whole [or essence] of the pure mind.[55]

Shenxiu's interpretation clearly leaves room for a logocentric hier-archy that privileges pure over impure, motionlessness over motion, the true mind over the ordinary mind, the whole (*ti*) over the func-tion (*yong*), even transcendence over immanence. Although the Buddha nature or the mind of suchness in the *Dacheng Qixin Lun*

involves the aspects of pure and impure, true and deluded, *ti* and *yong*, Shenxiu places his notion of *linian* solely on the side of pure, true and *ti*. Thus "being free from thoughts" not only means being free from deluded thoughts, but also from motions and actions, including seeing, hearing, feeling, knowing, and thinking. By entering into this "pure" and "quiet" state, Shenxiu and his followers believe that they can attain liberation.

What kind of liberation are they searching for? Does not it reflect a sort of Chan escapism?[56] Related to this escapism is inevitably a tendency towards reification, pointing to an enchanted place, a foundation. Although Shenxiu does talk about the identification between *ti* and *yong*, *ti* is like something from which *yong* flows and to which it also returns. This dialectic of *ti* and *yong* looks somewhat analogous to a Hegelian dialectic, insofar as it privileges *ti*.

Such a notion of *linian* becomes the target of Huineng's deconstructive operation. It is true that Huineng's idea of *wunian* (no-thought or no-thinking) also comes from the *Dacheng Qixin Lun* in which two terms, *linian* and *wunian*, are almost synonyms. However, if we look at Huineng's creative interpretation of *wunian*, we must admit the great difference between Shenxiu's *linian* and Huineng's *wunian*. To subvert Shenxiu's *linian*, Huineng does not simply fall back on the opposite of Shenxiu's abandonment of all thoughts, such as an emphasis on the importance of thoughts. Rather, Huineng proposes something that is neither Shenxiu's nor its opposite. Huineng's endeavor is a typical deconstructive one. He interprets *wunian* as follows:

> No-thought means not to be carried away by thought in the process of thought.[57] . . . Successive thoughts do not stop; prior thoughts, present thoughts, and future thoughts follow one after the other without cessation. . . . If one instant of thought clings, then successive thoughts cling; this is known as being fettered. If in all things successive thoughts do not cling, then you are unfettered. Therefore, we consider this non-abiding essential.[58] . . . But do not stop thinking about everything and eliminate all thoughts. As soon as thought stops, one dies and is reborn elsewhere.[59]
>
> What is no-thought? The [*dharma*] of no-thought means: even though you see all things, you do not attach to them, . . . Even though you are in the midst of six dusts, you do not stand apart from them, yet are not stained by them, and are free to come and go.[60] . . . If you do not think of anything

in order to stop all thoughts, that is bondage by [*dharmas*]. That is called a one-sided view.[61]

Huineng does several things to dismantle Shenxiu's misleading ideas. First, Huineng appeals to the causal chain of thoughts and things. All thoughts and things are interrelated and one causes another. We all live with this flow of thoughts and things, and no one can stop it. Huineng regards this unceasing flow, this non-abiding, as the essential condition for human existence or human nature (*weiren benxing*).[62]

Both freeing from thoughts (here referring to Shenxiu's idea) and attachment to thoughts (a common illness addressed by Buddhist soteriological discourses) are, for Huineng, two extremities that run counter to this essential condition or nature. For this reason, they are a hindrance to the way of liberation. Huineng's solution to this problem is to maintain the Middle Way. Though difficult, his advice is not to stop something that you will never be able to stop, but to detach yourself from it. This is none other than *flowing together* with thoughts and things. To some extent, to practice this (as a soteriological expedient) is to return to your own nature.

Next, in relation to this advice, Huineng proposes his thesis that *dao* must flow or circulate freely (*dao xu tongliu*).[63] He asks: "Why should *dao* be impeded instead?[64] If the mind does not abide in things, the *dao* circulates [or flows] freely; if the mind abides in things, it becomes entangled."[65] He also names this mind of *dao* the "straightforward mind (*zhixin*)" and teaches his disciple about "only practicing straightforward mind, and in all things having no attachments whatsoever."[66] In other words, they should "practice the straightforward mind at all times, whether walking, standing, sitting, or reclining."[67] These statements, tinged with a Daoist spirit, make it clear that for Huineng, enlightenment or the realization of the Buddha nature should not impede the living flux of the everyday world. Enlightenment or *dao* is rather the unimpeded or straightforward flowing together with thoughts and things in all everyday circumstances. Huineng's deconstruction of Shenxiu's idea apparently serves this soteriological motif. From this perspective of free flowing together with all thoughts and things Huineng strongly opposes Shenxiu's way of "contemplating the mind and contemplating purity, not moving and not activating the mind."[68] Huineng's thesis foreshadows, or is echoed by, the Hongzhou notion of *renyun* (following along with the movement of all things or circumstances), a thesis central to mainstream Chan, although not always properly understood as such.

The consequence of Huineng's interpretation of *wunian* is significant. For instance, the affirmation of the causal chain and unimpeded flux of thoughts and things provides the legitimacy for the emphasis on the existential awakening of the human mind. According to Huineng, the imagined cessation of this causal chain and flux leads nowhere but to continuous sufferings. Only by practicing non-attachment within this chain or flux of thoughts and things can we hope to attain liberation.[69] For it is this chain or flux that also makes possible the transformation or awakening of the human mind or thought from delusion to enlightenment. The reason is obvious: this flux (or the change of all individual thoughts or objects) brings about passion, craving, impermanence, disillusionment, as well as enlightenment. Although one instance of suffering does not necessarily entail enlightenment, how could there be enlightenment without the affliction resulting from passion? They are not only interrelated, but also mutually involved. Therefore, Huineng stresses: "[T]he very passions are themselves enlightenment (*ji fannao shi puti*)."[70] On the other hand, since the existence of a person is the flow of thoughts and feelings, the existential difference of the mind and thought is always possible. In this sense Huineng underscores: "[U]nawakened, even a Buddha is a sentient being," and "even a sentient being, if he is awakened in an instant of thought, is a Buddha."[71] "When past thoughts are deluded, this is the common man; when future thoughts are awakened to, this is Buddha."[72] In other words, "[E]ven these sentient beings, filled with passions and troubles," are able to "gain enlightenment" through the change of one instant of thought.[73] This emphasis on the existential transformation of the human mind and thought has, without doubt, the consequence of excluding any substance, essence or foundation outside the function of the human mind. Nor does it tend to reify the human mind or subjectivity itself, since the goal of this transformation is to flow together with all things through an empty mind, the mind devoid of self-attachment. Thus Huineng's teaching develops the existentializing point of the *Dacheng Qixin Lun* concerning the realization of the Buddha nature, without relying too much on a "true mind" distinguishable from the mind of the sentient being.

It is also in this context that Huineng's use of the term *zixing* (self nature) should be correctly understood. Throughout the *Platform Sūtra*, Huineng seldom uses the term "Buddha nature." He substitutes "self nature" for "Buddha nature." At first sight, this use is no different from those in the previous texts of *tathāgatagarbha* thought, since these texts refer to the *tathāgatagarbha* as the mind of self nature

and purity as well. It is true that there are linguistic and phrasal links between the *Platform Sūtra* and those texts of *tathāgatagarbha* thought, especially the *Dacheng Qixin Lun*.

However, upon closer inspection, Huineng's use of "self nature" is actually unique, for it tends to emphasize more plainly the possibility of existential awakening *within* the living body and mind of every sentient being. It underlines the point that every human being can actualize this possibility or fulfill this goal through the practice of non-attachment in all everyday circumstances. As we have indicated, it does not stress the need to establish a Buddha nature or true mind clearly distinguishable from the living mind of every sentient being, namely, the mind in *saṃsāra*. Attaining Buddhahood is but the existential transformation of the same mind of the human being in everyday life. This point is made much clearer than in the *Dacheng Qixin Lun*. The meaning of this term, therefore, is soteriological, functional and non-substantialist.

Huineng's point is clearly non-substantialist, since "self nature" here does not mean something existent in and by itself, or self-identity. No such meaning is involved in the use of this term at all. Rather, Huineng points out: "Human nature is empty (*shiren xingkong*)."[74] Here empty is used, first of all, in the same sense as the *Prajñāpāramitā* and Mādhyamika would maintain, namely, devoid of self existence or self nature. Second, it is used in the post-Mādhyamika sense as the Yogācāra school and some *tathāgatagarbha* texts would maintain, namely, that emptiness, or being devoid of self existence, is the nature of all things. This understanding of the empty nature of all things, in its best form, is maintained as something like the condition of the possibilities of all things. It is not an origin or essence of all things, but nonetheless involves everything. Everything becomes possible because of this emptiness, this web of relativity. Huineng's saying that the self nature involves the 10,000 things should be understood in terms of this meaning.[75] Clearly this view involves an objective or cognitive element, insofar as it describes the condition of the possibilities of all things. We may call it quasi-transcendental or ontologically neutral, since it can lead to a reified view by substantializing this condition or to a de-substantialized view by stressing its pragmatic, expedient function. However, when Huineng states that emptiness is human nature or human nature is empty, he does not stop with this second usage, but gives the term new meanings. His use of the term involves the meanings of relationality, the existential changeability of personhood, and the accomplishment of action.

To make this point clearer, I must clarify the linguistic–cultural background of Huineng's use of the term *xing* (nature) or *renxing* (human nature) in relation to the term *zixing*. Scholars have commonly accepted that the Confucian, especially Mencian, emphasis on the innate goodness of human nature had great impact on the Chinese Buddhist acceptance of *tathāgatagarbha* thought. However, scholars also have recently revealed that the notion of human nature in Chinese philosophy is different from the Western notion of human nature as a changeless essence contained in all individual human beings. For instance, Tang Junyi, in his extensive study on *renxing*, explicates that the classical Confucian conception of *xing* is concerned primarily with the existential changeability and growth of each living human being. The *xing* is discussed from a practical and dynamic perspective. The meaning of *xing* involves directionality, relationality, and existential–practical development.[76] In the Mencian theory of mind–nature, the *xing* is explained in terms of the growth of each individual mind. "It should not be termed an essence or principle deeply rooted in the mind."[77]

In a similar vein, Roger Ames radically questions the adequacy of the translation of the Chinese term *renxing* as "human nature" in its Western sense.[78] Ames clarifies the Chinese meaning of *xing* as "a creative act."[79] "[*X*]*ing* denotes the entire process of being a person. . . . [A] person is not a sort of *being*, but first and foremost a *doing* and *making*. . . . [*X*]*ing* is not reducible to what is innate or a priori."[80] These expositions have, to some extent, clarified the linguistic-cultural background of Huineng's use of *xing* as well.

Let us now look at one example of Huineng's use of *xing* in the *Platform Sūtra*:

> . . . immediately awakened. It is like the great sea which gathers all the flowing streams, and harmonizes the small waters with the large waters as a whole. This is realizing your own nature. [Such a person] does not abide either inside or outside; he is free to come or go. Readily he casts aside the mind that clings [to things], and there is no obstruction to his passage.[81]

Realizing one's own nature here is not explained in terms of what one recognizes but how one acts, how one achieves the existential transformation of the mind, and how one practices the free flowing together (or being harmonized) with all things. The focus is not on the cognitive element contained in the second usage, but on the

existential function of the mind and pragmatic wisdom (*zhi*), on the practical–behavioral carrying out of non-attachment. The usage of *xing* here is plainly operational. We have no difficulty in detecting the underlying accord of Huineng's usage with the Confucian one, despite its Buddhist context. The understanding of this unique usage is crucial to avoid any accusation that Huineng's, or his followers', "self nature" represents a substantialist view. The usage is also a good example to demonstrate the Chinese transformation of the original Buddhist usage.

No root, no foundation, no mind, no Buddha – deconstruction in the Hongzhou Chan

A main target of the Hongzhou school's deconstruction is Shenhui's teaching of "establishing awareness and cognition (*li zhijian*)"[82] in relation to his understanding of the Buddha nature. Although Shenhui is on the side of Huineng and makes a significant contribution to the criticism of Shenxiu's idea of *linian*, scholars have indicated that Shenhui's thought deviates from Huineng's in some important aspects.[83] Shenhui's own interpretation of *wunian*, if we make a careful comparison between it and Huineng's, is problematic. This fact, to a great extent, results in the Hongzhou school's deconstructive operation. The Hongzhou school should be considered the true inheritor of Huineng's thought in those essential aspects. Since the context of Shenhui's teaching is soteriological, and in some aspects he does stand with Huineng and with Hongzhou, we may define only some elements of his thought as quasi-reifying or quasi-logocentric. However, these elements make the difference between the Hongzhou and Shenhui's teachings and make a deconstructive operation indispensable.

Two major interrelated problems exist in Shenhui's teaching. First, he privileges a kind of awareness or intuitive knowledge over ordinary, discriminative cognition. The former is called "empty tranquil awareness (*kongji zhi zhi*),"[84] and the latter refers to ordinary activities of seeing, hearing, feeling, and knowing (*jian wen jue zhi*) with respect to discriminative consciousness. All such ordinary activities must be emptied or transcended in the state of *wunian*, according to Shenhui.[85] This disruption of ordinary cognitive activity is overemphasized by his interpretation of awareness. As he states, "This awareness does not have any causal link, since it is the *prajñā* wisdom of the original whole [or essence] of emptiness and tranquillity itself that is aware."[86] By cutting off this causal link, Shenhui shows his

tendency to isolate this awareness from all everyday activities. He equates the achievement of this awareness with the attainment of Buddhahood. In Zongmi's terms, he considers "the one word aware-ness [or intuitive knowledge] the gate to all wonders."[87]

Second, in using the category of *ti* and *yong* to explain awareness, Shenhui favors the *ti* and sees awareness as the *benzhi zhiyong*, that is, as the function of the wisdom of the *ti* itself that relies on no other conditions. For instance, he states: "In the whole (*ti*) of emptiness and tranquillity, there is the original wisdom, the illuminating function (*yong*) of which is called awareness."[88] It is true that this view involves the identification of the *ti* and the *yong*, since the *yong* is only the *yong* of the *ti* and the *ti* is that which functions (*yong*). However, upon closer examination, we find that in fact he cancels out *yong* in favor of *ti*. Zongmi's explanation is revealing on this point. He asserts: "[Shenhui's notion of] the awareness of tranquillity points to the *ti*."[89] It is the *ti* that is aware of itself and of all things. This *ti* is also equivalent to the mind of non-abiding, the Buddha nature or self nature. Since this *ti* does not rely on any causal link or causal condi-tion, it is clearly distinguishable from the mind in *saṃsāra*. This is an apparent departure from Huineng's notion of self nature or the mind of non-abiding that is identified with the mind of one instant of thought, namely, the mind of the sentient being.

As we have noted, the mind of non-abiding, in Huineng, is the existential awakening of the same mind of the sentient being. It does not presuppose a foundation-like "whole of mind" (*xinti*). Shenhui's privileging of the *ti*, it seems to me, falls back on Shenxiu's notion of true mind (*zhenxin*) and to that of the *Dacheng Qixin Lun*. There seems to be no fundamental difference between Shenhui's *xinti* and Shenxiu's *zhenxin* in their quasi-reifying aspect. Although Shenhui shows the non-objectified feature of this "mind of emptiness and tran-quillity" by relating it to wisdom and to the function of awareness, it is not clearly distinguishable from an absolutized subjectivity – an inverted substance.

The Hongzhou school overturns Shenhui's position in both of these respects. First, the Hongzhou school strongly opposes any char-acterization of the realization of the Buddha nature or enlightenment as *zhijian* or *zhijie*. It challenges two opposed positions: equating enlightenment with ordinary cognition and equating enlightenment with awareness or intuitive knowledge isolatable from ordinary cognitive activities. The second position is Shenhui's. The Hongzhou position is best represented by the following exposition found in the sayings of Huangbo Xiyun:

[Y]ou students of the *dao* . . . will realize your original mind only in the realm of seeing, hearing, feeling and knowing. Although the original mind does not belong to seeing, hearing, feeling and knowing, this mind cannot be separated from them. You should not simply start your cognitive maneuver from them, nor allow them to give rise to any conceptual thought; yet nor should you seek the mind apart from them or abandon them in your pursuit of the *dharma*. Do not let your mind be identical with them nor separated from them . . . be free everywhere, and nowhere is a place where the *dao* cannot be practiced.[90]

The point of the Hongzhou school expressed here by Huangbo is evident: although enlightenment cannot be pursued through mere cognition, it cannot be isolated from all activities that may be related to a further cognitive maneuver. The prerequisite for enlightenment is the cessation of one's cognitive maneuver – the illusory grasping of the object of self-identity. However, of equal importance is not separating oneself from everyday activities. For the Hongzhou school holds that seeing, hearing, feeling and knowing are part of our everyday activities. All everyday activities are opportunities or necessary conditions for the realization of enlightenment. This understanding is due to the Hongzhou school's belief in the Mahāyāna dictum that without *saṃsāra* or *saṃvṛti* there is no *nirvāṇa* or *paramārtha*, a strictly relational perspective. Enlightenment is only the establishment and function of the attitude of non-clinging within ordinary activities. The Hongzhou masters often ask where one can go or how one can be enlightened apart from this conventional world and everyday activities. As authentic followers of the Middle Way, the Hongzhou masters see Shenhui's isolation of awareness from ordinary activities as another kind of attachment or fixation. From a relational perspective, it must be overturned.

Second, the Hongzhou school invalidates Shenhui's logocentric hierarchy of *ti* and *yong*. Shenghui's *ti* is independent of all conditions (*yuan*). Zongmi defines Shenhui's hierarchy as "the original [or self] function of the self nature (*zixing benyong*)," while the Hongzhou position is criticized by him as only "the application [of the self nature] in various conditions (*suiyuan yingyong*)."[91] Since Shenhui's *ti* or self nature is independent of all conditions, its own *yong* is abstracted from everyday activities and all circumstances. Shenhui and Zongmi prefer this kind of self function. However, without that "application in conditions," how can there be any real function at all? There is

no doubt that Shenhui's view results in the cancellation of *yong* in favor of *ti*. From the Hongzhou perspective, on the contrary, there is only "application in conditions," and there is no such thing as the "self function of the self nature." The Hongzhou position, as formulated by Zongmi, is as follows:

> If one examines the nature of this whole [or essence], he will find that ultimately it can neither be perceived nor realized just as the eye cannot see itself, and so forth. If one considers its application, he will see that every move and every action that he takes is the Buddha nature, and that there is nothing else that can either realize it or be realized.[92]

The stance of the Hongzhou Chan here is to restore more completely the existential–soteriological and pragmatic–behavioral concern of Buddhism in the Chinese context. It strives against any quasi-metaphysical or quasi-reifying use of the Chinese category of *ti* and *yong*, including Shenhui's. The Hongzhou Chan does not oppose the use of the term *ti* itself. What the Hongzhou masters are concerned with is how one should use it. It is all right for them to use the *ti* as equivalent to the realization of the Buddha nature or enlightenment. However, it must be used in the perspectival, relational, dynamic, pragmatic–behavioral sense and as temporary expedient only, just as *xing* is used in the *Platform Sūtra* that we have discussed above. Since the *ti* or the Buddha nature or enlightenment is not any kind of substance or entity, we can neither perceive nor grasp it.

If we consider the *ti* as a dynamic whole or a web of relativity in which we live and act every day and with which we attempt to live and act in harmony, then every move or action is connected to, or a part of, that whole. Precisely for this reason the Hongzhou masters emphasize that all everyday activities are nothing but the function of the Buddha nature. The *ti* (or the Buddha nature), the *yong* (function or application) and the *yuan* (temporal conditions) cannot be separated. This identical relation favors *yong* and subverts Shenhui's privileging of the *ti*. One may object that this seems to be the cancellation of *ti*. However, if the *ti* is only a temporary expedient and is understood in the sense of action, application and relation, there is no need to cancel it out. The *ti* cannot exist in and by itself, and cannot be independent of this practical–behavioral context.

Although Zongmi's formulation of the position of the Hongzhou school is fair, his interpretation of it is definitely wrong. For example,

Zongmi explains the Hongzhou position as follows: "[T]he black-ness itself is the bright pearl, and the substance of the bright pearl is ever invisible. If one wants to know the pearl, blackness itself is bright-ness."[93] Metaphorically, Zongmi means that the Hongzhou school mixes the ordinary activities of the unenlightened person with the activities of the enlightened person. In that case, Hongzhou Chan runs the risk of denying the necessity of Buddhist practice, which is a complete misunderstanding of Hongzhou. The central point of the Hongzhou teaching is, of course, not to cancel Buddhist practice, but to further remove all hindrances to this practice.

One such hindrance is the tendency toward reification. As is indi-cated in Zongmi's own description, Hongzhou Chan takes as its motto "let the mind be free (*renxin*)":

> *Dao* is the [ordinary] mind itself, and one cannot use the [Buddha] mind to cultivate the [ordinary] mind; evil is also the mind itself, and one cannot cut off the [evil] mind by means of the [other] mind. Do not cut and do not produce; letting the mind follow along with all circumstances and letting it be free, this is called liberation.[94]

Thus, the Hongzhou identification of all activities of the ordinary mind with the Buddha nature is intended to deconstruct the dualistic distinction of the ordinary mind and the Buddha nature, to recover enlightenment as the existential–practical transformation of the ordi-nary mind. The Hongzhou view is not to demolish the existential changeability of the sentient being, but to reaffirm it through over-turning the original hierarchy of the Buddha nature and the ordinary mind. It echoes and develops Huineng's teaching by placing more weight on the relation between all activities of the ordinary mind and the realization of the Buddha nature.

The Hongzhou view must be understood in terms of this relational perspective. As we have mentioned, everyday activities, for the Hongzhou school, are the necessary condition for enlightenment in the first place. Without *saṃsāra*, there is no *nirvāṇa*; therefore, the ordinary mind is *dao*. I call this the pre-enlightenment aspect. The Hongzhou view also involves a post-enlightenment aspect, which reminds us that we must verify our own enlightenment in everyday activities. After realizing enlightenment, we are still ordinary people doing ordinary tasks. The only difference, as pointed out by many Chan masters, is that we now have an attitude of non-attachment and that attitude always works in everyday activities. To an enlightened

eye, then, every action is or can be seen as a function of the Buddha nature. The relational perspective, therefore, is an enlightened perspective, not an unenlightened one.

However, the disclosure of, and emphasis on, this enlightened perspective is extremely important for unenlightened practitioners, leading them in the right direction – to resist any separation of enlightenment from everyday activities. Here our distinction of pre- and post-enlightenment aspects is only intended for the purpose of analysis. Generally speaking, the Hongzhou view advises students to realize the mutual conditioning and mutual involvement of the enlightened and the unenlightened. This does not confuse the two, but rather sees them in the living reality of change and flux. The promotion of Buddhist practice is possible only within this living reality of change and flux.

To flow together with this ever-changing reality is called *renyun* in the Hongzhou school. The result of their deconstructive maneuver is not to replace all old binary distinctions or logocentric hierarchies with new ones. Rather, its standpoint or its strategy is to eschew or detach from any dualistic oppositions. In other words, the Hongzhou masters keep themselves busy moving with all things and circumstances, staying with neither the Buddha nor the sentient being, neither the extraordinary nor the ordinary, neither grasping nor rejecting, neither nihilistic nor permanent, neither knowledge nor non-knowledge, and so on. This elusive position is referred to by the Chinese words *renyun zizai*, meaning "following along with the movement of all things or circumstances and being free."[95] It constitutes both part of the deconstructive strategy of Hongzhou and the underlying thesis that this deconstructive strategy ultimately serves. In the recorded sayings of famous Hongzhou masters, we find frequent use of these words and similar expressions:

> Following along with the movement of all things and in this way living out your time.[96]

> At all times . . . never attach yourself to one thing; just follow along with the movement of all things the whole day long.[97]

> Following along with the movement of all things without any restriction is called liberation.[98]

> Merely according to circumstances as they are, use up your past *karma*; following along with [the change of] circumstances, put on your [different] clothes.[99]

A similar expression is also found in Master Linji's quotations. "The mind changes in accordance with the myriad circumstances;/the way it changes is truly profound./If you can realize its nature through this flow,/you will have neither joy nor sorrow."[100]

In view of these understandings, the soteriological goal of Buddhist practice, for Hongzhou Chan, should by no means be static or isolatable. The goal is to keep us moving or flowing with all things or circumstances. The masters know very well that the living process of change and flux will ruthlessly undercut every fixed position and every attachment to self or self-identity without ever stopping. Reality itself is deconstructive. Enlightenment cannot occur *outside* this flow. Enlightenment is nothing but being harmonious with change and flux. An enlightened person would find inexhaustible wonders by living a life in harmony with change and flux. This is the exact content and context of the Hongzhou teaching of realizing the "self nature" or "self mind," insofar as the Hongzhou masters do use these words sometimes. However, the profundity of this soteriological motif pushes their deconstruction completely home, just as their deconstructive strategy helps to reveal the profundity of this motif.

A remarkable characteristic of the Hongzhou deconstruction is its self-cancellation or self-effacement. This self-deconstruction is as compelling as its deconstruction of the position of others. One famous case is Mazu Daoyi's self-effacement of his notion of "the mind is Buddha." When the notion is first taught by Mazu, it involves an attempt to oppose the misunderstanding of the Buddha nature as something outside or separable from the ordinary mind. It is itself a kind of deconstructive operation upon the reifying view of the Buddha nature. However, after he teaches this notion for a certain period, it is inevitably sedimented or abstracted from the original context. His students display a tendency to attach themselves to this notion. Then Mazu starts to teach a different notion that apparently runs counter to his original teaching, a notion now emphasizing that there is neither mind nor Buddha.[101] In this way Mazu keeps himself moving with different situations, avoids misleading students and helps them to eschew sedimentation, fixation, and reification. This self-effacement indicates that for Mazu, there is no need to establish any logocentric hierarchy. He does not privilege any notion at all. He is able to use any kataphatic terms in his soteriological teaching, whenever the situation requires; but he is always also able to deconstruct the terms he has used.

Another famous example is Linji. Much attention has been paid to his notion of "an authentic person without rank." But little heed

has been paid to his self-erasing of this "authentic person without rank." The saying that there is an authentic person without rank, just like many other sayings, is a kind of soteriological expedient pointing to the existential transformation of personhood. The words themselves do not designate the reality of any metaphysical Self or absolutized subjectivity. Linji knows well that someone, among his audiences, may understand the notion in a reifying way. Therefore, soon after proposing of this notion, he suddenly declares: "What kind of shitty ass-wiper this authentic person without rank is!"[102] It lets people know that Linji himself is not so serious about this notion. In fact, this non-serious attitude is simply a strategy of self-erasing. The aim of this strategy is similar to Mazu's.

However, Linji may be the one, among all Chan masters, who uses the clearest language to deconstruct all kataphatic terms that Chan Buddhists have been using, including those used by himself. Let us take a quick look at some of his sayings:

> [M]y insight is different: I make no choice between the secular and the sacred without, nor do I stay in the root and foundation within.[103]

> [Y]ou must understand right now that the person here listening to the *Dharma* has no [fixed] form, no characteristics, no root, no foundation, no [particular] place he abides, yet he is vibrantly alive.[104]

> There is no Buddha, no [*Dharma*], no training, and no realization. What are you so hotly chasing? Putting a head on top of your head, you blind fools? Your head is right where it should be. . . . Do not be deceived. If you turn to the outside, there is no [*Dharma*]; neither is there anything to be obtained from the inside.[105]

Linji also points out: "The true *dao* is without substance."[106] As we can see, all those terms, such as *ti* (substance), *ben* (foundation), *xin* (mind), *fo* (Buddha), *fa* (*dharma*), *zheng* (realization), used either by others or by Linji himself, have no legitimate reification. In this aspect, Linji is unmistakably clear and quite radical. He is most resolute and exemplary in taking a stance of flowing freely with all things and circumstances. His de-reifying maneuver, as it stands in the text, should not be ignored by any scholar who intends to treat him with a fair and critical attitude. The entire *Linji Lu* is full of the spirit and energy of deconstruction and self-deconstruction.

One characteristic of his discourse, shared by the discourse of other Hongzhou masters, is the use of both kataphatic and apophatic language. The Hongzhou masters both reconstruct and deconstruct Buddhist themes, notions and concepts. On the one hand, they ceaselessly deconstruct all terms including their own; on the other, they never stop using positive terms. Deconstruction, for the Hongzhou school, is not the end of all kataphatic discourses; it is the companion of kataphatic discourse. The principle is to meet the requirements of all flowing situations. The move and development of situations call forth both the continuous use of positive language for soteriological purposes and the continuous use of deconstructive language for the same purposes. The Hongzhou masters are always aware of this call of practice. They echo it and do both at all times without hesitation. This may be a good lesson for our contemporary thinkers in dealing with the post-deconstruction situation.

Part II

THE LIMINOLOGY OF LANGUAGE IN THE *ZHUANGZI* AND IN CHAN BUDDHISM

5

WHAT IS A LIMINOLOGY OF LANGUAGE?

One of the categories Western culture in twentieth century has claimed to discover, according to Michel Foucault, is the limit.[1] Inquiries into limits, such as the limit of man, the limit of consciousness, the limit of reason, the limit of philosophy, the limit of science, the limit of logic, the limit of language, etc., have extended over a considerable part of Western discourse via various approaches. However, recent Western discourse on the limit has much to do with the central theme of what Foucault called "the finitude of man and the return of time."[2] Based on the dimensions of contingency, temporality and historicity, postmodern discourse throws new light on the limit and the limitless, the finite and the infinite, possibility and actuality, with respect to philosophy, language, and so forth. This discussion of the limit distinguishes itself from previous ones by emphasizing: (1) a double, or, I might call, a dialectical, relation of the limit and the limitless; (2) a transformation of, or a double play at, the limit.

Regarding the relation of the limit and the limitless, contemporary thinkers take a position of what I call the immanent transcendence of the limit. While maintaining the impossibility of the absolute, of the Limitless (be it God, Man, or the transcendental signified), contemporary thinkers do not give up the dimension of the limitless or the infinite. While focusing on the limit or limitedness of the human existential situation, contemporary thinkers do not neglect the responsiveness of the limit or limitedness to the limitless. For example, Foucault and Derrida assert that the limited, or every limit itself, is open to limitless transformations. In other words, because of the limit or limitedness, limitless substitutions of the limit are possible. Because of the finite, infinite supplements of the finite are possible.[3] The very limit that conditions the limited is also the condition of the possibilities of more and different limitedness, the condition of the possibilities of going beyond itself. In this way it responds to the limitless.

In this view, the world consists of only the limited, but the changes of the world, of the limited, or the transformations of the limit, are limitless. The notion of an absolute, immovable limit, along with the notion of a separated realm of transcendence, is apparently abandoned. Limitlessness or what is beyond the limit is considered inherent in the limit or limitedness. The limit simultaneously affirms and subverts itelf through the limitlessness it inevitably carries within. Every limit is thus in the endless process of transformations and substitutions. In Foucault's genealogical investigation, the problem of limits is always and closely related to the problem of mutations, transformations and the like.[4]

This kind of understanding directs us toward an important point – the transformation of the limit. In his seminal analysis of the limit and transgression, Foucault pointed out: "The limit and transgression depend on each other . . . a limit could not exist if it were absolutely uncrossable and, reciprocally, transgression would be pointless if it merely crossed a limit composed of illusions and shadows."[5] Foucault, therefore, concerned himself with the historicity of limits and the possibilities of going beyond them.[6] The idea that no limit is absolutely uncrossable contributes to the contemporary understanding of limits as both inevitable and relative. As a result, limits are seen more as historically transformed and transformable.

The postmodern view of the transformation of the limit is also reflected in postmodern thinkers' rethinking of the end or the death of philosophy. Derrida, among others, has stated: "I try to keep myself at the *limit* of philosophical discourse. I say limit and not death, for I do not at all believe in what today is so easily called the death of philosophy. . . ."[7] An end or a death is more like an uncrossable barrier that contradicts Derrida's "double play" at the limit, an operation that works within the limits of certain conceptual schemes, while allowing their self-erasure. This "double play" rests upon his understanding of the double structure of textuality – "the internal, regulated play" – that simultaneously "inscribes and overflows the limits of such a discourse."[8] Derrida's own play, as such, is based on the possibility and inevitability of the transformation of limits.

It is against this background of postmodern discussions of the limit that David Wood's coinage "liminology" is to be understood. As Wood characterizes it, liminology is "a new kind of writing" suggested by Derrida's works, which radically problematizes the boundaries, thresholds, and brinks of philosophy, and "plays on and around" them.[9] Although Wood does not say much in defining a liminology, we can see the connection between his brief description

and the general background I have outlined. The difference between my discussion of liminology and his will be that I will not confine liminology to a Derridean mode, but pay attention also to what other contemporary thinkers have said about the issue of limits and how to deal with them, thus attempting to define liminology against a much larger backdrop.

An etymological investigation of the term "liminology" shows that the root of the term lies not in the English word "limit" but in the Latin form *limin-* or *limen*, which carries the meaning of threshold and is close to the meaning of boundary, margin, limit, etc. By putting weight on the meaning of threshold, liminology signifies the transformation of, or the play at, the limit. This transformation or play is itself paradoxical and parapraxical.[10] What J. Hillis Miller explains about the double antithetical prefix "para" fits such a liminology very well: it is

> something inside a domestic economy and at the same time outside it, something simultaneously this side of a boundary line, threshold, or margin, and also beyond it. . . . It is also the boundary itself, the screen which is a permeable membrane connecting inside and outside. It confuses them with one another, allowing the outside in, making the inside out, dividing them and joining them. It also forms an ambiguous transition between one and the other.[11]

Along this line of thinking, liminology as playing at, or a transformation of, the limit, does not simply relate itself to the limit as black to white, the outside to the inside, and "does not seek to oppose one thing to another."[12] Rather, it eludes every fixed binary division. It takes into consideration both the limit and what is beyond the limit, both this side of a boundary line and the other side. It starts with a radically different concept of limit as threshold, as the dynamic connection and transition between the two sides.

Obviously, liminology can cover a wide range of topics. There can be different liminologies: a liminology of philosophy, a liminology of logic, a liminology of language, and so on. Nevertheless, this chapter will confine the scope of its inquiry to the liminology of language, despite the fact that the limit of language is also the limit of philosophy, and thus it is difficult to draw a clear-cut demarcation between the two.

In terms of what contemporary thinkers have enunciated, I shall attempt to encapsulate liminology of language as follows.

(1) Radical problematization of the limit, boundary, or margin of language.

When the early Wittgenstein said: "There is indeed the inexpressible. . . . Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent," he was thematizing and problematizing the limit of language.[13] For Wittgenstein, language has its limit in the attempt to describe something that is indescribable. One must rest in silence when one runs up against this limit of language. Yet does not the liminology of language radically call into question Wittgenstein's absolutization of the limit of language?

French thinker Maurice Blanchot's criticism of the early Wittgenstein and his rethinking of Bertrand Russell's original comment on the *Tractatus* is noteworthy at this point. Russell expressed his "discomfort" with Wittgenstein's notion of the inexpressible by arguing: (1) the fact that Wittgenstein still says a good deal about what cannot be said suggests some other way out; (2) the limit of a certain structure of language may not be the limit of a different structure of language.[14] Thus Russell challenges, to some extent, Wittgenstein's absolutization of the limit of language. Blanchot recasts Russell's themes in a much sharper form. For Blanchot, Russell's comments entail the notion that

> [w]hat is inexpressible is inexpressible in relation to a certain system of expression; . . . the Other of any speech is never anything but the Other of a given speech or the *infinite movement* through which a mode of expression . . . challenges or obliterates itself in some other mode.[15]

Wittgenstein would be in a very weak position if he wanted to defend himself here. His absolutization consists precisely in that he considers the limit of a propositional language to be the limit of all language, especially when he writes: "The right method of philosophy would be this. To say nothing except what can be said, *i.e.* the propositions of natural science."[16] In this way he confines language to a propositional, referential or logical use. Outside this use there is only a realm of silence, which is close to a realm of transcendence beyond the human ken. Such an absolute limit inevitably spells the end of philosophy. Ironically, such a view is not only rejected by recent developments in Western philosophy, but also contradicted by Wittgenstein himself in that he does not keep completely silent about what cannot be said, as Russell observes. The later Wittgenstein turns his back on this view, considering the propositional or referential use

of language to be merely one use among many. There are many language-games, just as there are many forms of life.

Russell's thesis that the limit of a certain structure of language may not be the limit of a different structure of language, and Blanchot's reformulating of that thesis, has been supported by more recent advancements in philosophy. Several major philosophers have recently revealed that a network of basic assumptions, beliefs, conceptual schemes, or a frame of references, always constitutes the human horizon at a certain time.[17] This network or frame sets up the limit to what can be said, thought, understood, communicated and even noticed at that time. It also sets up the limit of language, if language here is understood as the totality of available procedures for observation, description, and explanation.[18] Until that network or frame shifts, the incommensurability between different assumptions, different conceptual schemes, and different systems of expression, cannot be acknowledged.[19]

This elaboration indicates that the question of the limit of language depends, to a great extent, on how our minds conceive of it. The limits of language are the necessary limits of a given structure or system of language. When one is confined within a structure or system, the limits are inevitably conceived as uncrossable. However, there are many different structures or systems of language, and many different uses of language, just as there are many different forms of life and many different cultures. Moreover, even within one culture, the limit of a given system of language or expression at one time will be transformed when this system of language or expression gives way to another. The limit is never absolute.

Blanchot's criticism of the early Wittgenstein is also grounded in his realization that the inadequacy of language "runs the risk of never being sufficiently inadequate," otherwise, "we would all have been satisfied with silence long ago."[20] This peculiar character of being never completely inadequate is determined by the double structure of language. To use Foucault's expression, language is "always excessive and deficient."[21] First, it is deficient. This deficiency, this lack of language, does not only mean the absence of what has to be signified, but the absence of the center. To speak is to bring this kind of absence into play.[22] At the same time it is excessive, because what is deficient becomes the condition for the possibilities of more speaking, more signifying, more language. "[L]anguage can no longer avoid multiplying itself." "[I]t is always beyond the limit in relation to itself," and "is fated to extend itself to infinity without ever acquiring the weight that might immobilize it."[23] To simplify, the point Blanchot,

Foucault, and other contemporary thinkers are trying to make is that the development of different usages, of different linguistic strategies, is always possible, and, therefore, there is no set, absolute limit. The liminology of language thus announces itself to "have little affinity" with the early Wittgenstein,[24] and, in fact, sees the latter's absolutization of the limit of language as a form of logocentrism.

(2) Insight into the mutual connection and transition between this side of the boundary of language and the other side, between speaking and non-speaking (or silence), etc.

One of the most attractive sentences in the *Tractatus* is this: "[I]n order to draw a limit to thinking we have to be able to think both sides of this limit (we should therefore have to be able to think what cannot be thought)."[25] However, having limited language or meaning to logical use or propositional function, Wittgenstein declares: "[W]hat lies on the other side of the limit will be simply nonsense."[26] In doing so, Wittgenstein not only defines language as the totality of propositions, but also establishes an uncrossable borderline between language (speech), meaning, thinking, on one side, and silence, nonsense, the unthinkable, on the other. The contradiction inherent in this claim is, as we have hinted, that once Wittgenstein has talked about what cannot be said or has thought about what cannot be thought, the border between the two sides has already been somehow crossed. Surprisingly, at the end of the *Tractatus,* Wittgenstein suggests an explanation for this contradiction by advising people to treat his words as a ladder – after they have climbed up on it, people should throw it away.[27] Does not this advice suggest also that the other side of the limit is somehow attainable if people can use language in a different way, such as using it as a ladder? Furthermore, does not it suggest alternative explanations for the opposite sides of the limit than that to which the early Wittgenstein had committed himself?

Recent developments in Western philosophy have moved away from making such clear-cut demarcations about the two sides of the limit. We have seen the emergence of insights into the mutual connection and transition between two sides of the boundary of language, between speaking and non-speaking (or silence), etc. These kinds of insights radically blurs traditional distinctions by "allowing the outside in, making the inside out," or by rethinking the Other of language, and therefore provides legitimation for relativizing the limit of language.

In Heidegger's existential analysis of discourse as the articulation of the intelligibility of Being-in-the-world, he does not consider silence

– the other side of language – the mark of an impassable boundary of discourse. On the contrary, he sees it as one of the essential possibilities of discourse. He writes: "[T]o keep silent does not mean to be dumb. . . . As a mode of discourse, reticence [a]rticulates the intelligibility of Dasein in so primordial a manner that it gives rise to a potentiality-for-hearing."[28] Here silence is treated as a different mode of speech; silence and speech are not isolated from each other, but mutually involved. I consider this insight into the mutual connection and transition between two sides of the boundary of language a dynamic and relational understanding of the limit of language, in contrast to a static, non-relational one. It is this kind of dynamic, relational understanding that Heidegger carries into his later analysis of the being of language.[29] We are told by Heidegger: "Everything spoken stems in a variety of ways from the unspoken . . .";[30] "What is unspoken is not merely something that lacks voice, it is what remains unsaid, what is not yet shown, what has not yet reached its appearance."[31] On this account, the disjunction between speaking and silence no longer lasts. Neither speaking nor silence stands in and by itself. Speaking always has its absent presence in silence; silence, too, has only its non-absent absence in speaking. Consequently, this dynamic, relational understanding provides new angles from which to look at the issue of the limit of language. For instance, it implies that there are some things that cannot be put into words now – at a certain time in history – but remain open to the possibilities of later transformations. In other words, the limit or inadequacy of language is relative and conditioned by historical transformations. Heidegger's claim that all language is historical supports such an understanding.[32] In addition, the sphere of language in Heidegger's holistic view of the being of language is much broader than the early Wittgenstein's.

Echoing Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty also takes a dynamic, relational approach to speaking and silence. He emphasizes: "[W]e must consider speech before it is spoken, the background of silence which does not cease to surround it and without which it would say nothing." "[W]e must uncover the threads of silence that speech is mixed together with."[33] There is no radical discontinuity between silence and speech for him. Because he sees them in an utterly relational way, he pays special heed to "expressive silences" in signification.[34] However, from the perspective of mutual involvement, not only is silence speech, but speech is also silence. In other words, not only can silence function as speech, but speech can also function as silence.

When Merleau-Ponty distinguishes creative language from empirical language,[35] he states: "True speech . . . is only silence in respect to empirical usage."[36] One thing he suggests here is that true speech not only speaks something, but also keeps silent about something else. Speech and silence are always interwoven. This gives a great insight into the interplay of speech and silence. It is a more comprehensive understanding of the mutual connection and transition between the two sides of the boundary of language.

Along this line of thinking, Derrida holds: "[S]ilence plays the irreducible role of that which bears and haunts language, outside and *against* which alone language can emerge. . . ."[37] Elsewhere he claims: "Even if I decide to be silent, . . . this silence yet remains a modality of speech."[38]

For Foucault, "the inadequacy, the profound silence, of a philosophical language," brings about "a philosophy which regains its speech and finds itself again . . . in the marginal region which borders its limits."[39] Foucault's view can be regarded, to some extent, as a footnote to Blanchot's following statement:

> [T]he other of a language is always posed by this language itself as that by way of which it looks for a way out, . . . Which means not only that the Other is already *part* of this language, but that as soon as this language turns around to respond to its Other, it turns toward another language; a language that, as we ought not ignore, is other, and also has its Other.[40]

Blanchot's message, like Foucault's, still conveys two major points. First, what lies on the other side of the limit is always connected with, part of, or has its trace in, this side of the limit. The Other of language, the inexpressible, or silence, exists always in relation to a language, to a certain system of expression, or to a given speech. Second, the response to the Other of language always gives rise to the development of a different function of language, a different way of signification, a different expression, etc.

In short, no matter what differences all these thinkers' statements may involve, and no matter how divergent their projects may be, they do respectively make their own contribution to a typical attitude that obscures the conventional divisions, and, in effect, de-absolutizes the boundary of language. This kind of insight puts these thinkers on the right footing for engaging in what Blanchot calls "the play of maneuvers" instead of surrendering themselves to an absolutely uncrossable limit.[41]

(3) Play at the limit of language.

The consequence of overturning fixed binary divisions and relativizing the limits of language is that once philosophical discourse is freed from the static, non-relational understanding of the limit and function of language, options for novel linguistic strategies and styles are given their due. Thus we see, in Heidegger, the experiment of using philosophical tautology, his turn toward poetic and evocative language, his crossing out words he uses to mark their self-erasure, and his innovation in terminology. Correspondingly, we see, in Derrida, the effort to develop undecidable concepts which can no longer be enclosed in traditional oppositions, his preference for neither/nor, his playful and elusive style. In Kierkegaard, we see the strategies of indirect communication, use of metaphor, parable, irony; and so forth.

All these strategies can be seen as a kind of play at the limit of language. They aim particularly at eschewing the trap of a propositional, logical or descriptive language. To that language and its user, this kind of play may look neither serious nor unserious, neither normal nor abnormal, neither negative nor positive. It goes beyond every polarity. It is a transformation of language, a kind of linguistic wrestling, twisting or detouring, an employment of language against itself, an inscription with self-erasure, to negotiate the limit of language. The liminology of language, as such, can be regarded as an experiment in the production of linguistic strategies and styles, such as successive double negation, indirect communication, adopting poetic or evocative language, using irony, paradox, oxymoron, even tautology, reticence, etc. Thus, the liminology of language opens up great possibilities for ever differing–deferring practices of language. It is the possibility of such opening up itself.

All these three aspects are closely interrelated. To my understanding, they are what the liminology of language is all about. We may also conceive these three aspects as three levels within the liminology of language. The first is the experientio-analytic level. Problematizing starts with the analysis of our experience of the limit of language. It can lead to a metaphysical or trans-metaphysical view of the limit, since the interrogation of the limit cannot avoid answering the question of what lies on the other side, and therefore on both sides, of the limit of language. The liminology of language outlined above is particularly allied to the trans-metaphysical view of the limit. The second level in the liminology of language is trans-metaphysical.[42] The postmodern thinkers subvert the metaphysical appropriation – the absolutization – of the limit of language, and

reveal that the problem of the limit of language depends, to a great extent, on how we look at both sides of the limit, with a static, non-relational view or a dynamic, relational view. The third level – the exploration and development of novel linguistic strategies and styles as the consequence of trans-metaphysical insight and pragmatic wisdom – is practical. As we can see now quite clearly, the second and third levels are fundamental to the liminology of language. Without the second and third, how far a "radical problematization" can go would still be a question. With the second and third levels, the limit of language is legitimately relativized, and new possibilities for coping with the limit of language are explored practically.

It is especially in probing these two crucial aspects that we come to see the significance of inquiry into the liminology of language in the *Zhuangzi* and Chan Buddhism. First, we find that the *Zhuangzi* and Chan reach the de-absolutization of the limit of language by a complete penetration into the non-duality between speech and silence, speaking and non-speaking, etc. In blurring or even invalidating an absolute distinction between speech and silence, speaking and non-speaking, and in perceiving a dynamic connection and transition between the two sides of the boundary of language, Zhuangzi and the Chan masters, who are no less radical than our contemporaries, exemplify their great wisdom and insight.

Second, the *Zhuangzi* and Chan demonstrate a marvelous interplay between speech and silence, speaking and non-speaking, a skillful performance of linguistic twisting and detouring, and various effective strategies for coping with the limit of language, which go far beyond the current Western imagination. All these indicate that the *Zhuangzi* and Chan are great resources for a liminology of language.

Finally, the first aspect – radical problematization of the limit of language – is also important to the study of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan. The contemporary insight that the inexpressible is always inexpressible in relation to a certain system of expression will definitely help us to better understand the Zhuangzian and Chan Buddhist claim of the inadequacy of language. Although Zhuangzi and Chan Buddhists did not make their claims very clear, a careful reading and analysis of the texts will find that the inadequacy of language is in fact the inadequacy of certain dominant uses of language. Indications of opposition to any absolutized boundary of language are easily discernible in the Zhuangzian and Chan Buddhist discourse, although they focused instead on the transformation and overcoming of various relative limits of language.

This section, therefore, carries out a twofold task in using the liminology of language as an interpretive device: first, to rediscover the traditions of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan in relation to postmodern concerns with the limits of language and how to deal with them, to allow these two traditions to address the issues from their own perspectives, and to arouse contemporary interests in using these two traditions for the development of a liminology of language; second, to attempt an alternative interpretation of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan concerning their views of language and their uses of language. Much has been said about Zhuangzian and Chan Buddhist views of language and their uses of language. Nevertheless, it seems to me, a question remains unanswered. The question is how a school such as Chan can contain within itself the most radical negation of letters and words, and yet be "replete with practically every kind of literary production," as Nishitani once said about Chan (Zen) Buddhism.[43] Zhu Ziqing, a well-known modern Chinese writer and literary theorist, also once referred to this puzzle: "Chan Buddhists were renowned for so-called abandonment of language. . . . But meanwhile Chan Buddhists used language most briskly and flexibly."[44] The same question can easily be asked of the *Zhuangzi*.

Putting it another way, how can one bridge the gap between their apparently negative attitudes toward language and their most original and productive uses of language? What is the intrinsic relation between these two aspects, and how should we interpret that relation coherently? The investigation of the liminology of language in the *Zhuangzi* and Chan, I believe, will offer a valuable clue to the solution of this long-standing problem, and will be conducive to a better understanding of Zhuangzian and Chan Buddhist views of language.

Notwithstanding the importance of our investigation, we must be alert to differences between a Western postmodern liminology of language and a Daoist or Chan Buddhist approach. In addition to what I have discussed about the limitation of a postmodern approach to Zhuangzi's and Chan Buddhist thought,[45] I would like to address here two points regarding contextual differences to which our inquiry into the liminology of language must pay careful attention. As I indicated earlier, the postmodern thinkers base their de-absolutization of the limit of language upon the dimensions of contingency, temporality and historicity. To be fair to these thinkers, I also pointed out that they did not abandon the dimension of the limitless or infinite. I characterized their position as immanent transcendence. What I want to add here is that their dimension of the limitless is not

equivalent to the dimension of the timeless. It must be acknowledged that they privilege the dimension of time over the dimension of the timeless.

However, Zhuangzi and Chan Buddhists reach the relativization of the limit of language mainly by penetration into the non-duality between speech and silence, speaking and non-speaking, etc. Zhuangzi and Chan Buddhists are fully aware of the contingent nature of the world and human life, including human speech. Nevertheless, temporality or historicity is contained in their trans-temporal or trans-historical dimension, a dimension of interweaving time and the timeless, namely, a dimension of time in the timeless or of the timeless in time. Zhuangzi and Chan Buddhists believe that the perspective of the timeless is inseparable from, and can be realized within, the perspective of time or temporality. There is no separate world of the timeless. Attaining the timeless for Zhuangzi means to identify oneself with, and to follow, the infinite process of change and transformation of all things in the temporal world. Chan Buddhists hold a similar view. The Indian emphasis on the attainment of the timeless *nirvāṇa* is transformed into the Chan emphasis that enlightenment must be realized and verified in getting along with all changes in this mundane world. These positions also can be characterized as immanent transcendence. However, they still involve a perspective of the timeless that postmodern thinkers have missed. The Zhuangzian and Chan Buddhist trans-temporal or trans-historical dimension overflows any single dimension of temporality or historicity.[46] This may be one of those underlying principles that spell out undertakings different from postmodernism, and is one of the reasons that postmodern discourse cannot exhaust the *Zhuangzi* and Chan.

Furthermore, an inquiry into the liminology of language, or any intellectual maneuvers, has only a secondary place in Zhuangzian and Chan Buddhist practices. If Zhuangzi and the Chan masters demonstrate their great wisdom and insight with respect to a liminology of language, their wisdom and insight come out of their existentio-spiritual awakenings, out of their primary concerns with everyday soteriological practices within a variety of contexts. Of course, this is not to deny the significance of our inquiry into the liminology of language in the *Zhuangzi* and Chan, and not to negate the meaningfulness of disclosing some dimensions or angles that so far have perhaps been neglected in the study of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan. After all, these dimensions or elements are part of the heritage of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan, even though they cannot cover the whole range of their concerns and practices.

6

ZHUANGZI'S LIMINOLOGY OF "SPEAKING NON-SPEAKING"

Preliminary remarks

Of recent studies in Zhuangzi's view of language, two tendencies are, for my discussion, worthy of mention. One is represented by A. C. Graham, who notes the contradictory sides of Zhuangzi concerning the latter's negative attitude toward language and his productive use of language: "The irony is especially acute in the case of [Zhuangzi], a master of sophisticated argument, aphorism, anecdote, lyrical prose and gnomic verse who professes a boundless scepticism about the possibility of ever saying anything."[1] However, Graham goes on to center himself around the one side, namely, the explanation of Zhuangzi's use of language, his modes of discourse, without offering any convincing solution to the above-mentioned contradiction. The only interpretation regarding that contradiction Graham provides is the suggestion that Zhuangzi merely has the good sense to remind people of the limitations of the language, which he uses to guide them toward an altered perspective on the world and a way of living,[2] namely, that Zhuangzi does not totally reject language. Graham gives no detailed clarifications for the following questions: In what context does Zhuangzi's apparently negative attitude towards language take place? What kind of inadequacy of language is it that Zhuangzi so strongly urges people to be aware of? How is Zhuangzi's use of language a response to the limitations that he himself divulges? What is the intrinsic relation between Zhuangzi's seemingly negative attitude towards language and his highly original, productive use of language? As long as these critical questions are not answered, the contradictory sides of Zhuangzi concerning his view of language will continue to disturb readers. Since Graham does not successfully solve this problem, he basically repeats the puzzle of Zhuangzi, as most of his predecessors did.[3]

Another tendency is represented by Chad Hansen. In a way that is somehow connected with Graham's interpretations of Zhuangzi, Hansen develops his strong argument for the adequacy of language in Zhuangzi's philosophy.[4] We do not deny that his interpretation, which is based on the second chapter of the *Zhuangzi*, has a kind of clarity and consistency.[5] However, the problem with Hansen's inter-pretation is that he does not do justice to the text concerning the contradictory sides of Zhuangzi. As opposed to Graham's merely repeating Zhuangzi's contradiction, Hansen simply rules out the contradiction by ignoring those textual materials, which clearly demonstrate Zhuangzi's view of the inadequacy of language. Hansen never mentions that even in the text of the second chapter, Zhuangzi states: "If *dao* is made clear [by words], it is not *dao*. If words are argumentative, they do not reach the point."[6] For Hansen, this kind of textual evidence concerning the inadequacy of language simply does not exist or is irrelevant to his interpretation. He thus bases his interpretation on incomplete knowledge of the text or neglect in lieu of reconciliation of the contradictory sides.

Tang Junyi, in examining Zhuangzi's opinion of the relation between language and *dao*, suggests that there are different meanings or levels concerning Zhuangzi's view of language: the meaning or level of the inadequacy of speaking; the meaning or level of being beyond the opposite of speaking and silence; the meaning or level of the adequacy of both speaking and silence, and the like. Even the text of the inner chapters contains these meanings or levels rather than showing only one of them.[7] This analysis indicates that if an interpretation of Zhuangzi's view of language intends to do justice to the text, it has to deal with all these meanings or levels without neglecting any. It has to discover the intrinsic relations among these meanings or levels, on which a comprehensive understanding of the text can eventually be built, if it is concerned with its own cogency, without leaving out the contradictory sides. In this view, the approach of this chapter will differ significantly from both Graham's and Hansen's. The chapter will not merely restate the contradictory sides of Zhuangzi nor will it ignore them. It will attempt to shed new light on the long-standing contradiction via a liminological approach. It will analyze, both textually and theoretically, the different mean-ings or levels concerning Zhuangzi's view of language, and will pursue a coherent interpretation by inquiring into their intrinsic relations.

The context of the inadequacy of language in the *Zhuangzi*

I would argue that we should not consider Zhuangzi to be against all speaking, all uses of language, and should not take Zhuangzi's words such as *buchen* (being not named) or *buyan* (having no word) out of their context or at their face value.[8] However, it is quite necessary, first of all, to give a contextual analysis of the meanings of these words. One approach to Zhuangzi's contradictory views of language is the attempt to treat the inner chapters and the outer and the mixed chapters separately, and to base the study solely on the inner chapters. This is a popular approach. For instance, Tang Junyi, among others, once pointed out the reason for taking this approach, that in the outer and the mixed chapters some views of the inadequacy of language go so far as to extend the original view of the inner chapters to extremity, therefore deviating from the general purport of Zhuangzi.[9] It follows from this clarification that we should not identify those extreme views as consistent with Zhuangzi's.

This approach has its own advantage in solving the contradiction by excluding some textual materials from the study. However, it does not justify the position that we should examine the inner chapters only and ignore the outer and the mixed chapters. Here I would like to make clear that despite the understanding that the views of Zhuangzi of the inner chapters are of extreme importance, I will not confine my analysis to these alone. A main reason is that if the views of the inadequacy of language in the outer and the mixed chapters are analyzable, and if the result of this analysis serves our purpose well, namely, proves to be consistent, why should we give up on this attempt? Compared with the *Dao De Jing*, the *Zhuangzi* contains, no doubt, more detailed discussions on the inadequacy of language. However, do not these discussions provide more opportunities for a textual/contextual analysis of the inadequacy of language? In what follows, I shall demonstrate, case by case, that through a careful reading or analysis of the *Zhuangzi* one can be led to the realization that what Zhuangzi regards as the limit of language is always related to a prevalent way of using language, a particular way that language functions.

(1) In the "Qi Wu Lun" chapter, Zhuangzi's discussion of the inadequacy of language does not confirm that he holds a general view of the inadequacy of language. Expressions concerning the inadequacy of language, such as "being not named," "having no word," and so on, are closely related to Zhuangzi's attitude towards the *bian*

(disputes) of his time. Only in the context of his criticism of *bian* are words such as *buchen* and *buyan* used. In the statement "If words (*yan*) are argumentative (*bian*), they do not reach the point,"[10] we see quite plainly that the noun *yan* on which Zhuangzi expresses his negative view is modified and specified by the adjective *bian*. Hence, our first observation could be this: what is inadequate here is *yanbian*, the language of *bian*, or the disputatious use of language, not language *per se*. However, Zhuangzi does not completely reject dispute, since he favors a kind of "great disputation" in contrast to the *yanbian* he discredits. What, then, is Zhuangzi's exact point in his criticism of *yanbian*?

In classical Chinese, the character *bian* (dispute) is the synonym of another *bian* (discriminate), because the former contains the meaning of the latter. The character *bian* (discriminate) also has a synonym *pan* which, structurally consisting of "half" and "knife," means both to decide (to judge) and to divide (to cut into half). Dispute, as such, implies using language to discriminate, to divide. For Zhuangzi, a crucial point of his criticism of *bian* is that wherever there is dispute, something is left unseen. Wherever there is division, some-thing is left undivided.[11] Every doctrine, every philosophical position, in setting up a hierarchy, a system of right (*shi*) and wrong (*fei*), a fixed binary division, conceals something. Something else is being covered up by every seeing of something. This covering up, this closure, has no secure ground, not only because one thing and its other are mutually dependent or mutually conditioned, but also because it is always possible to shift the angles from which one looks at them.

To subvert the closure, Zhuangzi does not stand on the same level as his contemporary disputers do. He turns to *tianlai*, the piping of heaven: the differences among the myriad sounds are brought into being naturally, and the making and ceasing of these sounds, their changes, also come naturally.[12] Heaven (nature) privileges neither the Confucians' sound nor the Moists'. The relativity of dispute thus is the natural condition of the possibilities of all disputes. This relativity is the dimension of *dao*, a great dispute about all disputes.

In breaking down the logocentric closure of disputes Zhuangzi comes to criticize a particular view of language or a particular way of using language, which legitimizes the logocentric closure of these disputes. This view or this way of using language is especially reflected in the disputes about the relation of name (*ming*) and actu-ality (*shi*) among Confucians, Moists, and Dialecticians. The disputes about the relation of name and actuality in the pre-Qin period start

with the Confucian doctrine of the rectification of names. Although the rectification of names is not a theory of knowledge, but rather is a moral–political doctrine, it assumes a correspondence, one-name-one-thing, relation between language and (moral) reality.[13] It is therefore not without any intrinsic bearing on a more descriptive or referential notion of language, such as Xunzi's realistic development of this Confucian doctrine.[14]

In Zhuangzi's time, the descriptive, cognitive, or reifying function of language was specified especially by Neo-Moists and Dialecticians. Neo-Moists inherit Mozi's search for more objectivity and realism in their disagreement with Confucian reliance on conventions. They propose a correspondence theory of knowledge and language by emphasizing that referring and saying merely tell people what an object actually is.[15] Gongsun Long, a Dialectician, claimed: "A name is what designates an actuality."[16] Meanwhile, for him, a name also designates the universal underlying this particular.[17] The increasing prevalence of such descriptive, referential and reifying uses of language is precisely what constitutes the main feature of the disputatious language (*yanbian*) at that time.

Zhuangzi pointedly questions the reliability of the correspondence (one-name-one-thing) relation between language and reality. He illustrates his view in a well-known parable of the monkey trainer. The trainer's daily plan, that the monkeys got three acorns in the morning and four at night, irritated the monkeys. But his proposal that they got four in the morning and three at night pleased them. "There was no change in the reality behind the words, and yet the monkeys responded with joy and anger."[18] The story indicates that there is no underlying reason why the expression "four in the morning and three at night" is more attractive to the monkeys, even though the reality (seven a day) remains the same. It symbolizes that choosing words and names is a matter of contingency and convention, if not totally arbitrary. Zhuangzi explicitly asserts the conventional nature of language and refutes the view that the names of things represent the reality: "A road is made by people walking on it; things are so because they are called so."[19]

This statement does not mean that Zhuangzi adheres to conventionalism. Rather, for him, convention is always on the move. He maintains that language is inconstant.[20] Facing the objection that language is not only blowing breath and that language designates something, Zhuangzi replies that what language designates is never fixed.[21] For instance, one thing can be named differently by different speakers with different standpoints.

> No thing is not "that" (*bi*); no thing is not "this" (*shi*). If you
> take the standpoint of "this," from the standpoint of "that,"
> "this" still cannot be seen; but from your own standpoint,
> "this" can be realized.[22]

Thus the supposed one-name-one-thing relation between language
and reality is like something naively built on running water. The
disputatious language based on such a descriptive or referential view
of language only misleads people. The sage, therefore, rejects this
kind of disputatious language.

(2) Contrary to Zhuangzi's rebuttal of those who seek to grasp
reality by involving themselves in the *yanbian*, the *Zhuangzi* contains
some positive images of artisans, such as a butcher, wheelwright, and
the like, who demonstrate superb mastery of their arts, but are unable
to describe how their jobs are done. In the stories about these
artisans, we find that Zhuangzi's account of linguistic inadequacy
mainly alludes to the failure to capture living artistic experiences.
A most famous parable is about Wheelwright Bian, who describes
his situation:

> When I chisel a wheel, if the blows of the mallet are too
> gentle, the chisel slides and won't take hold. But if they're
> too hard, it bites in and won't budge. Not too gentle, not to
> hard – you can get it in your hand and feel it in your mind.
> You can't put it into words, and yet there's a knack to it
> somehow. I can't teach it to my son, and he can't learn
> it from me.[23]

The inadequacy of language here comprises two points. First,
Wheelwright Bian's story is just like those things that often happen
in our own times – merely telling or learning guiding principles,
procedures, concepts, and so on, cannot assure us of achieving the
state of art, which certainly goes beyond any objective knowledge.
The state of art is a harmonious moment. Although it is the outcome
of the practical function of the body and mind and the mastery of
object, this harmonious state transcends both the subject and the
object. In this regard, the dimension of practice or of experience in
art always exceeds conceptualization, simply because any conceptu-
alization is always an objectification that has to be overcome before
attaining the state of art. That is also the point Cook Ding, another
well-known artisan of Zhuangzi's, conveys when he talks about the
way of art surpassing mere technique, which obviously is understood

as a kind of objective knowledge. "Perception and understanding have come to a stop and spirit moves where it wants."[24]

Second, since what can be taught and learned through words are, under common circumstances, objectified and conceptualized procedures or principles, they are not equivalent to living experiences. From the viewpoint of living artistic experience, what records or describes other masters' experiences is not of great importance. The essential thing for a successful performance of art is the engaging subjectivity of each artisan, which finally transcends itself and objectivity. For this reason, Wheelwright Bian downplays books and words.[25] The inadequacy of language involved in these parables means quite clearly: the limit of a descriptive, categorical language.

(3) In the outer and the mixed chapters of the *Zhuangzi*, more cases directly concern the view that words are not sufficient to convey the experience of *dao* (in relation to artistic experiences and yet beyond them).[26] In these cases, the meaning of the inadequacy of language becomes clearer.

As I mentioned earlier, Zhuangzi's notion of *dao* addresses the relativity of all disputes. It is a dispute about all disputes. *Dao* also reveals the relativity of all beings, things, words, and the like.[27] Thus the notion of *dao* does not avoid addressing the condition of the possibilities of all beings, things, words, and indeed regards this relativity as the condition of possibilities, as we have seen in the notion of *tianlai*. However, one thing that distinguishes Zhuangzi's *dao* from any ontological or metaphysical claim is that for Zhuangzi, this view of the condition of possibilities is nonetheless an understanding of the functioning of the world in which we human beings live, a view that exists among many views, a perspective that exists among other perspectives. The special use of this view or this perspective lies in the fact that it serves a soteriological purpose or, generally speaking, guides people towards their existentio-spiritual awakening from any one-sided, absolutized views or perspectives. That is all! After serving its purpose, it can simply be forgotten or be thrown away, just as a ladder can be abandoned after being climbed. *Dao*, in this sense, is a holistic dimension, or a dimension of wholeness, although it does not hypostatize anything.[28] Since it is not a dimension of things or entities, the question of the inadequacy of using a discriminative, entitative language to convey the dimension arises.

Human language, in its discursive use, is preponderantly discriminative, entitative, and even metaphysical. When dimensionally or perspectively referring to the overall condition of the possibilities of things, to the non-discriminative whole of the life-world, it inevitably

misleads and betrays. Zhuangzi is acutely aware of the risk of adopting "*dao*" as a temporary expedient to convey the holistic dimension.[29] Therefore, he points out: "[T]hat which words can adequately describe, that which knowledge can reach to, extends only as far as the level of 'things,' no farther."[30] Obviously, *dao* is not a thing:

> While there are names and realities, you are in the presence of things. When there are no names and realities, you exist in the absence of things. You can talk about it, you can think about it; but the more you talk about it, the farther away you get from it.[31]

This paragraph reminds us of Zhuangzi's refutation of the correspondence relation between names and realities and his rejection of the discriminative, disputatious use of language in the "Qi Wu Lun" chapter. Since *dao* designates no entity, it cannot be inquired about by descriptive language, and "even if it is asked about, there can be no answer."[32] By the same token, "Eloquence is not as good as silence."[33] It is not difficult to see here that Zhuangzi endeavors, through emphasizing non-speaking or silence, to eschew the linguistic trap of a metaphysics of presence, to suspend the linguistic re-presentation of things, to interrupt turning away from the soteriological or therapeutic function of the discourse.

In sum, the contextual analysis of Zhuangzi's discussions on the inadequacy of language resists the myth of Zhuangzi's complete negation of language. What appears as a negative attitude towards language is always related to a particular function of language, a prevalent or conventional way of using language, which could be called descriptive, entitative, reifying, or metaphysical.

How Zhuangzi does not reject all speaking

If the preceding examination correctly reveals that there is no total rejection of language advocated by Zhuangzi, but a negation or silencing of a particular function of language, a conventional way of using language, then we find that Zhuangzi stands in a position that is not in conflict with a positive attitude towards speaking. The point Zhuangzi tries to make is rather how to speak differently, how to use language differently. Here I want to make explicit that both practically and theoretically, Zhuangzi does not reject speaking and language in favor of complete silence. Since what Zhuangzi negates is merely a particular use of language, when he, in some other

occasions, refers to the use of language positively, or talks about different uses of language, there is certainly no inconsistency involved in his attitude towards language. The text itself supplies a good many examples that support or can justify this point.

(1) In the chapter "The Great Ancestral Teacher," Zhuangzi first states that being absent-minded, the true man (the Daoist ideal person) is forgetful of his words.[34] This notion of the forgetfulness of language (*wangyan*) is developed further in a well-known passage in chapter 26:

> The fish trap exists because of the fish; once you've gotten the fish, you can forget the trap. The rabbit snare exists because of the rabbit; once you've gotten the rabbit, you can forget the snare. Words exist because of meaning; once you've gotten the meaning, you can forget the words. Where can I find a man who has forgotten words so I can have a [few] word[s] with him?[35]

As we can see quite clearly, Zhuangzi considers language to be as necessary as other human tools from a pragmatic point of view. We use language to serve our purpose, just as we use a trap to catch fishes or a snare to capture rabbits. In terms of this perspective, the notion of the forgetfulness of language presupposes the use of language. Only after using language can people forget language. Forgetfulness reaches a higher level of using language that never falls into the trap or snare of words. Therefore, the notion does not suggest the abandonment of language, but teaches us to speak better or communicate better, to obtain a better consequence, as Zhuangzi puts this point so well: Where can I find a man who has forgotten words so I can have a few words with him?

(2) In chapter 25, Zhuangzi declares:

> *Dao*, the delimitation of things – neither speech nor silence is sufficient to convey it. Neither speech nor silence – herein is [to be found] the highest form of discourse.[36]

This statement is pivotal to Zhuangzi's position. It demonstrates that from a de-absolutized perspective of *dao*, Zhuangzi does not privilege either speech or silence. He is more flexible and skillful in avoiding a logocentric hierarchy of speech and silence than people used to imagine. For him, speech and silence are all relative, just like anything else. Each has its limit in a particular use. Thus we could

distinguish Zhuangzi's thought from those onto-theologies of speech or silence, such as the Indian Vedic notion of divine speech (*vāc*) and the Upanishadic notion of the highest state of silent sleep.[37]

In contrast to these metaphysical determinations of speech and silence, Zhuangzi suggests two things: (i) The best way is to detach from either speech or silence. Once you realize the relativity of all speech and silence from the perspective of *dao*, you have more freedom in using speech or silence flexibly, skillfully, deconstructively.[38] (ii) There might be an ingenious way to develop a new strategy that stands between speech and silence, that cannot be reduced to a conventional speech or silence, for coping with the limit of speech or silence, as we will see later on in the discussion of his liminological play.

(3) Zhuangzi evidently favors a kind of paradoxical language, which he calls *diaogui* in chapter 2. No matter how bizarre it appears, a great sage, according to Zhuangzi, understands such a language.[39] Elsewhere he also indicates that he is good at "absurd speech" (*miuyou zhishuo*), "extravagant words" (*huangtang zhiyan*) and so on.[40] A more comprehensive characterization is Zhuangzi's use of language as "goblet words" (*zhiyan*), namely, as those that are like a goblet that tips when full and rights itself when empty.[41] They adapt to and follow along with changes in things and people. They are not fixed signifiers or signifieds. Therefore, though they seem outlandish or absurd, deviating from common sense or formal logic, they are in harmony with what is natural (what is spontaneously so), with the flux of all things and circumstances. These characterizations of the peculiar use of language confirm that Zhuangzi does allow for a positive role that language plays.

(4) To avoid a metaphysics of presence, to de-center *dao*, Zhuangzi stresses that *dao* has no specific presence. *Dao* is not a particular thing. But "there's no escape from things."[42] Since *dao* is a dimension of spontaneity, a perspective on the natural condition of the possibilities of things, "whenever you point to one thing among many, this thing contains or manifests the perspective (or principle) of what is natural."[43] Therefore, as Zhuangzi says, *dao* manifests itself "in ants," "in panic grass," "in tiles and shards," and even "in piss and shit."[44] "The supreme *dao* is like this, and so too are great words."[45] Here "great words" (*dayan*) also means the speaking or language of *dao*. Just as *dao* cannot escape from things (even though it is not a thing), the language of *dao* cannot escape from the language of things (even though they are different). This is an important view to de-constitute any possible ontological status of *dao* and any transcendental ground of a meta-language or an utter silence. For Zhuangzi, the language

of *dao* must be a transformation of the language of things, not an abandonment of any speaking or language.

"Speaking non-speaking" as a marginal, liminological play of language

Thus the question Zhuangzi faces is that if he does not want to retreat into a complete silence, nor surrender himself to a conventional way of speaking, what can he do? The answer Zhuangzi gives is "speaking non-speaking" (*yan wuyan*), which plainly develops from Laozi's notion of "the teaching of non-speaking" (*buyan zhijiao*).[46] However, Zhuangzi does not merely interpret Laozi's "the teaching of non-speaking." The primitive form of *buyan zhijiao* cannot match the sophistication and richness of Zhuangzi's liminology of *yan wuyan*. "Speaking non-speaking" has been a puzzle to readers generation after generation. Zhuangzi's so-called negative attitude towards language has always been labeled by his emphasis on "non-speaking." Strictly speaking, "non-speaking" is merely an incomplete form of his notion. The complete form should be "speaking non-speaking" or "the speaking of non-speaking." The oft-omitted part is crucial to an appropriate understanding of Zhuangzi's view of language and his strategy.[47]

The mutual connection and transition between speaking and non-speaking (or silence)

"Speaking non-speaking" concerns both speaking and non-speaking. Resting on his pragmatic wisdom and trans-metaphysical insight, Zhuangzi frees himself from attachment to either speaking or silence, as noted in the foregoing discussion. This also enables Zhuangzi to conceive the speaking–silence relation in a non-static, mutually penetrating, or mutually transitional way. For Zhuangzi, there has never been an absolute distinction between speaking and non-speaking (or silence). The "Qi Wu Lun" chapter records the following words: "He speaks without saying anything; he says something without speaking."[48] On close inspection, the notion of "speaking non-speaking" contains several profound meanings. First, the negation or silence of a certain way of speaking has to be brought into effect by language or speaking itself. Notice what Zhuangzi tells us: "*Speak* non-speaking!" Zhuangzi must be aware that silence becomes silence only in relation to speaking. Silence makes sense only within the domain of language. In other words, to maintain an authentic silence or non-speaking, he may have to speak first. Hence, we eventually get the whole book *Zhuangzi*.

Second, silence can be a sign. As Merleau-Ponty observes, "The absence of a sign can be a sign."[49] Within the context of the *Zhuangzi*, silence or non-speaking especially says "no" to descriptive, entitative or reifying speech. Besides, by negation or silencing of descriptive, entitative or reifying language, something outside the language, something that is beyond the limit of this kind of language, is being pointed to. Precisely in the sense of this transitionary relationship, we come to understand what Zhuangzi states: with non-speaking, you may say nothing throughout your life, in which case you will never have stopped speaking.[50]

Third, inversely, speaking might turn out to be as silent as non-speaking under certain circumstances. On the negative side, no matter how long a reifying speech may last, it will never hit the mark, never point to *dao*. In this connection, it says nothing. On the positive side, a person, with words such as "non-speaking," may speak throughout his life without having ever fallen into the trap of conventional, reifying speech. When Zhuangzi writes: "[Y]ou may speak all your life long and you will never have said anything," he mainly refers to the latter.[51] Zhuangzi's discernment of the dynamic, transitionary relation between speaking and non-speaking opens great possibilities for his coming to grips with the limit of language, and breaks new ground for a liminological play.

The similar patterns between "the speaking of non-speaking" and "the use of the useless"

If we do not treat "speaking non-speaking" in isolation from Zhuangzi's other teachings, namely, if we give heed to the similar strategies Zhuangzi adopts for some of his other teachings, we may have a clue to a better understanding of "speaking non-speaking." A similar strategy can first be seen in Laozi's notion of "taking action of non-action" (*wei wuwei*).[52] Laozi's point is not that we completely abandon any action. He is concerned with how we act better or do better by way of non-action or non-doing. "Taking action of non-action" is neither a conventional way of doing things nor a complete abandonment of action. Zhuangzi inherits Laozi's notion of "taking action of non-action" and applies the same strategy to his own teaching.

One of the most illuminating examples is Zhuangzi's well-known notion of "the use of the useless." Reversing the conventional view of what is useless, Zhuangzi underscores that the useless has its use (*wuyong zhi weiyong*):[53]

> The cinnamon can be eaten and so it gets cut down; the lacquer tree can be used and so it gets hacked apart. All men know the use of the useful, but nobody knows the use of the useless![54]

Here I am not exploring the various meanings or implications of "the use of the useless," but rather calling attention to his strategy. Taking into account Zhuangzi's other statement – "A man has to understand the useless before you can talk to him about the useful"[55] – we discover that "the use of the useless" can be defined neither as a total negation of any use nor as an affirmation of conventional use. It is an unconventional use by way of being conventionally useless. The strategy is plainly analogous to the one Zhuangzi takes in his saying: "Where can I find a man who has forgotten words so I can have a [few] word[s] with him?" What is common to all these expressions: the action of non-action, the use of the useless, the speaking of non-speaking? A play at the boundaries between action/non-action, useful/useless, speaking/non-speaking, a dazzling move to let the outside in, or bring the inside out, a kind of linguistic twisting, a delay or detour. It works in such a way as to overturn every conventional and logocentric hierarchy.

The liminological nature of "speaking non-speaking"

Now we might conclude that "speaking non-speaking" is a trans-conventional, marginal speech.[56] It speaks by way of non-speaking. It is a kind of linguistic twisting and detouring as play at the boundary between speaking and silence, speech, and non-speech. It is neither a continuation of conventional, reifying speech, nor utter silence. Since it is marginal and playful, it evades every binary distinction. In this sense, it is beyond speech and silence. Its liminological nature generally involves two aspects. On the one hand, since the nullity that language carries within itself can be announced only by language – the only tool Zhuangzi can use – a possible way out is to use language against itself, to allow language to do violence to itself. That is to say, he speaks something (in the sense of adopting) and at the same time he erases it, announces its nullity, in order not to speak something, in order not to fall into the metaphysical or logocentric trap of language. The strategy can even be traced back to the remarkable opening paragraph of the *Dao De Jing* in which Laozi says in the same manner: "The *dao* that can be spoken of is not the enduring *dao*."[57]

The consequence of such a self-erasure is the shaping and development of a new linguistic strategy, a new linguistic style. Therefore, on the other hand, by the withdrawal of metaphysical or reifying language, by only suggesting that something not being said is speaking, by producing in the language effects relative to that which is not in the language, the so-called unsayable or unnamable (namely, what language is inadequate to convey) is being shown, or being approached. If my interpretation of Zhuangzi's strategy, or my delineation of his linguistic twisting and detouring as play at the boundary between the sayable and the unsayable, makes sense, then the seeming inconsistency of his swing between speech and silence, between the so-called negative attitude towards language and his highly productive speaking–writing, can definitely be solved.

"Speaking non-speaking" and the pragmatics of indirect communication

Zhuangzi's "speaking non-speaking," as a liminological play of language, as a kind of linguistic twisting and detouring, is, by nature, indirect. Its strategy thus has much to do with what is called indirect communication. For example, Zhuangzi's liminology uses indirect language. This indirect language, or generally speaking, metaphorical language, serves as a means to overcome the limit of direct language, such as descriptive, cognitive, or propositional, language. Zhuangzi is a great master of indirect communication and metaphorical language. His "dwelling words" (*yuyan*) and "double-layered words" (*chongyan*) are all metaphorical.[58] Paradoxical words, as a sort of linguistic twisting, also are indirect and can be included in the broad sphere of metaphorical language. Insofar as Zhuangzi uses language metaphorically, the conventional distinction between the logical and the paradoxical becomes peripheral.

Moreover, within the domain of indirect communication, paradoxical language is no longer subsidiary to formal language. For Zhuangzi, there is no fundamental difference between philosophy and literature, philosophical language, and metaphorical language. This, of course, enhances his capability of dealing with the limit of language. Our investigation of Zhuangzi's liminology of language thus inevitably leads to the investigation of Zhuangzi's pragmatics of indirect communication. However, such a study cannot be "a formal pragmatics," but only a contextual investigation of the strategies of indirect communication. Since this investigation covers a wide range of issues and many details, I must leave it for a separate chapter.

THE CHAN
CONTRIBUTION TO
THE LIMINOLOGY
OF LANGUAGE

Preliminary remarks

(1) The emergence of the Chan liminology of language has its root in both the Buddhist tradition and the Daoist, especially Zhuangzi's legacy. It is an established fact that the Chan masters openly favor Zhuangzi's vocabulary, his linguistic strategy, and his view of language. This does not mean that the Chan masters simply followed or copied Zhuangzi's view and strategy. If that were the case, the Chan discourse would not be the second great resource for the liminology of language after the *Zhuangzi*. In putting into practice their own soteriological or therapeutic mission, Chan Buddhists create their own liminology which absorbed, enriched and developed Zhuangzi's liminology of "speaking non-speaking." Accordingly, this chapter will not focus upon how the Chan masters adopted Zhuangzi's vocabulary and strategy, but rather on the "topology" of the liminology of language, namely, on how the Chan masters engage in the similar liminological play within altered – i.e. Buddhist – contexts, and how they make their own contribution to the liminology of language. In this way, we will see, more clearly, similarity/difference, continuity/discontinuity, between Zhuangzi's and Chan Buddhist liminology of language.

(2) A liminological approach to the contradictory phenomena of the so-called Chan denial of language and the great Chan art of speaking is incompatible with some dominant modern interpretations of the Chan/Zen view of language. For instance, echoing logical positivism, Fung Yu-lan interprets Chan thought as a philosophy of silence, which says nothing about the noumenon – the unknowable.[1] This makes the Chan view somewhat close to the early

Wittgenstein's absolutization of the limit of language. It fails to appreciate the trans-metaphysical meaning of the Chan insight into a complete interplay between speaking and silence. Similarly, D. T. Suzuki sometimes assumes a dichotomy between silence and verbalism, placing Chan at one extremity of this dichotomy.[2] The dominant modern interpretations of the Chan/Zen view of language have inevitably given rise to various criticisms.

Dale Wright and Bernard Faure have provided pioneer works in the recent rethinking of the relationship between Chan/Zen and language.[3] Both criticize the assertion that Chan/Zen simply transcends or negates language. Both attempt a reconfiguration of the role of language in Chan/Zen and provide textual evidence to justify it. Generally speaking, my investigation of the Chan view of language can be regarded as part of this tendency to shape a better understanding of that view. However, Wright's approach relies heavily on reflections drawn from contemporary Western philosophy.[4] Faure's study contains extensive historico-textual materials from Chan/Zen, but does not engage fully in a systematic, theoretical interpretation. Both fail to provide a more systematic reconstruction, or a more comprehensive and coherent understanding, of the Chan view of language. A systematic analysis and interpretation of Chan notions of language has yet to be achieved. It is to this kind of analysis, reconstruction, or understanding that, I believe, my liminological approach will eventually contribute.

The context for the Chan Buddhist view of the inadequacy of language

Undeniably, the Chan attitude toward language has its doctrinal or ideological foundation in Mahāyāna Buddhism. For this reason, our inquiry into the Chan notion of the inadequacy of language must start with an examination of this foundation. A careful contextual analysis of the Mahāyāna discourse on the inadequacy of language will reveal what is meant by the inadequacy of language.

A very influential notion of the inadequacy of language in Mahāyāna Buddhism derives from Mādhyamika philosophy. In the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (hereafter *Kārikā*) 18:7, Nāgārjuna states: "When the object of thought is no more there is nothing for language to refer to. The true nature of things neither arises nor perishes, as *nirvāṇa* does not."[5] This statement has been considered foundational to the so-called Mādhyamika negation of language.[6] As Kalupahana correctly observes, it is possible for interpreters of Nāgārjuna to

assume that the "ineffable" is identical to *śūnyatā*, *paramārtha*, or *nirvāṇa*. Nevertheless, Kalupahana states: "[T]he first line of Nāgārjuna's statement should prevent anyone from reaching such a conclusion."[7] A scrutiny of Nāgārjuna's entire work, and of Candrakīrti's interpretation of it, shows that Nāgārjuna specifically negates a cognitive, entitative, or descriptive language, as well as a correspondence relation between language and object.

According to Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti, soteriological terms such as "devoid of self-existence," "not devoid of self-existence," and so on, should no longer be asserted as predicates (even though they have the form of predicates).[8] These terms should no longer serve the purpose of describing subjects, simply because noun words such as *nirvāṇa*, *paramārtha*, or *śūnyatā*, in the Buddhist discourse, are not entities, and, therefore, not the objects of any cognitive activities. Words, sentences, and speeches are, in fact, prescriptions for curing people's illness by merely recommending the attitude and behavior of nonclinging to things. Mādhyamika philosophy provides great insight into the intrinsic link between descriptive, imputative language, and cognitive reification. For Mādhyamika, the world of ordinary language is the realm of naming and things named, knowing and things known, and so forth.[9] Language constitutes the world, insofar as the external world as object always means the object grasped in thought, and insofar as language always imputes specific attributes to the object of thought.[10]

Referred to as *prapañca*, this entified world constructed through cognitive language is considered by Mādhyamika to be the root of all kinds of metaphysical thinking and all forms of clinging and suffering. A primary goal of the Mādhyamika teaching of emptiness is to bring *prapañca* to an end.[11] It is within this context that Nāgārjuna's verse 18: 7 can be properly understood. Nāgārjuna asserts that when a referent no longer exists, referential language is no longer adequate. Elsewhere he also suggests, as we have seen, that when language no longer functions by reference to objects, it ceases to name things, such that it no longer serves discursive thought or makes cognitive assertions. Both point to the inadequacy of the referential, cognitive function of language – the predominant use of language.

The inadequacy of language is also addressed by many Mahāyāna scriptures. Despite various negative statements about language in various scriptures, a close examination often discloses that the alleged inadequacy of language is always related to a certain mode of speaking, or a particular function of language. Among these

Mahāyāna scriptures, the *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, well known for its connection with the *tathāgatagarbha* theory and early Yogācāra thought as well as its great impact on Chan, is deserving of special attention. Notwithstanding a general claim of the inadequacy of words and letters, the *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra* offers a specific account of what it emphatically opposes:

> Said the Blessed One: Even when there are no [corresponding] objects there are words, Mahāmati; for instance, the hare's horns, the tortoise's hair, a barren woman's child, etc. . . . they are neither entities nor non-entities but expressed in words. If, Mahāmati, you say that because of the reality of words the objects are, this talk lacks in sense. . . . [W]ords, Mahāmati, are an artificial creation. . . . [T]he validity of all things has nothing to do with the reality of words.[12]

This is simply an explicit negation of the imagined correspondence relation between language and objects, and, therefore, of a descriptive, entitative, or cognitive use of language. The *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra* stresses the inner realization of supreme wisdom mainly by meditational practice and experience. This kind of "inner realization" cannot be achieved by any cognitive activity using discriminative language and dualistic thinking, since no such objective, isolated state of mind exists, to which a cognitive language can refer. "What has been realized by the Tathāgatas, [that] is my own realization. . . ."[13] Everybody has to realize his or her own enlightenment by engaging his or her own subjectivity. Since no awakened state of mind stands behind each general term or expression, nothing can be grasped or gained through restricting oneself to "the words of the canonical texts."[14]

The Chan masters align themselves with the Mahāyāna critique of the descriptive, entitative, or cognitive use of language. While the Chan masters claim that language is inadequate, this claim is inseparable from their denial of the appropriateness of a cognitive maneuver (*zhijian*, or *zhijie*). For instance, Baizhang Huaihai states:

> You must stop all cognition of being or of non-being, stop all desires and pursuits. . . . Nowadays there are cognitions or opinions about the Buddhas. But what people know about, what they seek after, or what they attach themselves to, all can be called the waste of the illusory knowledge produced by cognitive language. They can also be called "coarse language" (*cuyan*) or "dead language" (*siyu*).[15]

Why are cognitive discourses coarse (not refined) or dead (not living) language? Because they are the pitfalls of a deceptive correspondence relation between language and reality. Chan masters often advise their disciples that the Buddhist reality "is not something that can be obtained through [descriptive] words and language."[16] "Those who search for written words, and thereby look for the corresponding reality, become even more impeded by them."[17]

A similar, but more forceful, critique appears in the recorded sayings of Linji. Linji repeatedly points out: *Buddha*, *dharma*, *dao*, "all are empty names and designate no true reality."[18] All Buddhist doctrines and teachings are "simply medicines to cure diseases of the moment"; "None of them designate any true reality."[19] He further declares:

> The various phenomena in this world and other worlds are in all cases devoid of self-nature. . . . They are empty names, and the words used to describe them are likewise empty. But you think these idle names represent realities. This is a great error.[20]

His simile – "All sounds, names, words, phrases are like changes of robes" – expresses his belief that language, like other useful things or tools, serves only practical purposes and is always in the process of change due to different contexts and situations. Similarly, one person can wear and change different robes, but you cannot claim that a robe defines the reality of the person.[21] Thus the radical Chan emphasis on non-reliance upon words, or, in Baizhang Huaihai's terms, on non-restriction of words,[22] aims particularly at freeing Chan Buddhists from the restriction of the descriptive, entitative, or cognitive use of language. The result of asserting "the inadequacy of language" is not to turn completely away from language, as we will see, but to turn "within language."

Addressing the necessity or inevitability of using language

Between pointing out the insufficiency of language in conveying *dao* and engaging in marginal speech, Zhuangzi does not straightfor-wardly answer the question of why it is necessary or inevitable to use language. Zhuangzi only hints that the language of *dao* cannot escape from the language of things.[23] In this respect, however, the Chan masters are quite different. Informed by the Mādhyamika analysis of

the twofold truth, of the relation between language and the world, and so forth, the Chan discourse is able to be more specific regarding the need to speak.

When analyzing the twofold truth – *saṃvṛti* (worldly convention) and *paramārtha* (higher meaning or truth) – Nāgārjuna explains: "Unless worldly convention is accepted as a base, the higher meaning cannot be taught; if the higher meaning is not understood, *nirvāṇa* cannot be attained."[24] Candrakīrti clarifies that one of the meanings of *saṃvṛti* is "the world of ordinary language."[25] Thus, for Mādhyamika, to accept worldly convention as a base is to accept conventional language as a base. Nāgārjuna's verse unmistakably shows his insight into the need to use language. Sengzhao, the Chinese Mādhyamika thinker who had a great impact on Chan, grasps Nāgārjuna's point very well. He writes: "Though language cannot fully express the nameless *dharma*, without using language, the *dharma* cannot be conveyed."[26]

The situation a Mahāyāna Buddhist faces here is very much analogous to the one the Daoist thinker Zhuangzi faced long ago, namely, how to find a way out between the conventional use of language and complete silence. However, the context of this problem now presupposes the understanding of both the insufficiency of language and the necessity of using it as primordial to the Buddhist philosophy of the Middle Way. The Middle Way maintains a nirvanic dimension in the everyday world without presupposing a transcendental realm. By the same token, it pinpoints the insufficiency of conventional language without postulating any sacred language (whether a meta-language or complete silence). This position is like a thread running through the Buddha's teaching, Mādhyamika discourse, and Chan practice, advising Buddhists to avoid sliding into any extremist attitude toward language.

The Middle Way thus provides a solid ground for a Buddhist liminology of language. If language use was not necessary and inevitable, the Buddha would have remained silent forever. Then he would never have been the Buddha for sentient beings. Only to the extent that neither retreat into complete silence nor ignorance of linguistic insufficiency are satisfactory does a liminological exercise become credible. The fact that Zhuangzi, as a precursor, prominently engaged in marginal speech qualifies him as practicing a kind of Daoist Middle Way. However, Chan Buddhists more plainly thematize the issue of the necessity or inevitability of using language, while simultaneously addressing the insufficiency or inadequacy of language.

Following Nāgārjuna and the Mahāyāna notion of *upāya* (skillful means), the Chan masters express their concern about the necessity of language use from a heuristic or pedagogic perspective. *The Platform Sūtra* contains the following explanation: "All the sutras and written words . . . are established for men. . . . Should deluded people ask the wise, the wise will expound the *Dharma* for the stupid and enable them to understand and gain a deep awakening."[27] The *Jingde Chuandeng Lu*, fascicle 7 records:

> One day Mazu Daoyi asked Zhizang: "Why don't you read sutras?" Zhizang said: "What is the difference between a sutra and me?" Mazu said: "However that may be, you should get it in the future for the sake of other people."[28]

This use of language, including reading scriptures and preaching, "for the sake of other people," in Huangbo Xiyun's terms, is using "words for accommodating and guiding people" (*jieyin zhici*).[29] The Chan masters are fully aware that they cannot avoid using language to accommodate and guide people: "When host and guest meet each other, there cannot but be exchanges of words and remarks." Therefore, they ask their disciples to "pay strict attention" to the use of language.[30] For this reason, Huineng, Baizhang and Linji all formulated and handed down to their disciples a special use of language. Huineng taught his disciples how to preach *Dharma* by "utilizing the thirty-six pairs of opposites and going around without attaching to either side."[31] Baizhang preferred using "the sentences that cut off the connection with two opposites."[32] Linji talked about "one phrase with three dark gates and three vital seals," and so on.[33]

Nevertheless, these highly skillful uses of language in diverse contexts are not easy for most Chan students to practice. Oftentimes these skillful uses are the feats of enlightened ones. In the process of study and practice, in the encounter with Buddhist traditions, the task of keeping a focus on existentio-spiritual awakening, eschewing the trap of certain prevalent uses of language, remains. Hence, Chan masters fight tirelessly against any search through words and letters. This position does not necessarily require the abandonment of language. *The Platform Sūtra* shows an unusual discernment concerning the hidden relation between a negation of language and the inevitable use of language.

> People who attach to emptiness . . . simply say that we should not use written words. Since they have said that,

language also becomes inappropriate for them. However, such linguistic expressions already have a form of written words. Again, they say that direct *dao* does not establish any written words. But merely these two words – "not establish" – are already written words.[34]

Huineng is explicating here that even if people negate language one way or another, when they convey this negation, they cannot help but use language. Chan masters have no illusion that they can get rid of language in their this-worldly enterprise of "curing people's illness." On this account, the Chan critique of the conventional use of language is by no means tantamount to the rejection of language. It is better understood as an effort to find an alternative way of communication, an alternative way of using language.

Unveiling the non-duality between speech and silence

Detachment from dualistic thinking is one of the chief characteristics of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Nāgārjuna's famous eight negations – the negations of four pairs of opposites – in the dedicatory verses of his *kārikā* set a pattern for subsequent development of non-dualistic discourse in various schools of Mahāyāna Buddhism.[35] The *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra* presents its account of non-duality as follows:

> [W]hat is meant by non-duality? It means that light and shade, long and short, black and white, are relative terms, . . . and not independent of each other; . . . for the condition of existence is not of mutually exclusive character. Therefore, it is said that all things are non-dual as are [*nirvāṇa*] and [*saṃsāra*].[36]

It is logical to include the pair of speech and silence in the Mahāyāna reflections on non-duality. The *Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra* seems to be on the verge of addressing this topic, when it touches upon the relation between speech and silence in the discussion of "the *dharma* gate of non-duality." However, it leaves the impression that the best entrance into non-duality is silence, and therefore may lend itself to the privileging of silence over speaking.[37]

Despite this, the *Prajñāpāramitā* tradition and other Mahāyāna scriptures provide provocative views in blurring an absolute demarcation between speaking and non-speaking. For example, in the

Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra (or *Diamond Sūtra*) we read: "What do you think, Subhuti, is there any [*dharma*] which the Tathāgata has taught? – Subhuti replied: No indeed, O Lord, there is not."[38] This view contradicts the conventional opinion that the Buddha taught or spoke something. The distinction between what is spoken and what is not spoken, between speaking and non-speaking, is obscured.[39] This idea is further articulated by the *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*: "It is said by the Blessed One that from the night of the Enlightenment till the night of the [*parinirvāṇa*], the Tathāgata in the meantime has not uttered even a word, . . . for not-speaking is the Buddha's speaking."[40] All these expressions imply the non-duality of speech and silence, or the dynamic, transitional relation between them. However, in most cases, these implications are not fully developed. Only when we delve into Chan discourse do we find clear-cut statements about the non-duality of speech and silence.

In his *Wanling Lu*, Huangbo Xiyun unequivocally states: "Speaking is silence (*yu ji mo*); silence is speaking (*mo ji yu*); speaking and silence are non-dualistic (*yumo buer*)."[41] Another Chan master, Dazhu Huihai, construes Vimalakīrti's silence as being beyond speaking and non-speaking, a silencing of the duality between silence and speech – a strategy very similar to Mādhyamika's emptiness of emptiness and Zhuangzi's nothingness of nothingness.[42] By these statements, Chan masters demonstrate that they apply the principle of *pratītyasamutpāda* (interdependent arising) to the issue of speech and silence, presenting a non-isolated, truly relational understanding of speech and silence. Speech and silence thus no longer have their self-identity, for one always functions in relation to the other, and always has its absent presence in the other. Each always retains traces of the other. Sengzhao's saying – "Speech always has something unspoken" – might be a good footnote to the Chan notion of the speech–silence relation.[43] Chan masters might add one more point to Sengzhao's saying: silence always speaks.

As soon as the Chan masters bring speech and silence within the reach of relational, non-dualistic understanding, the functions of speech and silence are liberated from the conventional fixation. As a consequence, Chan Buddhists acquire a better grasp of the Buddha's strategy and better guidance for their own soteriological practice. On the one hand, silence is no longer considered mere silence. "The Tathāgata's silence speaks just as his speech does (*yu yi shuo mo yi shuo*)." "The Tathāgata always speaks – there has never been such a time the Tathāgata does not preach."[44] One of the examples used to illustrate this point is the Buddha's silence in the face of fourteen

metaphysical questions, signifying the Buddha's refusal to take a stand in metaphysical debates. This case, as well as Vimalakīrti's silence mentioned above, indicates that silence, in certain Buddhist contexts, is close to a special kind of negative expression that brings into effect the negation of dualistic thinking.

On the other hand, speech does not always or necessarily mean speaking. "Though the Buddha has preached for forty-nine years, he virtually does not say a word."[45] The Chan master here is clarifying that the Buddha's words are only intended to accommodate and guide people. Words simply cannot replace the realization of enlightenment, which involves going through one's own existentio-spiritual transformation. There is no reality to which the words correspond. In the entitative, reifying, or metaphysical sense, the Buddha says nothing. Therefore, Chan Buddhists regard their saying as non-saying and practice a sort of self-erasing saying, to avoid being entangled by saying or misleading people.

The Chan liminological play of language: a saying as non-saying or a self-erasing saying

Insight into the non-duality of speech and silence is significant to the Chan liminology of language. Once the absolute, impassable demarcation between silence and speech is obscured, the path for playing on the borders of language is opened. In other words, the liminological play of language is based upon, and made possible by, a trans-conventional attitude toward the limit of language. This in turn is cultivated by the philosophy of the Middle Way, by the non-static, relational understanding of speech and silence, by the detachment from any duality, and so forth. However, freedom from fixation on either silence or speech enables Chan Buddhists, first of all, to relocate (or redefine) the positive role of language within the framework of the liminology of language.

While addressing the necessity or inevitability of language use still leaves the role of language somewhat negative, the Hongzhou sect sheds light on the positive relation between the Buddha mind and language. Hongzhou Chan tends to deconstruct the dichotomy between the whole of the mind (*ti*) and function (*yong*) by canceling the quasi-metaphysical issue of the whole of the mind and emphasizing that the everyday activities of the human mind are nothing but the function of the Buddha nature itself.[46] The everyday activities of ordinary mind and the realization of the Buddha nature or Buddha mind are non-dualistic. Accordingly, using language, as an everyday

activity, is certainly relevant. When someone asked: "How can we recognize our own mind (as the Buddha mind)?" Huangbo Xiyun replied: "That which speaks (namely, asks the question) is your mind."[47] In other words, you should not attempt to attain enlightenment outside everyday activities. Speaking and writing, just like other everyday activities, can definitely be useful for triggering enlightenment. "Speaking, silence, move, rest – all sounds and forms – are the Buddha's business."[48] Dazhu Huihai also points out: "If separated from language, there would be no Buddha mind."[49] Therefore, "The Buddha mind, having no fixed form and characteristic, can neither be separated from nor tied to language (*feili yuyan feibuli yuyan*)."[50] This is the best characterization of the Chan position concerning language. In terms of this position, none of the one-sided interpretations of the Chan view of language can stand up to scrutiny.

Hongzhou Chan further claims:

1   The Tathāgata's preaching is the *Dharma* (*rulai shuo jishifa*); the *Dharma* is the Tathāgata's preaching (*fa jishishuo*); the *Dharma* and the preaching are non-dualistic (*fashuo buer*).[51]
2   You just speak anytime and can speak of either events (*shi*) or the principle (*li*) without being hindered. The fruit of enlightenment is also like this.[52]
3   The enlightened person's letters and words all come from the great wisdom and serve the great function right now and right here, having never been trapped by emptiness.[53]

The enlightened person "always speaks in terms of function (*suiyong er shuo*), having no fixation whatsoever on either affirmation or negation."[54]

These statements reveal, first of all, that the Chan masters' central concern is not whether silence or speech is preferable, but how to become enlightened. Once enlightened, hence free from any fixation, one is then a master of using language, a master of playing on and around the limit of language. There is no necessity to remain silent forever.[55] Second, when a logocentric hierarchy of silence and speech is completely abandoned, the function of language, or how to use language, in the soteriological practice, becomes fundamental. We should not misunderstand the Hongzhou Chan masters' view as a return to the logocentrism of speech. After noting: "The Tathāgata's silence speaks just as his speech does. While the Tathāgata speaks all day long, no word is actually spoken," Huangbo Xiyun further comments: "Though it is the case, we consider silence essential."[56]

Here "essential" does not mean something metaphysical, but functional. Given the context, what Huangbo Xiyun refers to as silence is surely not complete silence as opposed to speech, but a saying as non-saying or a self-erasing saying, a strategy of silencing or negating the duality between speech and silence. This is a unique Chan usage against conventional usage, a liminological play.

The Chan saying as non-saying, or its self-erasing saying, also involves two major aspects. On the one hand, fully aware of the necessity of using language for guiding people as well as the risk of misleading them, the Chan masters invoke an interplay between speech and silence. By sustaining the position that their words are not different from silence, and that no word has been spoken about any hypostatizable reality, the Chan masters move away from entifying and thereby help people to detach from their words. On the other hand, by underlining the non-saying or silence, by treating their saying as something like the finger pointing to the moon (as they always say), pointing to what is absent within language, pointing to what has not been spoken or what cannot be adequately spoken, Chan masters actually say a great deal. In this way, Chan masters play on and around the boundary of language without being obstructed. As shown in Huangbo Xiyun's well-known maxim "walking all day long without touching the ground,"[57] Chan masters walk on the boundary of language without falling to either side. They therefore achieve their great flexibility and skillfulness in the use of language. Thus the Chan masters' radical objection to reliance on words and their creative use of language can be placed within one framework of the liminology of language without contradiction. These are simply two sides of one single coin.[58]

The Chan liminological play and its pragmatics of indirect communication

The subtlety and indirection of a liminological play determine the intrinsic relation between the liminology of language and the strategy of indirect communication. When the Chan masters "make the outside in" through liminological play, when they point to the non-absent absence within language, they are not at all straightforward. The reason is quite simple: "If you say that it is like something, you immediately miss the point."[59] In engaging in such a liminological play, the Chan masters demonstrate that they are the masters of indirect communication. Not only are they adept in using metaphorical and poetic language, they also establish a distinctive principle of

indirect communication – "Never tell too plainly."[60] Under the guidance of this principle, Chan masters explore the double negation, the paradoxical and ironic saying, the tautological expression, the suggestive, implicative, elusive use of language . . . in a word, linguistic twisting and detouring. The strategy is effective in evading or interrupting correspondence theory, conventional either/or logic and dualistic thinking. It opens up space for de-centered meanings, imaginative connections, and active participations. It serves Chan Buddhist soteriology best. How the Chan pragmatics of indirect communication function liminologically and deconstructively, is, without doubt, a valuable topic, and calls for a whole chapter of detailed investigation.

Part III

PRAGMATICS OF INDIRECT COMMUNICATION IN THE *ZHUANGZI* AND IN CHAN BUDDHISM

8

THE DISPLACEMENT OF INDIRECT COMMUNICATION

Contemporary discussions on the indirection of communication

A classical model of Western philosophical discourse on communication can be found in Aristotle's works. In his *Rhetoric*, Aristotle demarcates three components of communication: the speaker, the message, and the receiver. Communication, as a transfer of information, of true knowledge or demonstrated facts, is intended to persuade the listener to accept information in a direction and manner desired by the speaker. All rhetorical means serve this purpose of communication and help the speaker to manage the audience.[1] This Aristotelian conception of communication is closely related to his theory of language, and both are rooted in the metaphysical notion that human reason or science is capable of grasping an invariant structure of reality.[2] According to Aristotle, the written words represent the spoken sounds, the spoken sounds represent the affections in the soul, and the affections in the soul indicate the actual things that arouse them.[3] Language, therefore, is the expression of what is present in the speaker's mind and, in the final analysis, of the reality of things.

Against this background theory of language, there is, in Aristotle's notion of communication, an emphasis on the origin or source of communication, which determines its entire movement. Communication is understood as a linear, direct, teleological conveyance of information, thought, and experience, from the transmitter to the receiver. This classical notion of communication, along with the theory of language that accompanies it, has dominated Western philosophical discourse for centuries, although it has many more complicated and more sophisticated variations.

Contemporary Western philosophers' inquiry into the indirection of communication reflects a rethinking of the issue of communication.

It is part of their wider critique of Western metaphysics, including the critique of the classical notion of language and signification.

Heidegger makes three major points in his existentio-ontological account of communication in *Being and Time*. First, he proposes a broader notion of communication than the classical one. Communication, for Heidegger, is the "mutual sharing" of Being-in-the-world or Being-with-one-another.[4] This "mutual sharing" is made possible by the disclosedness or intelligibility of Being-in-the-world, which has always been "there," always been articulated in human existential situations, even before it is appropriated. In this view, "giving information," basis of the classical notion of communication, can only account for "a special case" of communication.[5] The classical notion provides no existential basis for the phenomenon of communication.

Second, since communication in nature is the mutual sharing of Being-in or Being-with, "[c]ommunication is never anything like a conveying of experience, such as opinions or wishes, from the interior of one subject into the interior of another."[6] With this statement, Heidegger invalidates quite clearly the explanation of communication as a linear, direct, teleological movement.

Third, to legitimize this statement, Heidegger further elucidates the relation between the inside and the outside in communication:

> Whenever something is communicated in what is said-in-the-talk, all talk about anything has at the same time the character of *expressing itself*. In talk, Dasein *expresses* itself not because it has, in the first instance, been encapsulated as something "internal" over against something outside, but because as Being-in-the-world it is already "outside" when it understands.[7]

Heidegger does not deny that everyday linguistic communication has the form of communicating something. However, communication cannot be understood on the basis of conveying objective – for example, "scientific" – information in isolation from human existential situations. By the same token, the disclosedness or intelligibility of Being-in-the-world is not a kind of message-sending from one isolated mind to another. What seems present inside the individual mind is also and already outside it. This being outside is primordial to any "sharing," and renders impossible the attempt to confine communication to a context-free, original movement.

In the *Philosophical Investigations*, the later Wittgenstein criticizes the traditional understanding of communication in a strikingly similar

way, although his theory of language and signification differs from Heidegger's in many aspects. While trying to make "a radical break with the idea that language always functions in one way, always serves the same purpose: to convey thoughts,"[8] Wittgenstein raises, in his inquiry, the fundamental question of "How is telling done?" or "What is the language-game of telling?" Then he writes:

> I would like to say: you regard it much too much as a matter of course that one can tell anything to anyone. That is to say: we are so much accustomed to communication through language ... that it looks to us as if the whole point of communication lay in this: someone else grasps the sense of my words – which is something mental: he as it were takes it into his own mind. If he then does something further with it as well, that is no part of the immediate purpose of language.[9]

What Wittgenstein questions here is precisely the nature of language as the expression of inner thought and the linear, direct, teleological feature of communication. For Wittgenstein, there is no direct path by which something mental, such as an intention or intentional meaning, can simply reach its end – entering into another mind. Like Heidegger's emphasis on the fore-structure of interpretation and sharing, Wittgenstein calls attention to how guesswork plays a role in our communicative interaction:

> "But do you really explain to the other person what you yourself understand? Don't you get him to *guess* the essential thing? You give him examples, – but he has to guess their drift, to guess your intention." ... "He guesses what I intend" would mean: various interpretations of my explanation come to his mind, and he lights on one of them.[10]

This strongly suggests, at least it seems to me, that as long as interpretive guesswork is involved, communication could never be linear, direct, teleological, but indirect, interactive, and open-ended.

Merleau-Ponty alludes to the indirection of communication when he posits his concept of "indirect language." First, Merleau-Ponty refutes the view that each sign, having its meaning fixed once and for all, could not conceivably bring in any opacity between itself and us. This disputed view is based on the assumption that meaning transcends signs in principle. However, as Merleau-Ponty points out,

meaning does not actually dwell in the verbal chain or distinguish itself from the chain in this way. A sign has meaning only insofar as it is profiled against other signs, and its meaning is entirely involved in language. Any speech, therefore, is always and only a fold in the immense fabric of language. The unfolding of meaning requires that we lend ourselves to the life of sign structure, to its movement of differentiation and articulation. The genesis of meaning will never be completed. "There is thus an opaqueness of language. Nowhere does it stop and leave a place for pure meaning; it is always limited only by more language, and meaning appears within it only set in a context of words."[11]

Second, Merleau-Ponty denies the notion that before thought finds the words which are able to express it, it is already a sort of ideal text that our sentences attempt to translate. For Merleau-Ponty, the author himself has no text to which he can compare his writing, and no language prior to language. Language is much more a sort of being than a means. Since meaning is the total movement of signification, our thought crawls along in language. At the very moment language fills our mind up, we abandon ourselves to it, and nothing separates us from the meaning any more. Thus Merleau-Ponty claims:

> [I]f we rid our minds of the idea that our language is the translation or cipher of an original text, we shall see that the idea of *complete* expression is nonsensical, and that all language is indirect or allusive. . . . The relation of meaning to the spoken word can no longer be a point for point corre-spondence that we always have clearly in mind.[12]

Moreover, language's ability "to signify a thought or a thing directly is only a secondary power derived from the inner life of language."[13] Here Merleau-Ponty clearly refutes the direct or corresponding rela-tion between language and thought or language and things based on his understanding of the unfolding of meaning as the open-ended movement of differentiation. He thus responds positively to the unique way language functions in the perceptual world. Although this view of language is not his final theory of language, it is incor-porated into the latter.[14] These statements of his obviously contribute to our understanding of the indirection of language and communi-cation, and anticipate the rise of the poststructuralist theory of language and communication.

To subvert the traditional concept of communication as a linear, direct and teleological movement, Derrida inquires into the

condition of the possibility of communication, which he calls archi-writing or *differance*. The traditional concept of communication – "telecommunication," according to Derrida[15] – presupposes that meaning can be transmitted or communicated by different means, including technically more powerful mediations, over a much greater distance, but within a milieu that is fundamentally continuous and equal to itself, within a homogeneous space across which the unity and integrity of meaning are not affected at all. This concept is deeply rooted in the traditional theory of sign as a representation of idea, which itself represents the perceived thing. Communication, hence, vehiculates a representation as an ideal content. Upon this examination, the traditional concept of communication is considered by Derrida as the communication of presence, which is indissociable from the Western metaphysics of presence (the metaphysics of Being).[16]

Since the traditional concept of communication is based on the traditional theory of sign, Derrida's subversion starts with the written sign. Contrary to the supposition that a word signifies a presence, Derrida thinks that every written sign supposes a certain absence (to be determined). What is essential to a sign is its iterability. Every sign must remain legible, repeatable, despite the incessant absence or disappearance of every determined addresser or addressee, of every intention-to-signify or wanting-to-communicate-this, of every referent or signified, and so forth. This essential drifting, this structural possibility of being cut off from its origin or production, from its addresser or addressee, from its referent or signified, is precisely what makes every sign a sign, every writing a writing, every communication a communication. In other words, "The possibility of repeating, and therefore of identifying, marks is implied in every code, making of it a communicable, transmittable, decipherable grid that is iterable for a third party, and thus for any possible user in general."[17]

By revealing this open structure of signification, Derrida not only overturns the traditional hierarchy: writing as a form of communication. He also replaces the concept of communication with a new one: to understand communication in terms of its condition of possibilities – the archi-writing. From this perspective, "[a]s writing, communication, if one insists upon maintaining the word, is not the means of transport of sense, the exchange of intentions and meanings. . . ."[18] The latter, Derrida emphasizes, is only an effect of the former.

This brief survey of contemporary philosophical discourse on communication and signification runs, I am keenly aware, the risk of reducing the essential differences among these thinkers and their

philosophical undertakings. As we can see from the foregoing discussions, they address the issue of communication or signification from diverse angles, either from an analysis of the existential structure of Being-in-the-world, a philosophical therapy, a phenomenologist reflection, or from a deconstructive operation. Nevertheless, they do express a common concern with the indirection of communication from different angles. Upon close inspection, the most important meanings of the "indirection" of communication, which are explicated by, or implied in, these philosophical discourses, may be summarized as follows.

First, the alleged origin, source or speaker's intention cannot teleologically determine the process and result of linguistic communication. This is, in large measure, due to the open-ended structure of communication, which allows for every break with the origin, source or speaker's intention, and for the "receiver's" active participation, hermeneutic guess or even intervention.

Second, the concept of an original thought, inner experience, or pure meaning, which can be transmitted or communicated via a direct path from the speaker's mind to the receiver's mind, is merely an illusion. It is illusory because any thought, experience, or meaning, cannot be there "in and by itself." Thought, experience, or meaning, is always relational, context-bound, and without self-identity. If it is called the inside, this inside is simultaneously and always already the outside. It can be communicated only because of, and by, the detour of "being outside." Therefore, it is no longer purely "inside."

Third, the indirection of communication presupposes the invalidity of the correspondence theory of language, meaning and signification. There is no correspondence relation between object and thought, or thought and expression. Since meaning is not independent of the verbal chain or the web of language, and context is never fixed, meaning is both limited and, therefore, multiplied, by the operation of language. Communication takes place only within this ongoing process of multiplying.

Fourth, the indirect feature of communication radically subverts the traditional subordination of indirect communication to direct communication. When maintaining the direct feature of communication, indirection is inevitably treated as marginal or peripheral.[19] Since indirection is now considered a condition of the possibility of all communication, direct communication, as linguistic strategy or usage, can only be regarded as an effect of that general condition, or as a special case. This brings about a significant change in our studies of communicative strategy, as we will see in the following discussion.

The reinterpretation of Kierkegaard's "indirect communication"

A consequence of these contemporary philosophical inquiries into the indirection of communication is the re-evaluation or reinterpretation of Kierkegaard's notion of "indirect communication." It appears unavoidable that once philosophical attention is drawn to the indirection of communication, a new light is brought to the significance of Kierkegaard's notion and his use of indirect communication.

Kierkegaard centers his theory of indirect communication on the ethico-religious sphere. What is ethico-religious, Kierkegaard argues, cannot be communicated directly. As a way of life, the ethico-religious truth is different from any kind of objective truth. At first sight, Kierkegaard's theory gets entangled in a number of binary distinctions such as subjective/objective, concrete/abstract, outward/inward, and so on. However, Kierkegaard's emphasis on subjectivity and inwardness does not necessarily involve the notion of a closed or pure presence that a contemporary deconstructionist may anticipate. In his notion of subjectivity or inwardness, Kierkegaard actually puts much weight on each individual's inescapable choice, decision and involvement. For Kierkegaard, the ethico-religious life is a process of becoming, a process of personal appropriation, a process of differentiation. The other of every subjectivity would never be the same, since the existential situation that each individual faces provides no objective certainty. Communication in the ethico-religious sphere, therefore, has much to do with what he calls a "double reflection."[20] The first reflection refers to the intellectual content. The second refers to the existential application of this content to each individual's life. It is this second, doubled reflection – an existentio-practical dimension – that distinguishes the communication in the ethico-religious sphere from the ordinary conception of communication as conveying-receiving information.

Kierkegaard's point is that existential reality or ethico-religious capacity is incommunicable if the ordinary mode of communication is followed.[21] Moreover, any direct communication in the ethico-religious sphere is misleading, since it deceives people into thinking that the actualization of the possibilities of being ethico-religious is a result or something complete that can be sent or received through communication. Thus communication in the ethico-religious sphere must be indirect, oblique and artful. It aims at arousing each individual's own response to existential problems, providing occasions for each individual to take his or her own action, to seek his or her own

spiritual journey. To do this, it must first disillusion each individual of the possibility of gaining anything through communication. "[T]he art of communication at last becomes the art of taking away, of luring something away from someone."[22] This constitutes the complexity, subtlety and dialectics of communication in the ethico-religious sphere. "[T]his type of communication, which seems in comparison with the other to be no communication, is precisely communication."[23] Kierkegaard describes the characteristic of his "indirect communication" in more vivid language:

> To stop a man on the street and stand still while talking to him, is not so difficult as to say something to a passer-by in passing, without standing still and without delaying the other, without attempting to persuade him to go the same way, but giving him instead an impulse to go precisely his own way. Such is the relation between one existing individual and another, when the communication concerns the truth as existential inwardness.[24]

The contemporary reinterpretation of Kierkegaard's "indirect communication" raises two interesting issues. First, it overturns the authoritative interpretation, such as Walter Lowrie's, of Kierkegaard's later works as direct communication.[25] This authoritative interpretation is clearly based on the traditional hierarchy of the direct/indirect. Within this hierarchy, indirect language, speech or communication, has always been excluded from the mainstream of Western discourse. It could only be a special case of direct communication. In a similar vein, Kierkegaard's early, "aesthetic," or pseudonymous texts, are conceived of as marginal, unnecessary irritants. It is said, even Kierkegaard himself in his later works abandoned this indirect communication and went back to the direct mode of communication.

New interpreters argue that the later works are "just as oblique as" the pseudonymous works.[26] The pseudonymity is only a surface feature, or a part, of the more widely conceived indirect communication.[27] This argument is well supported by theoretical and textual re-examinations of Kierkegaard's works. For instance, in *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, Kierkegaard actually distinguishes between the "form" and the "process" of communication.[28] The form can be various, but the process of communication is always indirect. This might provide the ground for him to assume a different form for his later "indirect communication." In one of his later works, *Training*

in Christianity, Kierkegaard explicitly expresses his further concern with indirect communication:

> [I]ndirect communication can also be brought about in another way, through the relationship set up between the communication and the communicator. In this case, the communicator would be present, whereas in the first case he was omitted. . . . [S]ince any communication concerning what it means to exist demands a communicator, the communicator is the reduplication of what is communicated. . . . [I]f the communicator is himself dialectically qualified, . . . then all direct communication becomes simply an impossibility.[29]

This is a direct echo of the existentio-practical view expressed in his early work that existential reality cannot be communicated directly, and that each individual simply must live in it.

If the relationship between this first issue of reinterpretation and our current concern with the indirection of communication is not so direct, the second appears to be the reverse. Our contemporary interpreters contend that, seen from a postmodern point of view, "Kierkegaard's special theory of indirect communication, then, is also a general theory of language."[30] "[I]t is Kierkegaard, a century ahead of Derrida, who demonstrates that a meaning can be so long deferred that it would finally be merely naive to ask for it."[31] The ethico-religious dimension of Kierkegaard's theory is not denied, yet the significance of this theory certainly exceeds its ethico-religious sphere. Kierkegaard's theory of sign, which is the cornerstone of his entire theory of indirect communication, is now considered the precursor of contemporary inquiries into the indirection of communication, signification, and language in general. This is an apparent reason why Kierkegaard's texts are still favored by postmodern readers.

A much-quoted paragraph from Kierkegaard's discourse of sign is most revealing:

> What is to be understood by a "sign"? A sign is the negation of immediacy, or a second state of being, differing from the first. It is not thereby affirmed that the sign is not something immediate, but that what it is as a sign is not immediate, in other words, that as a sign it is not the immediate thing it is. A nautical mark is a sign. Immediately it is a post, a light, or some such thing, but a sign it is not immediately, that it

is a sign is something different from what it immediately is.
. . . [F]or a sign is a sign only for one who knows that it is a
sign, and in the strictest sense only for one who knows what
it signifies.[32]

What do we observe in this paragraph? The negation of immediacy,
the canceling out of the correspondence relation between presence
and representation, the non-referential characteristic of signification,
all are within the reach of contemporary inquiries into the indirec-
tion of communication, signification, and language in general, as
my preceding discussion has already shown. With this theory of sign
in view, it is not difficult to see that Kierkegaard's theory of indirect
communication does contribute to our critique of the traditional
conception of communication, and our discovery of the indirect
feature of communication, despite its special reference to ethico-
religious issues. Moreover, Kierkegaard's theory of indirect commu-
nication, due to his philosophical insight, provides a unique sample
in that a particular study of communication in the ethico-religious
sphere can also shed light on the general issue of communication and
signification. This is not only because ethico-religious problems
occupy an irreplaceable place in human existence and are insepar-
able from other spheres of human existence, but also because a
profound understanding of communication in the ethico-religious
sphere must involve a profound understanding of features of human
communication and signification in general.

Indirect communication as linguistic strategy

A remarkable aspect characteristic of both the inquiry into the indi-
rection of communication and the recovery of Kierkegaard's indirect
communication is the attention to studies of indirect communication
as linguistic strategy, to how we communicate or use language
indirectly, and to indirect communication as a way of overcoming
the limitations of the direct mode of communication.

As indicated earlier, recognition of the indirection of communica-
tion makes possible the repositioning of indirect communication
within philosophical discourse. It in effect liberates indirect commu-
nication from the oppressive hierarchy of direct/indirect communi-
cation. However, contemporary inquiries into the indirection of
communication or signification are, to a large extent, tinged with
a post-metaphysical emphasis on the strategy and pragmatics of
communication or signification. Two schools, post-Wittgensteinian

and post structuralist, among others, have particularly contributed to this emphasis. For instance, following Wittgenstein's notion that we should pay more heed to different uses of words instead of establishing the essence of language,[33] Davidson strongly opposes any attempt to define the essence and rules of communication. He asserts: "We must give up the idea of a clearly defined shared structure which language-users acquire and then apply to cases."[34] Meanwhile, having insight into the double structure or double play of language, Derrida concentrates his philosophical writing on developing "a kind of general strategy" for critiquing philosophical texts.[35] These two drifts conspicuously link philosophical inquiries with linguistic usages and strategies.

In terms of this approach, our inquiry into the indirection of communication does not aim to establish any inverted hierarchy of indirect/direct communication, nor attempt to discover an essence of or set of rules for communication that can regulate every communicative action. Rather, this inquiry merely seeks to draw attention to indirect methods of communication that have long been marginalized, and to recognize the importance of various indirect strategies of communication. In other words, analysis of the indirection of communication must be closely related to the study of indirect uses of language or indirect strategies of communication. Though the former can be distinguished from the latter in the sense that an examination of the general feature of communicative process is not the same as the study of different strategies of communication, the latter is the pragmatic focus and consequence of the former.

It is this pragmatic focus and consequence of the contemporary inquiries into the indirection of communication that has impact on, and is echoed by, reinterpretations of Kierkegaard's indirect communication. Previous interpreters of Kierkegaard's works are criticized for being "so anxious to descry *what* he is saying that they failed to take proper account of *how* he says it."[36] These interpreters forget that the issue of how we communicate or how we communicate better is a central theme of Kierkegaard's whole theory of indirect communication. As Kierkegaard himself puts it very clearly, "*The objective accent falls on What is said, the subjective accent on How it is said.*"[37] For Kierkegaard, this "how it is said" is more important than "what is said," not only because what is said can never be separated from how it is said, but also because what is said is determined, to a great extent, by how it is said.

Kierkegaard's writings are fascinating examples of the development and practice of indirect communicative strategies. Kierkegaard

obviously is not concerned with any essence of communication, but precisely with this use and practice of indirect communication. By developing a series of linguistic strategies of indirect communication, including parables, irony, paradox, pseudonyms, and the like, Kierkegaard overcomes the limitations of direct modes of communication such as informative discourse, argumentative discourse, and so on, especially in the ethico-religious sphere. Readers have often misunderstood Kierkegaard's texts because they did not have a grasp of Kierkegaard's linguistic strategies, as our contemporary interpreters point out.

At this point in the study of the indirect strategy of communication or of the indirect use of language, we can start to see more clearly the significance of the ensuing investigation on the strategy and pragmatics of indirect communication in the *Zhuangzi* and Chan Buddhism.[38] If the tradition of Western philosophy has privileged the direct use of language or the direct strategy of communication, and has disfavored the indirect use of language or the indirect strategy of communication, the opposite is the case in the *Zhuangzi* and Chan. The *Zhuangzi* and Chan are great traditions of indirect communication. Although there are no systematic theories of indirect communication in the *Zhuangzi* and Chan compatible to contemporary Western inquiries into the indirection of communication, a careful analysis of what Zhuangzi and the Chan masters articulated concerning their uses of language and their strategies of communication will show that they take the indirection of communication into serious consideration. This understanding of the indirection of communication is rooted in their profound recognition of the context-bound feature of human communication, and in their holistic, dynamic, and relational understanding of human existence and of the world. Their lack of interest in the theoretical pursuit of any essence of communication does not hinder them from having opinions on fundamental issues of communication. These opinions are inseparable from, and implied in, their emphasis on the indirect use of language or the indirect strategy of communication. By investigating the strategy and pragmatics of indirect communication in the *Zhuangzi* and Chan, we will see how they develop these strategies of communication or uses of language as a way of overcoming the limits of communication or of language. We will find the underlying principles of these strategies or usages, as well as discover great resources and gain inspiration for the practice of indirect communication. This investigation thus will bring the study of these two great traditions of indirect communication into a postmodern focus, and help them serve our contemporary interests.

Although indirect communication was until recent times forgotten in Western philosophical discourse, contemporary inquiries into the indirection of communication and the reinterpretation of Kierkegaard's indirect communication, especially their probing of indirect linguistic strategies of communication, have become an important part of the present context in which our rediscovery of the Zhuangzian and Chan strategies inevitably takes shape. This rediscovery will also help to reinterpret these two traditions. For instance, what is Zhuangzi's pragmatic solution to the contradiction between an utter abandonment of language or communication and the conventional use of language or the conventional way of communication, as the preceding chapters have proposed? What is the relationship between Zhuangzi's art of speaking or of communication and the central notions of his philosophy? How does Zhuangzi's strategy of communication embody his fundamental philosophy? The investigation of indirect communication, it seems to me, will undoubtedly shed new light on all these questions. By examining Zhuangzi's indirect communication, the veil over the explanation of Zhuangzi's attitude toward language will be further lifted: it is an attitude directed against direct language, an effort to overcome the limitations of direct language or direct communication.

By studying indirect communication in Chan, we will greatly improve our understanding of the traditional Chan teaching of "the special transmission from mind to mind." Does this teaching regard Chan communication as a direct conveying and receiving of messages between two minds? Does it maintain a linear, continuous, teleological presence of enlightenment experience, which is context-free and pure, in Chan communication? These are critical questions that postmodern readers may well raise. Since Chan communication has not always been clearly understood, and has not drawn much scholarly attention, a detailed investigation of indirect communication in Chan may provide more appropriate interpretations of these issues. Of course, our study of the strategy and pragmatics of indirect communication in the *Zhuangzi* and Chan will not be restricted to merely answering these questions. It will involve a wide range of topics that are at once crucial to a proper understanding of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan, and have aroused broad interest in contemporary discourses and studies of linguistic strategies.

Finally, it might be worthwhile to insist that although there are some parallels between contemporary Western inquiries into the indirection of communication and Zhuangzian and Chan Buddhist emphasis on the indirect use of language or the indirect strategy of

communication, the background theories for these undertakings are very different. Contemporary Western inquiries into the indirection of communication, such as those of Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty or Derrida, reflect their rejection of the view of language as a medium, or as a means, functioning between an objective world and human beings. They attempt to see language as a being, a holistic process in which the relation of human beings and the world undergoes transformation. Zhuangzi and the Chan masters, on the other hand, see language as a means or a tool, which does not serve only as a medium by which we express our innermost thoughts or form a picture of the outside world. Its functions are inseparable from our broader practices. We use language to serve our practical purposes just as we use other means or tools to acquire food, to protect our body, or to get rest. The uses of language, like the uses of other tools, are not considered context-free, not isolated from the user and the environment. This holistic view seems similar to that of neo-pragmatists, such as Rorty, who views language as a tool.[39]

However, the differences between neo-pragmatism, a secular philosophy, and the *Zhuangzi* and Chan Buddhism, which are oriented toward religious or soteriological practices and thinking, are also manifest. If one compares the *Zhuangzi* and Chan with Western approaches to indirect communication, it is quite clear that the *Zhuangzi* and Chan are rather more analogous to the Kierkegaardian approach than to others in the sense that they are concerned with religious practice in the first place, and that the existentio-practical dimension is primordial to them. On the other hand, the underlying principles for the Kierkegaardian and these two Chinese traditions are so profoundly dissimilar that by neglecting the differences we will inevitably fail to understand these separate undertakings correctly. Therefore, we must cautiously clarify all these differences when adopting any Western vocabulary. I will deal with these differences in more specific terms in the next two chapters.

9

THE PRAGMATICS OF "GOBLET WORDS": INDIRECT COMMUNICATION IN THE *ZHUANGZI*

Preliminary remarks

Based upon our preceding examination, the concept of direct communication or direct discourse can be broadly defined as follows: it is speaker-oriented and assumes a linear, teleological relation between the speaker and the receiver; it presupposes a direct or corresponding relation between language and thought, thought and object; it regards the message or what is communicated as objective, context-free and separable from existentio-practical concerns; it considers meaning determined, unequivocal, and transparent; it confines itself to the direct use of language, namely, the descriptive, cognitive, or propositional use of language. Indirect communication, on the contrary, can be broadly defined as listener- or reader-oriented, and non-teleologcal; it assumes an interactive relation between the speaker and the listener; it abandons the correspondence theory of language; it is concerned with the existentio-practical dimension of what is communicated; it considers meaning open-ended and indeterminate; it adopts indirect language, such as metaphorical, poetic, or paradoxical language. As our foregoing investigation of the *Zhuangzi* has shown, Zhuangzi refutes the correspondence theory of language. He refuses to surrender himself to the descriptive, cognitive or referential use of language, displaying his liminological play, a kind of linguistic twisting, to overcome the limitation of the direct mode of discourse, and to best serve the primary purpose of his soteriological or therapeutic practice. This leads us toward the further investigation of Zhuangzi's strategy of indirect communication, his indirect modes of discourse.

Chapter 27 of the *Zhuangzi* provides its own characterization of Zhuangzi's modes of discourse, three famous modes of Zhuangzi's saying – "dwelling words" (*yuyan*), "double-layered words" (*chongyan*), "goblet words" (*zhiyan*)[1] – which are very useful for our understanding of Zhuangzi's strategy of indirect communication. As A. C. Graham correctly observes, although this characterization of three modes of discourse appears in one of the mixed chapters, it is "closely related" to Zhuangzi's view of language in the inner chapters, especially in the "Qi Wu Lun" chapter.[2] However, these modes of discourse, namely, the characterizations of how Zhuangzi speaks, have not been sufficiently studied by contemporary interpreters of Zhuangzi's philosophy. For instance, Chad Hansen, in his account of Zhuangzi's philosophy of language, utterly disregards the three modes of discourse, despite their close relationship with the inner chapters.[3] On the other hand, Graham's account of these three modes of discourse is quite elementary. He does not explore the intrinsic relations among these three modes, but simply mentions in passing that "spillover saying" (his translation of *zhiyan*) is most important and is given more space than the other two modes in chapter 27 of the *Zhuangzi*.[4]

In fact, some Chinese commentators on the *Zhuangzi* have clearly pointed out that these three modes of discourse overlap. "Dwelling words" involve "double-layered words." "Goblet words" involve the other two.[5] Wang Shumin propounds the suggestion that *yuyan* and *chongyan* refer to the concrete aspects of Zhuangzi's writing, and that *zhiyan* refers to Zhuangzi's general stance toward his use of language.[6] Shuen-fu Lin states that while *yuyan* and *chongyan* "seem to be primarily concerned with the practical aspects of expression of ideas," *zhiyan* "is concerned with the more philosophical aspect of [Zhuangzi]'s theory of language and self-expression."[7] While all these views need to be further clarified, they strongly indicate that these three modes of discourse, as presented in the *Zhuangzi*, imply a certain relationship beyond their surface order. This opinion will be taken as a point of departure for our ensuing investigation. In other words, we will not simply restate these three modes of discourse in their original sequence, as Graham does. Rather, we will first examine the general strategy and pragmatics of "goblet words," revealing the structural depth of Zhuangzi's indirect communication. The characterization of "goblet words" perfectly reveals Zhuangzi's profound understanding of the indirection of communication. This understanding results from, and is an integral part of, his holistic, relational, and dynamic understanding of human existence and of the world. Only within the general scope and function of "goblet

words" will we gain a better understanding of the role of "dwelling words" and "double-layered words." We will, therefore, examine these two modes of discourse within our general task of the investigation of Zhuangzi's indirect mode of "goblet words."

Second, we will investigate the strategies of denegation,[8] paradox, and irony, referred to as *diaogui* (paradoxical speech), *miuyou zhishuo* (absurd speech), and the like, in the *Zhuangzi*. This may constitute a fourth category in Zhuangzi's modes of discourse. However, the use of denegation, paradox and irony in the *Zhuangzi* not only is closely connected with the use of "dwelling words" and "double-layered words," but also can be subsumed under the general category of "goblet words." Indeed, denegation, paradox and irony are good examples of Zhuangzi's "goblet words." Although they can be included in the "goblet words," each is nonetheless distinct. We choose the use of denegation, paradox and irony in the *Zhuangzi* as a special part of our investigation of Zhuangzi's indirect communication for two obvious reasons:

1   the use of denegation, paradox and irony carries heavy weight in Zhuangzi's strategy of indirect communication and his philosophical style;
2   the use of denegation, paradox and irony in the *Zhuangzi* has regained its attraction due to postmodern attention to the strategic link between deconstruction and negative theology,[9] to the study of the various strategies of denegation, paradox and irony. Our investigation of Zhuangzi's use of denegation, paradox and irony will address those issues that have been inquired into by contemporary philosophical discourse.

The pragmatics of "goblet words" and Zhuangzi's strategy of indirect communication

The context of the Zhuangzian notion of "goblet words"

The notion of "goblet words" suggests that Zhuangzi's words function like a goblet that tips when full and rights itself when empty, indicating how they "adapt to and follow along with the fluctuating nature of the world and thus achieve a state of harmony."[10] A contextual analysis of this Zhuangzian notion of "goblet words" reveals: (1) this notion has close connection with, and reflects quite clearly, the soteriological and therapeutic goal of Zhuangzi's philosophy – to

accommodate one's mind to, or to be flexible with, the changes of all things and the shifts of meanings and viewpoints; (2) the account of "goblet words" and the other two modes of discourse in the *Zhuangzi* definitely regard these modes or strategies as alternatives to direct communication or direct discourse.

Concerning point (1), we find that the notion of "goblet words" is inseparable from Zhuangzi's notion of *tianni* (the operation/balancing of heaven/nature). The complete statement about "goblet words" that appears in chapter 27 is as follows: "Goblet words come forth day after day (*zhiyan richu*), and are in harmony with the operation of nature (*heyi tianni*); they accommodate themselves to endless changes and, therefore, may live out their years (*yinyi manyan*, *suoyi qiongnian*)."[11] Except for the first clause and, therefore, the slightly different context, this statement repeats the main sentence in which Zhuangzi mentions *tianni* in his "Qi Wu Lun" chapter:

> Whether the alternating voices of disputation are relative to each other or not, *they may be harmonized within the operation of nature and allowed to follow their endless changes so they may live out their years*. What does "harmonized within the operation of nature" mean? I would say, "*Right* may be not *right*; *so* may be not *so*. If right were really right, then right would be distinct from not right, and there would be no dispute. If so were really so, then so would be distinct from not so and there would be no dispute. Forget the years; forget (fixed) distinctions. Ramble in the realm of infinity and make it your home!"[12]

In Zhuangzi's opinion, there is no legitimacy for any fixation on a particular view or any privileged binary distinction. Everything is inherently possessed of that which we may affirm or that which we may deny, and can be viewed from different angles or perspectives, because everything exists in a relational web and constantly undergoes a transformation that strips it of any self-identity. One thing, one aspect, or one perspective, is always relative to an other, and in this sense is always limited. This relativity or limitedness opens the possibility of limitless things, aspects or perspectives. It allows more things, more aspects, more perspectives to thrive without partiality. Zhuangzi understands this as the operation/balancing of nature (*tianni*) and advises us to stay with the axis of *dao* and to respond to endless changes,[13] that is, to awaken us from our fixation on limited views or perspectives and to allow us to be nimble and flexible with things.

For Zhuangzi, heaven/nature teaches us this lesson without using direct human language. It teaches through *tianlai*, the piping of heaven or the sound of nature.[14] The great sage understands this sound of nature. For the great sage, "To know *dao* is easy; not to speak of it is difficult."[15] This is so because he lives in the human world. He cannot escape, nor does he have to. As our preceding discussion has shown, Zhuangzi understands very well that everything contains or manifests the perspective of *dao*. Language is no exception. There must be the possibility of language that is in harmony with *dao*, with *tianni*, accommodating itself to endless change. "Goblet words" are such possibilities, as demonstrated by Zhuangzi himself. "Without "goblet words" that come forth day after day and are in harmony with *tianni*, who can use his words for long?"[16] In other words, if language is going to function in an ever-changing world, it must sustain itself in an ever-renewing process. Here Zhuangzi's concern is not only with a particular way of speech, but with the more general feature of language, with the open-ended and dynamic function of language. Thus we see that the notion of *tianni* lays a foundation for Zhuangzi's pragmatics of "goblet words," and profoundly determines Zhuangzi's indirect communication. We will see this more clearly in the ensuing investigations.

Concerning point (2), the account of Zhuangzi's "goblet words" and other modes of discourse in chapter 33 contrasts sharply with its negation of the direct mode of discourse or of communication. The relevant sentences in that chapter run as follows:

> With absurd expressions, extravagant words, and unbordered phrases, he often gave free rein to his whims, and did not confine himself to straightforward language (*budang*), nor show his preference for any particular point of view. Believing that the world was sunk in stupidity, he could not discuss (with people) straightforwardly (*bukeyu zhuangyu*). So he used "goblet words" for endless changes, "double-layered words" for authenticity, and "dwelling words" for breadth. . . . Although his words are irregular and paradoxical, they deserve consideration.[17]

Here, in contrast with his positive attitude toward absurd expressions (*miuyou zhishuo*), extravagant words (*huangtang zhiyan*), unbordered phrases (*wuduanya zhici*), "goblet words," "double-layered words," "dwelling words," irregular and paradoxical words (*cancha chugui zhici*),[18] etc., we see quite obviously Zhuangzi's negative attitude toward straight-forward words (*dang*) or straightforward discourse

(*zhuangyu*). Among traditional Chinese commentators on the *Zhuangzi*, Gao Heng defined *dang* as "straightforward saying (*zhiyan*)," pointing out that the word *zhuang* in *zhuangyu* carries the same meaning as the word *dang* does.[19] An earlier commentator, Wang Xianqian, identified the meaning of *zhuangyu* as "straightforward discourse (*zhenglun*),"[20] which supports Gao Heng's definition.

Although most contemporary commentators do not follow them, Gao's and Wang's exegeses have, it seems to me, at least two merits. First, they reinforce the coherence of the text by more closely matching the focus of this paragraph on Zhuangzi's use of language. Second, they make possible the more coherent reading of Zhuangzi's indirect modes of discourse or of communication characterized in this paragraph. As Gao Heng correctly observes, *miuyou zhishuo* (absurd expressions), *huangtang zhiyan* (extravagant words), *wuduanya zhici* (unbordered phrases), none are straightforward.[21] Thus the point becomes quite clear that to give free rein to his whims, Zhuangzi uses an indirect strategy of discourse instead of using direct language, thereby detaching himself from any limited point of view. As already discussed in previous chapters, Zhuangzi's attitude toward language is closely related to his attitude toward the disputes of his contemporaries. He not only opposes the fixed viewpoints of his contemporaries, but also opposes these contemporaries' increasing indulgence in straightforward argumentation characterized by the use of descriptive, referential and cognitive language. He discerns the intrinsic relation between fixed viewpoints and straightforward argumentation. To give these people therapy and to achieve better results, Zhuangzi must turn away from their way of using language. This is the major contextual meaning of his saying that since the world was sunk in stupidity, he could not discuss anything with people straightforwardly.

Based on Gao's and Wang's exegeses, the above-quoted statements can, then, be regarded as a manifesto of Zhuangzi's employment of indirect discourse or communication against direct discourse or communication, and as a further account of Zhuangzi's three modes of discourse or communication, especially the mode of "goblet words." As we can see, the mode of "goblet words" now ranks first among the three modes of discourse. Moreover, "absurd expressions," "extravagant words," "irregular and paradoxical words,"[22] in my view, all refer to Zhuangzi's use of denegation, paradox and irony, which can be subsumed under the general category of "goblet words." "Unbordered phrases" is another description of Zhuangzi's "goblet words." These accounts help us to understand the general feature of "goblet words." However, a comprehensive study

of Zhuangzi's pragmatics of "goblet words" cannot be restricted to these brief descriptions. In what follows, we will examine more specific aspects of Zhuangzi's pragmatics of "goblet words," take a close look at the structural features of Zhuangzi's indirect communication, and explore these features within the central domain of Zhuangzi's thought.

The pragmatics of "goblet words" and the structural features of Zhuangzi's indirect communication

An etymological investigation of the meaning of communication tells us that the Latin word *communicare*, which is the origin of the English word *communicate*, means "to share, impart, or partake." Stemming from this Latin root, the English word *communicate* develops its meanings of "to convey," "to transmit," "to use, or enjoy, in common," "to participate," and the like.[23] Since Aristotle Western philosophical discourse on communication has been oblivious to this meaning of sharing or participation, and has remained stuck on the idea of the conveyance of information or knowledge, until very recent times. The most often used modern Chinese translation of *communicate* or *communication* is *chuanda*, which catches the meaning of conveyance or transmission. In classical Chinese, there is no exact equivalent for *communication*. The term *chuan* is more flexibly used either singly or in combination with other words, such as *yanchuan*, *chuanshu*,[24] and the like, in the sense of linguistic communication, conveyance and transmission. However, Zhuangzi insists, on many occasions, that artistic experience and the experience of *dao* cannot be expressed or conveyed by ordinary use of language, as our discussion of Zhuangzi's liminology has shown. What distinguishes the mode of "goblet words" from ordinary modes of language lies precisely in the fact that "goblet words" embody Zhuangzi's view of communication as sharing and participation rather than as conveyance of information or knowledge.

Zhuangzi has simply no objective information or knowledge to convey, nor does he wish to express a particular, cognizable position among other competing positions. The primary concern of Zhuangzi's discourse or communication is about each individual's existentio-spiritual awakening or transformation, about the issue of how one becomes an authentic person, or a person of *dao*, as can be plainly seen through his teaching: "There must first be an authentic person before there can be any genuine understanding."[25] Here the existential transformation of the entire personhood is given full priority. Any genuine understanding can only be an

existential consequence of this transformation of personhood. It is this existential–spiritual awakening or transformation, a new way of life, that Zhuangzi wants to share with his readers. It demands the reader's participation, and invites him or her to respond from his or her own situation, discovering significance on his or her own. Insofar as Zhuangzi can do nothing practically to accomplish the transformation of the reader's personhood, this transformation is not something that can be directly handed down from Zhuangzi to the reader. It must be undertaken by the reader him or herself. Seen from the perspective of conveyance or transmission, Zhuangzi's communication is no communication at all. His discourse is merely edifying, evocative or therapeutic. It directs the reader toward working out his or her own health. It functions like wine in a goblet that allows everybody to drink and to find its taste by him or herself (no matter how different this taste might be), as a Chinese commentator rightly describes it.[26]

Since the mode of "goblet words" presupposes sharing and participation, it reveals the unique structural features of Zhuangzi's communication. Each of the three components of communication – the author, the message, the reader – plays a radically different role as compared with the one in the classical Western notion of communication.

(1) The author's strategy does not serve to determine teleologically the entire movement of communication. Rather, it serves to suspend or interrupt any possible deception of a linear or teleological relation between the author and the reader. For Zhuangzi, there is no fixed intentional meaning to convey, nor is there any position that is particularly his own to assert. Zhuangzi "would tarry a while in one position he fully knew to be mistaken and would then go on to another mistaken position, exposing errors as he went."[27] In this way he just makes the reader question his or her own way of thinking, his or her own motive for philosophizing. To evoke such self-questioning, Zhuangzi first interrogates his own statements. "I have just said something, but I do not know whether what I have said is really saying something or not."[28] "Do we really say something? Or do we say nothing?"[29] The point of this self-interrogation is quite clear that even what he says is never fixed. It is impossible to be fixed, since meaning is always context-bound, and context is always on the move in the continuing process of signification and communication. This lack of fixed intentional meaning, lack of a particular view, brings into play the shift and multiplication of meanings and viewpoints. Zhuangzi is happy with this shift and multiplication. He sees

it as spontaneously so, natural. As a Daoist ideal person, a person of no-self, Zhuangzi is particularly skillful in accommodating his speaking to this shifting and multiplying. In explaining Zhuangzi's mode of "goblet words," Wang Shuzhi points out:

> A goblet tips when full and rights itself when empty, following along with the changes of things and never fixing on one and the same function. Having applied this to language, the author adapts his speech to the changes of people and has no fixed meaning to convey.[30]

The determinate role of the author thus disappears in this shifting and multiplying of meanings and viewpoints. Searching for the final meaning of Zhuangzi's words distorts Zhuangzi. Ask what particular position Zhuangzi holds among rival positions misses Zhuangzi's point. Expect Zhuangzi to clarify his intentions and views will be disappointing. These ways of understanding Zhuangzi are evidently based on an utter misunderstanding of Zhuangzi's indirect mode of "goblet words," a neglect of the profound philosophy of signification and communication central to Zhuangzi's thought. Only within the sphere and function of "goblet words," within this structural dis-appearance of the author in the shift and multiplying of meanings and viewpoints, can the strategy of *yuyan* ("dwelling words") and *chongyan* ("double-layered words") be understood correctly.

Yuyan is defined as "*jiyu zhiyan*" by Chinese commentators.[31] It refers to the use of parables, figurative descriptions, imaginary con-versations, and so on, which makes up nine-tenths of the *Zhuangzi*. These become the lodging or dwelling (*jiyu*) places for ideas, mean-ings, implications, and thus are different from the straightforward dis-cursive language normally used in argumentation. A further definition of *yuyan* made by traditional Chinese commentators is "putting one's words into the mouths of other people."[32] Zhuangzi puts his words into the months of fictitious characters, talking trees, ancient kings, and even the philosophers he is criticizing. "He borrows figures from out-side for the purpose of exposition."[33] In terms of this definition, *chongyan* can be considered a subcategory of *yuyan*, because it puts the author's words into the mouths of those wise old men whom people respect, in order to give the saying more weight. *Chongyan* seems repeating or quoting these wise old men's words. However, it is actu-ally a strategy of indirect communication by using pseudonymous speech or pseudo-quotation. Rather than imposing the author's authority or simply obeying wise old men's authority, it follows the

authority of the inevitable multiplying of meanings, that demands the reader's existential and situational involvement. This strategy dissolves the author's authority in the play of words by not letting those wise old men speak for themselves, that is, by keeping the reader at a distance from the author and any direct speaker. It draws the reader's attention, eliciting not fixation but openness. Thus it is double-layered: one dwells or lodges in another. The author's saying dwells or lodges in the place of wise old men's sayings; the meaning dwells or lodges in the situational reappropriation of the words.

Insofar as *yuyan* and *chongyan* are figurative, imaginative, and double-layered, they are close to the Western category of "metaphorical language." However, the philosophical notion of metaphor implied in the *Zhuangzi* is quite different from the philosophical conception of metaphor in Western metaphysics. First, there is no privilege of discursive language over figurative, metaphorical language in the *Zhuangzi*. Zhuangzi does not refuse to use discursive language – discursive passages are intermingled with *yuyan* and *chongyan* throughout the *Zhuangzi*. However, the distinction between discursive language and figurative, metaphorical language is not essential to Zhuangzi's view of language. What mainly defines Zhuangzi's *yuyan* and *chongyan* is "borrowing" (*ji*), which also contains the meaning of "by means of" or "with the use of." Since Zhuangzi holds the view that language is a means or a tool, and that language is conventional, it follows that all speech – discursive or figurative – is nothing but borrowing and/or using language to achieve pragmatic goals. In this sense, discursive language is not different from non-discursive language. This view obviously frees Zhuangzi from a hierarchical confinement of discursive/figurative language, and helps him to explore an alternative way of using language.

Second, no fixed meaning stands behind a metaphor for Zhuangzi. The Zhuangzian notion of metaphorical language is not based on the notion of the proper meaning of words and the separation between the sensible and the intelligible, which Heidegger has criticized in questioning the metaphysical presupposition of the Western conception of metaphor.[34] Nor is this Zhuangzian notion based on the thesis, to borrow Davidson's words, "that associated with a metaphor is a definite cognitive content that its author wishes to convey and that the interpreter must grasp if he is to get the message."[35] Our preceding investigations have made quite explicit that Zhuangzi rejects a complete genesis of meaning on the basis of the natural shift and multiplying of meanings and viewpoints. This principle also applies to the case of metaphor. What characterizes

Zhuangzi's metaphorical writing is his untiring play with metaphors, his masterful use of metaphors in multiplying and diversifying meanings. We are surely unable to exhaust the meanings of Zhuangzi's *yuyan* and *chongyan*. Oftentimes Zhuangzi tells a story, discusses one explanation, one meaning for it, and then goes on to discuss another explanation, another meaning. Finally, he calls into question all previous explanations, meanings, without providing a new one. Zhuangzi enjoys staying with all possibilities, never attempting to close the door on any one of them. Another strategy is that Zhuangzi "does not present us with a specific metaphor but . . . an evocative collage of metaphors, . . . one referring to another."[36] He keeps the reader busy moving among numerous metaphors and constantly changing with them. Sometimes the reader feels as if he or she is caught in a web of metaphors and is forced to play with them. The consequence is that it "leaves no place free for a discourse of the proper or the literal."[37] There is no "withdrawal of metaphor." There is always another metaphor, when one metaphor stops play or when the reader sets up its limit. The *Zhuangzi* thus is a flowing and shifting of stories, metaphors, meanings.

Some contemporary interpreters of the *Zhuangzi* have seen the use of *yuyan* and *chongyan* as a survivalist strategy. They emphasize that by expressing his radical and unconventional ideas through *yuyan* and *chongyan*, Zhuangzi hopes "to avoid all danger, harm and troubling entanglements."[38] This is true as far as the socio-political context and function of *yuyan* and *chongyan* are concerned. However, this kind of interpretation often fails to account for the intrinsic relation between these two modes of discourse and the mode of "goblet words." In other words, it fails to relate the use of *yuyan* and *chongyan* to Zhuangzi's more fundamental concern with the shifting and multiplying of meanings and viewpoints. Therefore, it fails to grasp that the socio-political and survivalist purpose of *yuyan* and *chongyan* only comes after Zhuangzi's understanding and mastery of the shifting and multiplying of meanings and viewpoints. The general structure of Zhuangzi's indirect communication makes possible the socio-political and survivalist use of *yuyan* and *chongyan*.

(2) The mode of goblet communication calls for a displacement of the role of the reader or listener. The withdrawal of the determinate role of the author or speaker paves the way for the reader's or listener's active participation. Two main factors apparently determine the necessity of this participation.

First, in the mode of goblet discourse or communication, the unfolding of meanings is contingent upon different readers in differ-

ent contexts. In other words, the shift or multiplying of meanings of "goblet words" is dependent upon various readers' participation in various situations. The reader is not a passive receiver, since no objective meaning has been transmitted to him or her from the author. The reader's participation thus is the condition necessary to this communication. To find out the taste of the wine contained in a goblet, people must drink the wine, experience it by themselves, and then can tell what kind of taste it has. Just as taste may vary – some may claim it is too sweet, some may not – the meaning differs when there are different participants. However, the participation, the action of drinking it, is indispensable to determining the taste.

Second, the existentio-practical dimension of what is communicated makes the reader's participation central to the structure of this communication. Let us quote one of Zhuangzi's sayings before we go on to discuss this point:

> The teaching of the great man is like the shadow from a form, the echo from a sound. When questioned, he replies, sharing his thoughts without reservation and serving as the companion of the world. . . . He leads all of you teeming masses back to where you belong, to wander in limitlessness, passing in and out of non-attachment, . . .[39]

This passage, again, clearly reveals that what Zhuangzi wants to share, to communicate, is an awakened way of life such as he himself lives. For the sake of the listeners or inquirers, Zhuangzi, as their friend and companion, inspires them to explore the meaning of their own lives, to transform their own personhood, and to follow along with endless changes. As for himself, he has nothing to assert, nothing to give away. Since this way of life is what Zhuangzi himself lives, the listeners or readers cannot get it directly from him. They must explore and live it by themselves. Unless a listener or reader echoes Zhuangzi existentially by living it for him- or herself, he or she will never really share it with Zhuangzi, and communication will be incomplete. Thus the listeners or readers are crucial in this communication. They are important, not because they are the object won over by the speaker's or author's pre-set plan or knowledge,[40] but in their own right, because of their creative contribution to the communication.

Zhuangzi realizes this importance. His communicative strategy mainly serves to liberate the listeners or readers, to arouse and to release them into their own creativity. The strategy of dissolving the author in the play of "dwelling words" and "double-layered words,"

this light, can be better understood as setting the reader free to inquire into the meaning of one's own life, to return to one's natural-ness, to initiate a self-transformation. While having a conversation with us, Zhuangzi constantly makes us forget about him, forget about words, and thus keeps reminding us that we had better realize our own situation, and find our own way.

(3) The function of the message, in this goblet communication, therefore, is also different. The question of what is communicated does not exist by itself. *What* is communicated is contained in, and inseparable from, *how* it is communicated. In other words, how it is communicated is more fundamental than what is communicated. This characteristic can be explained in terms of the following reasons. First, since the heart of goblet communication is the evocation and echoing of self-activity or self-transformation, the speaker's or author's words are merely the occasion for this self-activity or self-transformation on the part of the listener or reader. Almost anything – trifles, falsehood, contradiction, irony, absurdity, exaggeration – can serve to arouse such self-activity or self-transformation. The accuracy and definitiveness of *what* is said is of little importance here. Second, since there is no definitive information or knowledge to be conveyed, and since what is communicated depends so profoundly on the activity and creativity of the reader, the reader is freed with respect to what is communicated. This is demonstrated by the fact that the meaning is always the reader's as long as his or her under-standing is provoked by the discourse, and that the meaning always shifts according to the situation, the level, or the perspective of the reader. The reader is also "provoked into experiencing as many sides of the issue as his originality allows."[41] This freedom to explore, to respond from his or her own situation, to act and transform, is pre-cisely what is communicated. As is quite clear now, the issue of what is communicated never exists by itself. It is inseparable from, and must be deciphered by, the entire mode of goblet communication.

Thus the functions of the author, the reader and the message all manifest the dynamic and open-ended structure of Zhuangzi's indirect communication, which serves Daoist soteriological and therapeutic practice best, and operates throughout years.

Denegation, paradox, irony, and Zhuangzi's strategy of indirect communication

As mentioned earlier, the use of *yuyan* and *chongyan* can be placed under the category of figurative, metaphorical language, which is

different from the straightforward discursive language normally used in argumentation. I have also pointed out that Zhuangzi does not refuse to use discursive language, and that there are discursive passages intermingled with *yuyan* and *chongyan* in the *Zhuangzi*. Now the question regarding Zhuangzi's use of discursive language is how Zhuangzi relates his use of discursive language to his goblet communication. One might ask: does Zhuangzi turn back to direct communication when he uses discursive language? The answer to this question is a definitive "no." Zhuangzi obviously retains his indirect mode of goblet communication even when he uses discursive language. This is demonstrated particularly by Zhuangzi's use of denegation, paradox and irony, which characterizes his unusual or "abnormal" use of discursive language. It is as essential as the use of *yuyan* and *chongyan* to Zhuangzi's indirect mode of goblet communication.

Denegation

The negativity of discourse has been a remarkable feature of Daoist philosophy and religious thought since the *Dao De Jing*. Zhuangzi develops this negativity by creating new negative terms such as no-mind (*wuxin*), no-self (*wuji*), no-speaking (*wuyan*), and adding them to Laozi's original repertoire of terms, such as no-action (*wuwei*), no-name (*wuming*), nonbeing (*wu*). Zhuangzi's discursive writing also takes on the full form of negation more distinctively than Laozi's. In the "Qi Wu Lun" chapter we find the following passage:

> There is a beginning. There is a not yet beginning to be a beginning. There is a not yet beginning to be a not yet beginning to be a beginning. There is being. There is nonbeing. There is a not yet beginning to be nonbeing. There is a not yet beginning to be a not yet beginning to be nonbeing. Suddenly there is nonbeing. But I do not know, when it comes to nonbeing, which is really being and which is nonbeing. Now I have just said something. But I don't know whether what I have said is really saying something or whether it is saying nothing.[42]

Here Zhuangzi engages in a series of negations, which, like other negations in the *Zhuangzi*, have two major features. First, all dualistic concepts – being and nonbeing, beginning and end, speaking and non-speaking, and so forth – are equally or thoroughly negated

without privileging or affirming any one of them. Thus Zhuangzi's negation takes the form of "neither . . . nor . . . ." Neither being nor nonbeing, neither beginning nor end, neither speaking nor silence, neither this nor that, is asserted by Zhuangzi.[43] Second, there is a kind of doubling in Zhuangzi's negation, a negation of negation, such as "a not yet beginning to be a not yet beginning to be a beginning" or "nonbeing of nonbeing." The double negation "nonbeing of nonbeing" is discernible in the passage quoted above. Elsewhere Zhuangzi even more explicitly uses this double negation. For instance:

1 I can conceive of nonbeing, but not of the nonbeing of nonbeing. Now I have just come to the stage of nonbeing; how could I ever reach such a stage of the nonbeing of nonbeing?[44]
2 Primordially, it is the nonbeing of nonbeing, which is nameless.[45]

This kind of thorough negation of all polarities and double negation[46] carries the syntactic and rhetorical form of negation. However, it is not mere negation. It goes beyond both negation and affirmation. It itself is neither negative nor positive, neither apophatic nor cataphatic. On the one hand, it is apparently not an affirmation, since it denies every alternative within conceptual polarity. It does not even affirm itself as negation. Here the doubling, the negation of negation, does not simply mean a return to affirmation. It does not presuppose an essential Being or Nonbeing affirming itself ultimately by a double movement. In this sense it is completely different from the Hegelian dialectic. On the other hand, it is not a negation, since the negation it makes denies itself as well by the doubling. It denegates itself, and, therefore, is not a total negation. Nothing ceases to be affirmed as it is in the ongoing process of interchanging itself and its other, in the dynamics of becoming toward its other. Thus we open to endless being and nonbeing, speaking and silence, right and wrong, *yin* and *yang*, and in this way we can move along with them. This is Zhuangzi's *dao*. With this *dao*, Zhuangzi would see no reason to confine himself to either negation or affirmation. In this sense my understanding of the Zhuangzian denegation disagrees with the Derridean interpretation of denegation, as presented in Mark Taylor's writing, namely that it affirms only negation.[47] This Derridean interpretation still falls into a negation privileged over affirmation.

Zhuangzi does not privilege negativity over positivity. However, Zhuangzi does see the pragmatic usefulness of denegation – the play of negativity – in his goblet communication. In the West, only

Kierkegaard correctly observed the intimate relationship between negativity and indirect communication.[48] Zhuangzi is another great thinker who shows insight into this relationship, although his context and entire project are different from Kierkegaard's.[49] For Zhuangzi, denegation serves the purpose of indirect communication in the following ways. First, denegation performs an art of taking away. Instead of giving something away to the readers, such as conveying a substantialist idea or demonstrating a graspable entity, which can be directly appropriated by the readers, it constantly takes something away from them. It takes away every kind of conceptualization, every binary distinction, every reifying thought. It intervenes and interrupts their conventional thinking, seeking and expectation. By this taking away, this intervention and interruption, it opens the limitation of dualistic thinking, conceptual predication and direct communication. It arouses self-interrogation in the readers, turning them toward that which has been turned away by dualistic thinking and conceptual predication, that is, toward *dao*.

Second, denegation carries a self-erasure or self-cancellation. By utilizing discursive or conceptual language in such a self-erasing manner, it becomes not solely negative, but carves out a void within what is being said. This void, this absence, is what is unsayable and unspoken, namely, what is inadequate to, and therefore is excluded by, that which is sayable and spoken. It thus inscribes, carries, points to, what is lacking in, what is outside of, this conceptual and discursive language. It makes possible the sharing of what cannot be directly communicated. Crossing the threshold and playing at the boundary between the sayable and the unsayable, denegation displays its unique function in Zhuangzi's goblet communication.

Paradox

The *neither/nor* form of negation also brings to the fore the problem of contradiction and paradox, a problem that seems embarrassing to the ordinary *either/or* logic. The negation of the two opposite alternatives may create a serious problem for the law of the excluded middle, if the latter is to be strictly maintained. Nevertheless, the negative/indirect strategy of communication in the *Zhuangzi* is closely related to this use of paradoxical terms or statements.

The Daoist preference for using paradox first emerges in the *Dao De Jing*. Laozi not only employs a good many paradoxes, but also plainly states the notion that correct speech appears paradoxical

(*Zhengyan ruofan*),[50] identifying the use of paradox as a correct way of speaking. Although Zhuangzi never quotes this statement, he does adopt some of Laozi's paradoxical notions, such as "taking action of non-action (*wei wuwei*)," and invents numerous new paradoxical notions, such as "speaking non-speaking (*yan wuyan*)," "the usefulness of the useless (*wuyong zhiyong*)." In the *Zhuangzi*, paradoxical expressions are referred to as *diaogui*, *cancha chugui zhici*, or *miuyou zhishuo*. They are valued as alternatives to the direct mode of discourse, as the wisdom and art of the great sage, and as particularly meaningful for soteriological and therapeutic practice.[51] These indicate the unique context of Zhuangzi's use of paradox. A contextual and dimensional analysis clarifies that this peculiar use of paradox involves several important meanings.

DYNAMIC DIMENSION OR THE DIMENSION OF INFINITE CHANGES

Recent criticisms of Western metaphysics have shown that the Aristotelian principles of logic, the foundations of Western formal logic, are rooted in his belief in a changeless substance or essence of things.[52] The principle of noncontradiction and other related principles, on which the validity of all arguments must be built, assume the exclusion of changeableness, contingency and indeterminacy in reality. Although these principles of logic are still useful for valid argumentation, traditional logic, based on Aristotle's interpretation, from the very beginning has its limits in dealing with the changeableness, contingency and indeterminacy of things. Traditional logic is selective, abstracted from the dynamics of living actuality, and, especially, staticizing the latter. As some contemporary philosophers have pointed out, in the context of changing life, the Aristotelian principles of noncontradiction and the excluded middle are simply inoperative.[53] Traditional logic, due to its deep-rooted tendency to consider all changes embarrassingly contradictory, is ill-equipped for demonstrating the actual convergence and dynamic reciprocity of various opposite meanings and ideas.

In contrast to Aristotle's approach, Zhuangzi concerns himself with how one dwells and wanders in the realm of infinite changes, taking this as the central theme of his philosophy. For Zhuangzi, "myriad transformations never begin to reach an end."[54] "The life of things is a gallop, a headlong dash – with every movement they alter, with every moment they shift. . . . Everything will change of itself, that is certain!"[55] Only when we isolate things, words, or meanings, from the

dynamic web of relations in which they function can we impute self-identity to them. When we come to the living actuality of change and transformation, it is quite clear that every privileged distinction (*fen*) or argument (*bian*) always involves and relies on its suppressed other.[56] The privileged one is evolved from, and moving toward, its other. Therefore, in the incessant process of transformation, the distinction between one and the other, this and that, a thing and nothing, is, inevitably, bound to be blurred. A distinction is always relative and changeable. This ever-changing context – the spacing-temporization – makes it possible that A is simultaneously not-A. It is possible to look at one thing from two or even many different standpoints. Therefore, Zhuangzi states, the sage

> recognizes a "this", but a "this" which is also "that," a "that" which is also "this." His "that" has both a right and a wrong in it; his "this" too has both a right and a wrong in it. So, in fact, does he still have a "this" and "that"? Or does he in fact no longer have a "this" and "that"? . . . Its right then is a single endlessness and its wrong too is a single endlessness.[57]

Here Zhuangzi's statement that a "this" is also "that" and a "that" is also "this," as well as his numerous other statements – such as "their dividing is formation, their formation is dissolution,"[58] and "speaking without saying something and saying something without speaking,"[59] – demonstrates his use of paradox to make sense of actual changes and the dynamic convergence of various opposites. Unlike Neo-Moists, who lean on "logical necessity" derived from change to distinguish "this" from "not-this" and to serve their utilitarian purpose,[60] Zhuangzi uses paradox to accommodate himself to changes, avoid staticization and serve his soteriological purpose.

PRAGMATIC DIMENSION

At the semantic level, Zhuangzi's paradoxes do yield contradictory meanings. However, Zhuangzi's paradoxes are different from those logical and semantic paradoxes treated in the analytic tradition of Western philosophy, as Mou Zongsan so rightly observes.[61] The major differences consist of the following two aspects. First, logical and semantic paradoxes serve no pragmatic purpose, and generate only nonsense in the face of semantic truth. Zhuangzi's paradoxes, on the other hand, are not nonsensical. However, the meaningfulness and usefulness of Zhuangzi's paradoxes lie beyond the semantic

level, dwelling primarily at the pragmatic and perlocutionary level. Zhuangzi's criticism of Hui Shi's infatuation with paradoxes, due to their lack of pragmatic purpose, confirms this important dimension.[62]

Second, therefore, the resolution of logical and semantic paradoxes by reformulating or imposing various restrictions on the propositional language, as practiced by modern logicians,[63] is not applicable to Zhuangzi's paradoxes. The latter is not a "crisis in the evolution of thought"[64] but an openness to the dynamics of actual change through a "logical breakage,"[65] a kind of negative/indirect approach. The semantic contradictions thus could be preserved, need not be abandoned, and should simultaneously be transcended by using them as a tool for the purpose of soteriological and therapeutic practice. For example, Zhuangzi discusses the relativity and changeability of the distinction between dreaming and waking (or awareness). He indicates that people who think they are awake are dreaming. Then he adds that one who says people are dreaming is dreaming too.[66] It is true that we can explore the context of Zhuangzi's saying, and try to make his statement understandable. However, this does not mean altering the apparent contradiction that dreaming is waking, waking is dreaming. Rather, to find out the meaningfulness of this paradoxical statement, we must particularly look into the pragmatic dimension of this statement. Once we realize the aim of this use of paradox is to arouse in us an attitude of non-clinging to any polarity, including dreaming and waking, to suspend our staticization and fixation, we are no longer puzzled by its contradiction. Most of Zhuangzi's paradoxes function in much the same way.

LIMINOLOGICAL DIMENSION

Zhuangzi does not reject logic. There is a well-known passage, in the book, showing that Zhuangzi uses *reductio ad absurdum* to refute the dialectician Hui Shi in a debate on knowing about the joy of fishes.[67] A. C. Graham's position that Zhuangzi rejects logic and abandons reason is untenable, a misinterpretation of Zhuangzi.[68] Even though Zhuangzi prefers using paradox, this use of paradox cannot be reduced to the illogical. Zhuangzi's paradoxical language is different from ordinary logical language, nor is it illogical, granting that logic is nothing but a set of relations reflected statically by human reason, and that paradoxical language reflects the relations of life dynamically. Zhuangzi's paradox is translogical or paralogical in the sense that it works or plays at the boundaries and limits of ordinary logic.[69] It becomes a means to overcome the limitation

of ordinary logic. However, this overcoming takes the oppositions and distinctions of ordinary logic as its starting point and as the raw material for its advanced work. It puts ordinary logic into move by breaking its rules. Obviously, in discursive discourses such as those paragraphs in the "Qi Wu Lun" chapter, paradox cannot work without the pre-functioning of the boundaries and limits of ordinary logic. Therefore, it is a kind of liminological play.[70] It communicates or shares, via negativity, something that ordinary logical language cannot sufficiently or effectively communicate or share.

Irony

Irony is closely related to the use of denegation and paradox in Zhuangzi's play of negativity and communicative strategy. When the use of denegation or paradox brings about self-negation or self-contradiction in an unanticipated manner, especially when it occurs in a form of self-mockery or self-ridicule, it involves irony. Thus in serving as the negative/indirect strategy of communication, irony, denegation, and paradox can overlap. Zhuangzi, indeed, uses them together sometimes, although irony can be used independently. Here I use the term *irony* in one of its generally accepted meanings: a kind of linguistic expression showing unexpected self-cancellation or self-contradiction, as if in mockery of one's own competence. It is a way of distancing oneself from what one says.[71] Irony differs from sarcasm, because sarcasm laughs at the hearer. "The ironist laughs at himself, and invites the hearer to do likewise. . . . Irony . . . goes out of itself and looks at itself with the other. This is an act of comprehensiveness, a peculiar quality of the philosopher."[72] Therefore, philosophically, the use of irony can be seen as "a way of dealing with concepts,"[73] of distancing oneself from concepts.

In this sense Zhuangzi's use of irony goes hand in hand with his use of denegation and paradox. We have seen the rhetoric of irony following a long discussion of philosophical concepts such as being and nonbeing: ". . . I have just said something. But I don't know whether what I have said is really saying something or whether it is saying nothing."[74] We also have seen the typically ironic side of Zhuangzi at the end of his discussion on dreaming and waking: "Confucius and you are both dreaming! And when I say you are dreaming, I am dreaming, too."[75]

The most famous example of irony in the *Zhuangzi* might be the story of Zhuangzi's dreaming of being a butterfly. Here I share Kuang-ming Wu's unraveling of this irony:

> . . . [Z]huang [Z]hou dreaming of being a butterfly. Awakened, he realized that he was unmistakably [Z]huang [Z]hou. And *then*, in this awakened state, he realized that he might be a butterfly currently dreaming of being [Z]huang [Z]hou. One of the ironies here is that he had to be *awakened* before realizing that he could be a butterfly, currently *dreaming*. Awakening to a dream, and becoming certain about one's uncertainty – this is clearly a self-involved incongruity.[76]

This perfect example of Zhuangzi's use of irony demonstrates two major functions of irony in Zhuangzi's goblet communication. First, irony becomes a rhetoric of non-closure. It calls into serious question any logocentric or metaphysical closure in a frivolous or humorous way. The ironist's seriousness is dissimulated by his frivolousness. His frivolousness is a weapon to defeat the seriousness of any logocentric or metaphysical thesis. Therefore, irony sets forth, to borrow Kierkegaard's words, no thesis (through its self-cancellation). It is a perpetual agility in which the ironist posits something that is nothing, "allows nothing to endure." It becomes "the infinitely delicate play with nothingness."[77] Zhuangzi's ironies, as quoted above, make impossible any closure of either being or nonbeing, either speaking or non-speaking, either dreaming or waking, either the self-identity of Zhuang Zhou or that of butterfly. In this negative way, Zhuangzi's ironies share with the reader a positive message, positing a thesis of non-thesis, that is, moving along with endless changes, including that of one's own.[78]

Second, the consequence of the impossibility of closure is, obviously, freedom. In the context of Zhuangzi's irony, this freedom means being free to change, free to move along with "the transformation of all things," namely, with the *wuhua*.[79] In this context, the ironist first frees himself. By using irony, the author detaches himself from what is said, and therefore is able to free himself from any metaphysical closure, any binary distinction, any self-identity, and from any logocentric reappropriation of the reader.[80] On the other hand, Zhuangzi's irony aims also at liberating the reader from the same closure and bondage. It "liberates by destroying all dogma or destroys by revealing the inescapable canker of negation at the heart of every affirmation."[81] Thus, to achieve this liberation, Zhuangzi's irony first creates a kind of therapeutic shock,[82] lets the reader's conventional perception and expectation clash, in order to let them engage in reflective thinking themselves, and see the life-world and

themselves anew in the illumination of irony. By the negativity of irony, Zhuangzi invites the reader to wander with him in the realm of infinite changes. Together with the use of denegation and paradox, Zhuangzi's use of irony thus serves well the purpose of his goblet communication.

10

THE PRAGMATICS OF "NEVER TELL TOO PLAINLY": INDIRECT COMMUNICATION IN CHAN

Preliminary remarks

The issue of communication has been salient in Chan Buddhism ever since Chan Buddhists made the claim that Chan is a "special (or separate) transmission outside theoretic teachings." This special transmission is sometimes also identified by Chan Buddhists as "the transmission from mind to mind." The uniqueness of the claim for Chan transmission or communication has drawn the attention of several modern scholars and interpreters. DeMartino, in his essay on Chan/Zen communication, clearly states that Chan/Zen communication could "be spoken of as a communication that is *no-communication*."[1] D. T. Suzuki, in his famous debate with Hu Shi, reaches the same point concerning Chan/Zen communication. He writes: "Strictly speaking, . . . there is no conveying at all."[2]

   These interpretations obviously tend to draw a line between Chan communication or transmission and ordinary communication as conveyance of information or knowledge. As my definition has shown, I subsume the latter type of communication under the category of direct communication. The Chan strategy of communication, then, without doubt, fits into my category of indirect communication. Hu Shi, in his important essay "Chan (Zen) Buddhism in China: Its History and Method," pays special heed to one of Chan's peculiar methods of instruction – "never tell too plainly" (*bushuopo*).[3] Hu Shi points out that by using this method of never explaining things "in too plain language," the Chan masters let "the individual find out things through his own effort and through

his own ever-widening life-experience."[4] To show the practical consequence of this method, Hu Shi cites a quote about *bushuopo* from the sayings of a great Chan master Dongshan Liangjie: "It is not my former master's virtue or Buddha Dharma that I esteem, only that he did not make exhaustive explanations for me."[5] This statement illustrates that in the master–disciple communication of Chan, the indirect way of communication itself is inseparable from, and even more important than, what is communicated. It has an important bearing on the realization of enlightenment. Hu Shi's effort to call attention to the study of the Chan strategy and principle of "never tell too plainly" is, therefore, significant to any more advanced investigations of indirect communication in Chan. Unfortunately, not much has been done in this regard since Hu Shi's discussion.

It might be worth examining further here, for the purpose of our ensuing study, D. T. Suzuki's response to Hu Shi's description of the Chan method. One point Suzuki makes is that there is no prescribed, or fixed, method for Chan. Chan communication as non-conveyance of information or knowledge "is the awakening of the same experience in others by means of words, gestures, and anything the master finds suitable at the moment."[6] This comment seems quite accurate. If "never tell too plainly" were someday to become a rule or pattern that every Chan teacher must follow or duplicate, a great Chan master might spit at it and resolve to utilize plain expressions. Here I would like to make two comments as a supplement to Suzuki's point. First, the Chan strategy of "never tell too plainly" does not mean to exclude any use of plain, direct expressions such as "no Buddhas," "no clinging to anything."[7] This fact is reflected in the huge body of Chan recorded sayings. Second, the principle of "never tell too plainly" should not be conceived of as a unified method, but as being open to a variety of strategies as Chan Buddhism itself provides. Suzuki correctly observes that Chan Buddhist expressions have a variety of uses and that what they mean depends on different situations.[8] He further emphasizes that *bushuopo* does not mean just "not to speak plainly." It is not merely a pedagogical method. It is "inherent in the constitution of" the enlightenmental experience of Chan.[9] This is where Suzuki disgrees with Hu Shi. Although I do not take an overall stand with Suzuki on that debate, I think that Suzuki is suggesting to us that there is an underlying structure or relationship in the Chan strategy of "never tell too plainly." To investigate this underlying structure or relationship will, it seems to me, be crucial to our study and understanding of indirect communication in Chan.

My argument, however, is that this investigation of the underlying structure or relationship should be an integral part of our contextual (or situational) investigation of Chan communicative strategy. From this perspective, Suzuki's stance seems somewhat problematic. In attempting to look beyond the so-called "pedagogical method," Suzuki tends to focus on the Chan experience of enlightenment itself. For Suzuki, those great Chan masters' strategies, whether verbal or non-verbal, directly issue forth from their enlightenment experience.[10] This leads Suzuki to leaning too much on the explanation or revelation of this Chan experience itself, and to overlooking, to a great extent, the importance of the contextual investigation and explanation of Chan communicative strategies. This tendency is not only reflected in his debate with Hu Shi, but is also manifest in his well-known study of the Chan/Zen *gongan* (J. *koan*). In that study, the focus remains on discussing the meaning of the Chan experience of enlightenment (*wu*, J. *satori*) itself.[11]

This problem is closely related to, or probably caused by, two other problems in Suzuki's treatment of Chan. First, he believes in a kind of "self-nature of Zen" or what he calls "Zen as it is in itself," referring especially to the Chan/Zen experience of enlightenment.[12] Thus the Chan experience becomes ahistorical and context-free. This interpretation seems to conflict with the typical Chan emphasis on the realization of enlightenment within everyday/temporal situations. Nor is it consistent with Suzuki's own acknowledgment that Chan/Zen deals with both time and timelessness,[13] namely, an interweaving of the two dimensions, not one dimension only. Second, the related understanding that Chan communicative strategies directly issue forth from the masters' enlightenment experience becomes a reason for Suzuki to underestimate these strategies or methods and the related studies.

Concerning this last point, I have two brief comments to make. First, the idea that Chan communicative strategies are manifestations of, or to a large extent determined by, Chan enlightenment experience should underpin rather than undermine the importance of these strategies. Especially from the perspective of Hongzhou Chan, as indicated in the foregoing discussion, apart from everyday activities including linguistic communications, there would be no realization of enlightenment.[14] This perspective precludes any underestimation of Chan strategies and their functionality in Chan Buddhist soteriological practice. Second, it is important to understand properly the so-called direct functioning or issuing forth of the Chan strategies from the enlightenment experience. Since Chan communication and

its strategies are inseparable from the Chan enlightenment experience, the former seems to have a direct connection with the latter. However, insofar as Chan communicative strategies are the adaptation of the enlightened one's experience to different students and situations, this working of Chan communication is nonetheless indirect. The Chan masters are the masters of indirect communication precisely because they are so skillful in their adaptation. This adaptation cancels what Suzuki claims as the self-identity of the Chan experience, and keeps this experience alive by moving along with changing situations on a daily basis and by effectively arousing more people to work toward their own enlightenment.

The ensuing study, therefore, will be directed toward both the investigation of the underlying structure of Chan communication – the pragmatics of "never tell too plainly" – and of the important types of Chan communicative strategies. Although this study is more philosophical than historical, my interpretation of this underlying structure will not be ahistorical nor will my understanding of the Chan strategies be context-free. Recontextualization of Chan texts will inevitably involve a kind of "fusion of horizons" – the fusion of the historical tradition and our contemporary philosophical understanding. The latter will particularly consist of the use of selected vocabularies from contemporary discourses. A contemporary revisiting of the tradition of Chan Buddhist communication will be a useful resource for contemporary understanding, utilization and development of various strategies of indirect communication. It will also clarify what the Chan "special transmission" or "the transmission from mind to mind" means or implies. However, all this must be done on the basis of examining Chan texts, most of which are widely known as "recorded sayings (*yulu*)."

Chan pragmatics of "never tell too plainly": contextual and structural features

To characterize and analyze the contextual and structural features of the Chan pragmatics of "never tell too plainly" is to reveal the rationale for this general strategy of indirect communication. Put it another way, we shall attempt to see under what circumstances this indirect communication works or for what reasons Chan Buddhists employ this general strategy. Since Chan communicative strategy is inseparable from the goal of Chan soteriological practice – the realization of enlightenment – my analysis of the contextual and structural features of Chan communication must link itself to the

understanding and interpretation of Chan enlightenment. Two main dimensions of Chan enlightenment most profoundly determine the underlying structure of Chan communication: the dimension of non-duality and the existentio-practical dimension. These two dimensions are closely interrelated in the realization of enlightenment.

First, the dimension of non-duality. Chan Buddhism inherits the dimension of non-duality from the Mahāyāna Buddhist tradition. Among the Chan contributions to the enrichment of this Mahāyāna dimension of non-duality, two aspects are particularly relevant to our current study.

(1) Chan completely carries out the dimension of non-duality in such a way that all the schisms between *nirvāṇa* and *saṃsāra*, between Buddhas and sentient beings, between self and other, etc., are ulti-mately illegitimate. The consequence of this realized non-duality in Chan is not only an intellectual non-commitment to any oppositional thinking or binary distinction, but an active involvement in the everyday world of interdependent fluidity. In the eye of an enlight-ened person, this living fluidity of interdependence never becomes a vacant space, a realm for escape from the everyday entanglement, nor an abyss for annihilation. Rather, it is a productive field of interrelationship, a field for interaction in which the conventional, samsaric separations or oppositions no longer restrict or hinder the enlightened person. Enlightenment, from this Chan point of view and understood as realized non-duality, can never be an isolated state of consciousness, nor can it be an experience "as it is in itself."

(2) Chan Buddhists most noticeably carry into effect the dimension of non-duality in their communicative encounter between masters and disciples, a unique form within Chan soteriological practice. This application of non-duality dramatically alters the traditional pattern of Buddhist discourse or communication. The latter demar-cates, by established scriptural phraseology such as "thus have I heard," the preacher and the receiver of the Buddhist *dharma*, facili-tating the view that the Buddha conveys a kind of truth or knowledge. Chan Buddhist transmission or communication, however, is "a trans-mission or communication in which there is no transmitter, no recipient, and nothing transmitted or communicated, and, at the same time, nothing *not* transmitted or *not* communicated."[15]

It is not too difficult to understand, in terms of non-duality, that there is no transmitter, no recipient and nothing transmitted or communicated in the Chan communication, because the connection between these features of Chan communication and the non-dual dimension of Chan enlightenment is quite obvious. DeMartino also

explains the Chan communication as "a transmission of [*dharma*] by [*dharma*] to [*dharma*] that is [n]o-[*dharma*]."[16] I believe this non-duality explains why D. T. Suzuki interprets Chan communication as the direct functioning of the enlightenmental experience itself.[17]

However, what is most commonly misunderstood is this "*dharma* that is no-*dharma*," or the point that nothing is transmitted and at the same time nothing is not transmitted. Here I mean the differentiation of the *dharma*, or the same of non-self-identity, in the realization of the enlightenment, which is so crucial to our understanding of Chan communication. If we carry out the Chan dimension of non-duality, and understand enlightenment as realizing and being involved in the everyday world of interdependence, the *dharma* must be understood as differentiating itself or negating itself, not to return to itself, but to be open to the living flux of interdependence. In much the same way, the *dharma* or the enlightenment experience must differentiate or negate itself to communicate or to share. Thus it does not cancel communication in sustaining its own identity, but merely demands a transformation of the latter. It makes possible a radically different way of communicating, assigning a different role to each participant in the communication, and therefore best serves Chan soteriological practice.

Second is the existentio-practical dimension. Chan enlightenment is both individual and social. It is individual in the sense that it is each individual's existentio-spiritual awakening or the transformation of one's own personhood. It is social in the sense that enlightenment is not, and cannot be attained by, a withdrawal from everyday activities or practices in the world and from all involvement with others. This point is well illustrated in Mazu Daoyi's explanation of *dao* (in Chan, *dao* designates both the Buddhist Path and enlightenment): as he says, "Just like now, whether walking, standing, sitting, reclining, responding to situations or handling things for people: all is *dao*."[18] In this light, the Chan emphasis on each individual's existentio-spiritual awakening or the transformation of one's personhood does not necessarily entail a kind of individualism as long as its social and practical dimensions are not ignored. However, it is this emphasis on each individual's awakening or transformation, or more precisely, its existentio-practical dimension, that decisively calls for the change in the meaning of communication in Chan.

Here we need to clarify the meaning of "the transmission from mind to mind (*yixin chuanxin*)." The Chan masters do use the word "transmission" or "communication" (*chuan*) when they talk about "the special (or separate) transmission outside theoretic teachings (*jiaowai*

biechuan)" and "the transmission from mind to mind." However, this transmission or communication never amounts to conveying something from the inner state of one mind to that of another. It does not convey something like knowledge or cognitive truth that can be exteriorized by the transmitter and can be obtained or possessed by the receiver. The Western conception of direct communication based on the correspondence relation between object and thought, thought and medium, finds no counterpart in Chan communication. As many Chan texts reveal, Chan masters vehemently oppose any view of Chan enlightenment as getting a certain kind of knowledge through some media. This objection to submitting communication to mediated cognition, however, does not necessarily mean that the Chan communication of enlightenment experience is non-mediational, as D. T. Suzuki has claimed.[19] What matters for Chan is that conventional media are seen as a means to accomplish practical (especially soteriological) goals, not as a medium of representing something mental or material.

Because of this fundamental difference between conventional communication and Chan transmission or communication, oftentimes Chan masters painstakingly point out that they transmit nothing to anyone. For example, Dazhu Huihai declares: "I do not have a single *dharma* to show anybody."[20] Linji announces: "I don't have a particle of [*dharma*] to give to anyone."[21] The following dialogue between Huangbo Xiyun and his student may be the most straightforward discussion on "the transmission from mind to mind":

The student: If there is nothing on which to lay hold, how is the *dharma* to be transmitted?

The master: It is a transmission from mind to mind. . . . Obtaining no *dharma* whatever is called the transmission of mind. . . . You hear people speak of the transmission of mind and then you intend to say that there is something to be received. So a patriarch said: ". . . Enlightenment is naught to be obtained. One who attains does not say he knows."[22]

Here Huangbo Xiyun makes perfectly clear that the transmission from mind to mind is not a transmission in the conventional sense. It transmits nothing, not even a single *dharma*. Therefore, paradoxically, this no-transmission, as he explains, is the so-called transmission of mind.

Nevertheless, the Chan "recorded sayings" provide us with other positive terms that the Chan masters use to explain their view of

communication. These terms allow us to take a further look at what is meant by "the transmission from mind to mind." For instance, Huangbo Xiyun himself also interprets "the transmission from mind to mind" as follows: "Mind and mind verify and accord with each other (*yixin yinxin*) so that they become the same (*xinxin buyi*)."[23] It is difficult to find an accurate equivalent for the Chinese character *yin* in a single English word. As a verb, it involves the meanings of "to accord or to harmonize with each other," "to verify each other," and so forth.[24] In compounds, such as "*yinhe* (to verify and to accord with)," "*yinzheng* (to verify)," "*yinke* (to verify and to confirm)," etc., these meanings are apparent and often adopted by Chan Buddhists. Thus, according to Huangbo Xiyun, the transmission from mind to mind must be understood as the mutual realization or verification of enlightenment. The mind of the master (the Sakyamuni Buddha is seen as the first master by Chan Buddhism) and the mind of the disciple are brought into harmony or accord by each one's enlightenment. This is the meaning of transmission. Here the verification (*yinzheng*) of enlightenment must not be understood as merely interior. It must be characterized as neither interior nor exterior, since it can never be cut off from, or confined to, one side or the other.

Just as *yin* indicates to us the special meaning of Chan communication, the use of the term *qi* offers a similar clue to the understanding of this meaning. *Qi*, as a verb, involves a stronger sense of "to accord or to harmonize with each other" and "to get along with each other" than the word *yin* does. It contains as well the meanings of "to attain" and "to experience and to understand."[25] Thus in Chinese compounds we see "*qihe* (to get along with each other, or to accord with each other)," "*qihui* (to experience and to understand)," "*qiwu* (to experience and to realize)," etc. The Chan masters more often use *qihui* or *qiwu* in the sense of "to be enlightened." Huangbo Xiyun, in his well-known *Chuanxin Fayao*, frequently uses such terms as *qihui*, *qiwu*, *moqi* (to realize silently), and so on.

What draws our attention is the close relation between his use of *qi* and his interpretation of Chan transmission or communication. After his discussion of the verification and harmonization between mind and mind (*yixin yinxin*), he immediately talks about *qihui* – the experience and realization of enlightenment.[26] For him, being able to verify and harmonize one's mind with another enlightened mind is first and foremost to experience and realize one's own enlightenment (*qihui*). This experience and realization of one's own enlightenment is like a person's drinking of water (*ruren yinshui*). Whether the water is cold or warm, one must experience it by him- or herself

(*lengnuan zizhi*).[27] Nobody can do it for him or her. It involves one's existential choice, the conversion of one's life outlook and attitude, good will and decision-making; in short, the transformation of the entire personhood.

On the other hand, Huangbo Xiyun unmistakably points out: "Each opportunity and each situation, each move of brows and each blink, if responding appropriately, all can be called [the moment of] the experience and attainment of enlightenment (*qihui*) or the verification and realization of the way of Chan."[28] In this light, *qihui* is a practical matter. It is inseparable from practices in the everyday world and involvement with others. The Chan emphasis on *qihui* thus most effectively embodies the existentio-practical dimension of Chan, revealing the peculiar context for the primary goal and feature of Chan transmission or communication. Because of this disclosure of the intrinsic relation between *qihui* and Chan transmission, Pei Xiu, a famous lay Chan Buddhist and the editor of Huangbo Xiyun's sayings, in his "Hymn on the Transmission of Mind" (often used as an appendix to Huangbo Xiyun's sayings), summarizes: "Mind cannot be transmitted. The experience, realization and resonance of enlightenment, therefore, are the transmission (*yiqi weichuan*)."[29] This is an accurate recount of Huangbo Xiyun's thought and an excellent definition of Chan transmission or communication.

Once we have a clear grasp of these important dimensions of Chan, which give special meaning to Chan transmission or communication, we are in a better position to investigate the peculiar relationships among the components of this communication, the unique roles these participants play, all of which constitute the underlying structure for employing the general strategy – "never tell too plainly."

(1) In Chan communication as the experience, realization, and resonance of enlightenment, there is no hierarchy of speaker and listener, transmitter and receiver. The overturning of this hierarchy is due not only to the Chan perspective of non-duality, but also to its existentio-practical concern. Let us examine first the role of the Chan master as a participant in this communication. In Chan communication, the master, the patriarch, or even the Buddha, is not a dominant speaker or transmitter whose intention pre-determines the process and end of communication. The role that the Chan master plays rather manifests the open-ended structure of Chan communication. This role can be described in the following main aspects.

First, Chan masters engage in the communication only in response to other sentient beings' need for the realization of enlightenment.

They themselves have nothing special to deliver, nor do they have any position to assert. The realization of other sentient beings' own enlightenment is the focus and primary goal of all Chan communicative activities in which Chan masters are involved. As indicated, this realization is the transformation of one's entire personhood, irreducible to the mere conveying–receiving of a certain intention or intentional meaning. Meaning is completely contextual and situational. It must be realized existentially and practically by one's own transformation. In this sense the Chan students' naive search for answers to the question – "what was the first patriarch's intention in coming from the West?" – must always be rejected by the Chan master. Since other sentient beings' own enlightenment rather than one master's intended meaning is the focus and goal of communicative action, what this master says is not particularly important, nor is it necessary that it be consistent. It simply becomes a moment of evocation or inspiration for the student's own effort and life-engagement.

Second, what the master says does not directly link his or her enlightenment with the student's realization of his or her own enlightenment. It is indirect, since all sayings are situational and the situations in which the master and the student realize their own enlightenments are also different. To deny this situational difference is to deny our everyday world of change and flux. Chan masters embrace this changing reality rather than ignore it. Their indirect strategy of communication reflects their insight into this situational or practical difference. Therefore, "never tell too plainly" as an indirect strategy is not a personal or sectarian preference, but a profound recognition of the indirection of communication. Chan master Guishan Lingyou once suggested that even parents' sayings cannot have a direct relation to their son's own realization of enlightenment – "I will not even explain directly to my son, although my mouth was born with me from my parents."[30] He also says: "What I can directly tell is my own understanding. How can it (directly) benefit your own seeing?"[31] The implication is that while enlightenment for all Buddhists seems the same, each realization must be different. What the parents or the masters understand or see would never be identical with what the son or the student understands or sees, for each faces a different situation, being in a different position, and must find his or her own way.

Third, since other sentient beings' own enlightenment is the focus and primary goal of the communication, and since their realization of enlightenment is situational, every Chan master, as a participant,

is not only a speaker. He is, and must first be, a listener. Chan masters may happily accept Heidegger's opinion that speaking is in itself a form of listening, but would refuse to confine themselves to the reified "essential being of language" that fascinated Heidegger for so long.[32] Chan masters listen to many different things. They, of course, listen to the silent utterance of their own and others' enlightenment experiences, listen to the Chan language that has come down to them. This kind of listening prepares them for engaging in communication. However, more importantly, they listen to the silent call of a variety of situations in which they encounter students. They listen to the silent telling of each student's everyday activities and practices, of his or her relationship with others, and of his or her capacity. Finally, they listen to the student's questions and words carefully. Because they listen, they are able to respond and speak better. They thus are able to perform an art of speaking – to speak indirectly. Chan masters may agree with Kierkegaard on one thing: that indirect communication is what makes communication an art.[33]

Fourth, this art of speaking, based on listening, demands that the Chan master must speak differently according to each different situation. There is no fixed meaning to convey, nor is there any theoretic principle to follow. Since Chan masters' sayings are not intended to inculcate a form of thought, formal consistency is not a restriction for them. Their sayings are regulated or guided by their practical purpose or effectiveness. This enhances greatly the sensibility, flexibility and skillfulness of their response and speaking. One of the most famous examples is Mazu Daoyi's different responses and sayings to different people and situations.

Question: Why do you say that mind is Buddha (*jixin jifo*)?
Answer: To stop children's crying.
Question: What do you say when they have stopped crying?
Answer: It is neither mind nor Buddha (*feixin feifo*).
Question: When there comes someone who belongs to neither of these two kinds, how do you instruct him?
Answer: I tell him that it is not even a thing (*bushiwu*).
Question: How about when you suddenly meet someone who has been on the Path?
Answer: I teach him to experience and realize the great *dao* (*tihui dadao*).[34]

Here four great notions of the Chan soteriology briefly posed by Mazu Daoyi respond to four kinds of people who are at different

stages of their spiritual progress. As Mazu Daoyi and his followers emphatically advise, no student should get stuck in any of his words or notions. They are, among numerous others, merely expedients (*shishe*) or temporary prescriptions (*yaofang*). A similar demonstration of the great flexibility and skillfulness in responding and speaking can also be found in Linji's description of his "Four Procedures."[35]

Fifth, this great flexibility in responding and speaking reveals the working of the Chan art and strategy of "never tell too plainly." The Chan masters must not perform in such conventional ways as giving lectures, teaching doctrines, describing things, or explaining principles for further action, but must simply evoke, inspire, arouse, or intrigue. Therefore, to speak indirectly is to say something evocative, inspiring, edifying. Chan masters speak to evoke the students' self-interrogation and self-transformation, to arouse the students' discovery of their own meaning of enlightenment, to encourage the students to make their own existential choices. In all these aspects, neither the Chan masters' intention nor their sayings can be a substitute for the students' own action. A great Chan master is fully aware of this difficult task: to help the students only to the degree that words will inspire or edify them, but never mislead them or hinder their own realization.

This is the main reason that many Chan students feel so grateful to their masters. One instance, mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, is Dongshan Liangjie's noted esteem for his master's strategy of "never tell too plainly." To arouse the students' action in the right direction, the Chan masters' evocative or edifying sayings are often at the same time therapeutic. Not only do these Chan masters carefully eschew any trap of reifying words, they also offer "shock therapy" to those who, for instance, have been trapped by the reifying use of words and the conventional way of thinking. Zhaozhou's answer of "The cypress tree in the yard" could be a kind of "shock therapy" to the student who asks what the first patriarch's intention was in coming from the West.[36] The "shock therapy" directs the students towards working out their own health. Sometimes it has the effect of curing the disease quickly and leads the students to the realization of their own enlightenment.

(2) If the art and strategy of "never tell too plainly" make the Chan master's speech both freer and more difficult, so does the role of the student. The student, in Chan communication, is not only a listener, nor a passive receiver. If the master merely conveyed some information or knowledge, some fixed meanings or formulated teachings and doctrines, some rules or principles, everything might be much

easier for the student. In that case there would be no authentic Chan communication. The Chan student, on the contrary, must become more engaged, active and creative. The master's responses or words, no matter how evocative or edifying, only push the students back on themselves. They must face their own situation and find their own way to enlightenment. They must make their own decision and transform their own personhood. They must experience and realize the meaning of enlightenment in their daily activities and situations. They cannot simply duplicate their master's experience. Only in this way can they realize enlightenment, echoing and resonating with the master's experience, and harmonize themselves with the master and other enlightened ones. Only in this sense can communication be completed.

On the other hand, since the masters do not impose any positions or rules on them, and do not inculcate any dogmas, the students are encouraged to be unattached to what the masters say. They have more freedom to search out their own solutions for the problem of their lives, to explore the meaning of life and death, *nirvāna* and *samsāra*, in various situations, to do whatever they believe is right in their daily practices. This freedom is both the condition for the student's creative involvement and the characteristic of enlightenment. We may see this aspect more clearly from the following story.

> When Mazu Daoyi heard that Master Damei Fachang lived in the mountain, he sent a monk there to ask, "What have you learned from Master Mazu so that you live in this mountain?" Damei answered, "Master Mazu taught me that mind is Buddha; accordingly I have settled here to live." The monk said, "Nowadays Master Mazu teaches a different Buddhadharma." Damei asked, "What is the difference?" The monk said, "In these days he also teaches that there is neither mind nor Buddha." Damei said, "This old man confuses people without an end. No matter how you insist on saying 'There is neither mind nor Buddha,' I will pay attention only to 'Mind is Buddha'." When Master Mazu heard the story after the monk's return, he remarked, "Oh brothers, the plum is now ripe." (For the Chinese word *damei* means big plum).[37]

This story demonstrates best the creative relation between the student and the master, especially the unique role of the student. As Mazu's student, Damei is free to choose what is right for him, or what is most suitable to his own situation. He does not depend on, or attach

himself to, everything his master says. From the perspective of enlightenment, whatever the master says, either "Mind is Buddha" or "Neither mind nor Buddha," is nothing but a skillful expedient guiding the students toward their realization of enlightenment within each particular situation. To understand this is an important step on the path to enlightenment. Therefore, the master admires Damei's attainment of freedom and non-attachment.

This story also well illustrates the non-existence of the hierarchy between speaker and listener, transmitter and receiver, in Chan communication. The student, as a creative person, a person of non-attachment, is free to challenge his own master, as Damei's words show. The end of the story can be read as Mazu's meeting the challenge from his own student. Chan communication thus is perfectly shown here as the mutual realization of enlightenment, as the harmonious relation between the participants, as the achievement of *qihui*.

(3) It is hard to demarcate the message, as an element in the Chan communication, from the participants and from the communicative action in the way that a traditional study of communication, such as an Aristotelian one, does. We have referred to the issue of message or of what is communicated in our discussion of the role of the participants in Chan communication. Here I will briefly summarize the germane points.

First, the Chan masters always underscore, as we have mentioned several times, that they do not convey any message, any teaching, any *dharma*. When Zhaozhou uses the words "The cypress tree in the yard" to answer the question "What is the first patriarch's intention in coming from the West," a student asks him, "Don't you use surroundings to show something?" Zhaozhou says: "I do not use surroundings to show anything."[38] He is suggesting that there is not even a message behind such words as "The cypress tree in the yard." All the Chan masters' sayings are prescriptions for curing diseases or expedients to evoke self-interrogation and self-transformation. In a word, they serve practical purposes. Therefore, the clarity and definitiveness of their words or meanings are unimportant. For example, to answer the same question, once Zhaozhou uses "The cypress tree in the yard"; another time he uses "The legs of a bed"; another time he uses "Moss growing on one's front teeth."[39] These answers, of course, make the student's conventional understanding of the message very difficult.

Second, what is communicated is not a message, but the realization and resonance of enlightenment in everyday activities and practices. In other words, the awakened participant of this communication him- or herself is what is communicated. Thus the

participants must be free from bondage of any message, any words. This is precisely the main reason that the issue of what is communicated does not exist by itself for Chan communication. It is embodied in Chan communicative action, in the entire way of communicating, in the existentio-practical achievement of enlightenment itself, in the creative contribution of the participants.

These preliminary accounts of the underlying relationship and structure of Chan communication help us to understand why and how Chan Buddhists employ the indirect strategy of "never tell too plainly." However, to see more distinctly how Chan Buddhists communicate indirectly, we must investigate more concrete strategies as compelling illustrations and manifestations of the general strategy of "never tell too plainly."

"Living words": different types of indirect strategy in Chan communication

The extraordinary flexibility and skillfulness of the art and strategy of "never tell too plainly" characteristic of Chan communication also is reflected in the Chan notion of "living words." Among the well-known Chan masters, Baizhang Huaihai may have been the first to distinguish "living words (*shengyu*)" from "dead words (*siyu*)." Like other Chan masters, he fiercely opposed any reliance on words or being restricted by words. Meanwhile, he made quite explicit that he did not oppose every use of language. "You must," he said, "discriminate those living and dead words . . . ."[40] This notion of living words later on became a focus for the development of *gongan* in "*kanhua Chan.*" Yuanwu Keqin made a famous statement about "living words."

> Examine the living words (*huoju*); don't examine the dead words (*siju*). If you gain understanding through the living words, you will never forget it; if you gain understanding through the dead words, you won't even be able to save yourself. If you want to take the patriarchs and Buddhas as your masters, you must clearly choose the living words.[41]

Dahui Zonggao, the strongest advocate of "*kanhua Chan*," holds the same opinion.[42] Generally speaking, the Chan notion of "living words" apparently carries two major meanings. First, it insists that Chan Buddhists should use words in such a way as to elude every fixation on words, to avoid falling into the trap of words. Living words are those that can point to something beyond any fixed words or

meanings. Living words thus function and play at the boundaries of language. Second, therefore, living words best serve Chan soteriological practice, never hindering but catalyzing Chan awakening in a variety of contexts. It is not surprising that the art of "never tell too plainly" finds its finest expression in the notion of "living words." However, Chan Buddhists do not establish a theory of "living words." Their notion of "living words" is involved in their explanation of the actual use of words. In what follows, we will examine three types of "living words" as Chan strategies of indirect communication.[43]

The use of paradoxical language

The use of paradoxical expression has a close connection to the use of serial negation or double negation in Buddhism. Both can be placed under the category of the play of negativity in discursive language. The use of double negation and paradox is not an exclusive possession of Chan Buddhism. It is a common feature of discourse, we may say, characteristic of almost the entire Buddhist tradition, including Indian Buddhism, Chinese Buddhism, and so forth. However, scholars have argued that although Chan Buddhists were informed by the Indian Mahāyāna Buddhist discourse of negativity, such as the Mādhyamika discourse and the *Prajñāpāramitā* tradition, Chan Buddhism reached the consummation of the Chinese adaptation and simplification of the Indian Buddhist mode. Contrary to the Indian mode of rigid logical analysis, such as the *reductio ad absurdum* and the progressive negation, Chinese Buddhists prefer the simplified use of paradox, the juxtaposition of opposites, first exemplified by the Chinese Mādhyamika thinker Sengzhao, and culminating in Chan Buddhists.[44] The consequence of this simplification of negative strategy coincides with the Chan attitude of non-reliance on theoretical teachings, with its emphasis on the realization of the Buddhist soteriological goal in all mundane activities. In any case, the abundant use of paradoxical language is widely known as a unique characteristic of Chan discourse. To understand this use of paradoxical language, we must start our investigation with Baizhang Huaihai's account of "living words."

Baizhang's account of "living words" involves his advice on using words or sentences that cut off two opposites:

> Cut off the supposition "it exists" and the supposition "it does not exist." Cut off the supposition "it is nonexistent" and the supposition "it is not nonexistent." Leave no trace

on either side. Let nobody catch you on either side . . . neither profane nor holy, neither light nor dark, neither having knowledge nor lacking knowledge, neither bondage nor liberation. It is not any name or category at all.[45]

Therefore, "Those sayings that there is cultivation and there is realization, that this mind is Buddha, . . . are dead words. Those sayings that there is neither cultivation nor realization, that it is neither mind nor Buddha, . . . are living words."[46] "Neither identity nor difference, neither impermanence nor permanence, neither coming nor going – these are living words. . . . [The binary distinctions of] coming, going, impermanence, permanence, Buddha and sentient beings, are dead words."[47]

On these accounts, "living words" are, first of all, paradoxical words, words that elude and violate the conventional rules of oppositional thinking and either/or logic. This emphasis on the use of paradoxical words develops from Huineng's similar teaching in *The Platform Sūtra*. Huineng teaches his disciples to preach *dharma* "by utilizing the thirty-six pairs of opposites and going around without attaching to either side."[48] When explaining how one should use this method, he further points out:

> In conversation with others, externally, while within form, be separate from form; internally, while within emptiness, be separate from emptiness. . . . Darkness is not darkness by itself; because there is light there is darkness. That darkness is not darkness by itself is because light changes, becoming darkness, and with darkness light is revealed. They originate each from the other. The thirty-six pairs are also like this.[49]

We see very clearly that the logical principles of noncontradiction and excluded middle simply do not work for these Chan Buddhist thinkers. However, to understand why these Chan Buddhist thinkers advocate and use the paradoxical expressions of A = –A, we need a three-fold dimensional analysis to look more closely into the entire context of the Chan Buddhist use of paradoxical words.

Dynamic dimension or the dimension of getting along with the change and flux of the everyday world

The above-quoted paragraph from Huineng plainly shows that his preference for using paradoxical expression is concerned with the

"change," contingency and indeterminacy of things, or in traditional Buddhist terms, with interdependent origination. This dimension is fundamental for the Chan use of paradoxical words and for Chan soteriology, but has been frequently misunderstood both inside and outside Chan Buddhism. "Sitting meditation" and the realization of enlightenment or Buddha nature are often conceived of as a kind of escape from the flux and impurity of mundane activities to an island of permanence and purity. Teachings such as "concentrating the mind and entering into meditation, fixing the mind on contemplating purity, . . . controlling the mind for inner cleanness,"[50] criticized by Shenhui, presuppose the Buddha nature as an immobilized essence apart from flowing reality and the everyday activities of the human mind. However, the spirit of Shenhui's criticism is greatly advanced by the later development of Chan Buddhism.[51]

Among the most celebrated Chan masters, Huangbo, Linji and Mazu all like to use the word *renyun*, which could be best translated as "following along with the movement of all things or circumstances."[52] In Mazu's sayings, we find the following expression: "following along with the movement of all things and in this way living out your time."[53] Huangbo advises his students: "At all times . . . never attach yourself to one thing; just follow along with the movement of all things the whole day long."[54] "Following along with the movement of all things without any restriction is called liberation."[55] Linji's more metaphorical expression goes like this: "Merely according to circumstances as they are, use up your past *karma*; following along with [the change of] circumstances, put on your [different] clothes."[56] Linji's viewpoint is also manifested in his use of this quotation:

> The mind changes in accordance with the myriad
>   circumstances;
> the way it changes is truly profound.
> If you can realize its nature through this flow,
> you will have neither joy nor sorrow.[57]

These important and persuasive examples demonstrate that these great Chan thinkers never regard liberation or enlightenment as isolation or an escape from the flowing reality of the everyday world. They rather consider it as a return from our isolated or fixed state of mind to this world of perpetual change and flux. They consider all these changes and fluctuations to be natural and spontaneously so, and this naturalness and spontaneity a state of the enlightened mind.

Their use of the word *renyun* often occurs in tandem with their use of words tinged with more apparent Daoist naturalism, such as *ziran* (being natural or spontaneously so) and *wushi* (doing nothing special). Accordingly, words that are connected with the fabrication and staticization of sequential, discriminative, reifying thinking, must be "cut off." Words that utilize oppositions and contradictions to inspire our return to the world of dynamic convergence of various different meanings, things, aspects, to call forth our flowing together with these different meanings, things, aspects, are "living words."

Pragmatic dimension or therapeutic dimension

When Mazu simultaneously proposes the notion of "Mind is Buddha" and the notion of "There is neither mind nor Buddha," it is an apparent contradiction. However, when facing another person's questioning of his position, as we have seen, he does not attempt to solve the contradiction by reformulating his sentences or by clearing up its semantic meanings. He simply asks people to look beyond the semantic meanings of his sayings. In other words, the meaningfulness is its usefulness, which lies completely in the pragmatic context, namely, in the context of soteriological practice. Therefore, the forms of contradiction or paradox, in Chan communication, are always preserved as they are, without any need to eliminate them, but at the same time are utilized to serve therapeutic or healing purposes, such as "To stop children's crying." Baizhang Huaihai makes this point very explicit, stating: "All speeches and teachings are just like curing illness. Because there are different kinds of illness, we use different medicines. Therefore sometimes we say 'There is Buddha,' and sometimes we say 'There is no Buddha.' . . . Prescriptions are different. We should never have any restriction and fixation."[58] Another master, Funiushan Zizai, also explains: "Such a phrase as 'There is neither mind nor Buddha' is a phrase for curing illness with a medicine."[59] Many Chan paradoxical expressions work in the same way. For the Chan masters and students, if the therapeutic functions of these paradoxical expressions are effective, there are no contradictory meanings at all within the pragmatic context.[60]

Liminological dimension

The Chan use of paradoxical expressions cannot be characterized as illogical or irrational, as D. T. Suzuki sometimes claims.[61] It is translogical or paralogical. It functions and plays at the boundaries or

limits of ordinary logical thinking. As Huineng's strategy has shown, Chan utilizes various pairs of opposites that are commonly used as the elements of the discrimination characteristic of a conventional either/or logic. However, without abandoning opposites available in ordinary and religious–philosophical language, Chan masters make inoperative logical rules such as those of noncontradiction and excluded middle. They use contradictions and oppositions as special tools to pursue a pragmatic purpose, to suspend human staticization and fixation, to arouse their fellow beings' awakening to the dynamic reality of change and flux. Therefore, the boundaries or limits of discriminative language, oppositional thinking, and either/or logic are pre-conditions of the Chan use of paradox. By playing at these boundaries or limits, the Chan paradoxical expression works toward something that ordinary logical thinking cannot arrive at, namely, overcoming the latter's limitations. This is the liminological function of Chan paradoxical expressions, an important function of Chan "living words."

The use of tautological language

The English word *tautology*, stemming from its Greek root, means the repetition of the same idea, statement, or word. Grammatically, a tautology is commonly considered meaningless or a fault of style.[62] Philosophically (or logically), tautology is often said to be empty, uninformative, or useless.[63] The subject–predicate structure of propositional language demands an exclusion of tautology from philosophical discourse. This structure, in serving the logical principle of identity and defining a thing as itself, always forces a proposition to say something *about* the thing it represents, namely, to refer to something opposite to it negatively and thereby establish its own identity, such as "A is not X" or "A is not non-A." Thus, although Western logic and its principle of identity have been criticized as tautological for their ignorance of the change and flux of things,[64] this logical language, ironically, forbids the use of any apparently tautological expression.

Obviously, oppositional thinking is the foundation for both the principle of identity and the exclusion of tautology from philosophical discourses. In his critique of Western onto-theologies and his search for alternatives to Western metaphysical language, Heidegger uses striking tautological expressions such as "the world worlds," "the thing things."[65] However, Heidegger is not aware of the fact that Chan Buddhists also use tautological language as "living words" in

their religio-philosophical discourses. The investigation of the Chan use of tautological language will therefore be helpful to our exploration of other possibilities in philosophical discourse.

Most tautologies deliberately used by Chan masters appear in the dialogues between the masters and the students. Being extraordinarily flexible and skillful in responding and speaking, Chan masters sometimes give contradictory answers to the same question. They speak as differently as they can to deal with very different situations or contexts. Sometimes they keep silent, refusing to give any answer. At other times they simply repeat the student's words. Let us look at the following examples:

Question: What is one drop of water from the source of Caoxi (*ruhe shi caoyuan yidishui*)?[66]

Answer: [It is] one drop of water from the source of Caoxi (*shi caoyuan yidishui*).[67]

Question: What is the Buddha *dharma* (*ruhe shi fofa*)?
Answer: The Buddha *dharma* (*fofa*).
Question: What is the *dharma* of all *dharmas* (*ruhe shi fazhongfa*)?
Answer: The *dharma* of all *dharmas* (*fazhongfa*). . . .
Question: What is the *dao* (*ruhe shi dao*)?
Answer: The *dao*, the *dao*.[68]

Question: What is the *dao* (*ruhe shi dao*)?
Answer: [It is] just the *dao* (*zhengshi dao*).[69]

Are these tautological answers or expressions meaningless? It is true that they are uninformative, since they are not conventional answers to those inquiries, not the conveyance of any information. They say nothing in the conventional sense. However, they are certainly not meaningless, nor are they useless, within the context of Chan soteriological practice.

The general function of Chan tautological expression in soteriological practice can be described as follows. First, tautology is used as a therapeutic tool similar to a negative strategy. It decomposes or violates normal predication, refusing to formulate a definition, to predicate anything. The lack of a strict subject–predicate structure in Chinese grammar facilitates the Chan masters' deliberate rejection of any definition. However, the pragmatic concern is still a predominant factor here. The lack of rules for subject–predicate relationship does not preclude the possibility of using Chinese language in the way of predication, as those Chan students' questions

imply. For these Chan masters, the students' questions have fallen into the trap of predication. The realization of the Buddha *dharma* or the *dao* cannot rely on knowing the definition of the Buddha *dharma* or the *dao*. It must liberate itself from any oppositional thinking and referential, propositional language, and must be achieved practically, as indicated by our preceding discussion of the dimension of non-duality and the pragmatic dimension in Chan. The Chan masters' answers are intended to reverse the direction of predication, to put an end to oppositional thinking and referential language, thus curing the students' illness. The unconventional, tautological expression produces an effect analogous to a kind of therapeutic shock to the students.

Second, although the tautological expressions say nothing in the sense of predication, they nonetheless say something indirectly. In interrupting predication, they continuously and repeatedly challenge and provoke the students' effort, guiding them toward non-oppositional or non-dualistic understanding. As we can see in our examples, the tautology of "the Buddha *dharma*" or "the *dao*" points to the realization of enlightenment in such a way as to violate or unusually restrict ordinary naming. It provisionally utilizes the naming, but transforms and presents it in an undivided manner, in its full intensity, in its dynamic immanence, and without an "*is* predication." Chan tautological expression is thus a saying by way of non-saying, or a saying of non-saying. It is beyond negative and positive expressions. This use of tautological expressions demonstrates the characteristic of the Chan use of "living words." If living words are those that have no words within themselves (*yuzhong wuyu*),[70] the Chan tautological expressions are precisely such words. They are sayings of repeating and at the same time of pointing, suggesting, but without predicating.

There are similarities between the Chan Buddhist use of tautology and Heidegger's. Both use tautology to decompose conventional predication, to overcome oppositional thinking. Both use it as a saying of non-saying or as a saying by way of non-saying. However, the differences with respect to their uses of tautology are also discernible. The Chan Buddhist use of tautology has an apparently pragmatic goal, namely, it serves its soteriological purpose. Heidegger's use is closely related to his search for the understanding of Being. The tautological expression for Heidegger is to maintain the identity and unity of Being.[71] For Chan Buddhists, although the tautological expression aims at pointing to the Buddha *dharma* or the *dao* non-

dualistically, the Buddha *dharma* or the *dao* is neither identical nor different. The Buddha *dharma* or the *dao* must be realized holistically, but at the same time it remains open to differentiation, to different people and different situations. Therefore, it is without self-identity. It is not a metaphysical notion, rather, it is a soteriological and heuristic notion.

The use of poetic language

Here the term "poetic language" refers not only to words cast in a conventional verse form, but also to words of poetic taste, or of poeticity, that do not conform to any conventional canon of poetry. I define "poeticity" or "poeticizing" in a broad sense, namely, I define it as a kind of figurative, imaginative, or suggestive use of language that echoes, or evokes co-echoing with, the rhythm of life. This allows us to take into consideration more than the Chan masters' frequent borrowing and composing of verses in their communication, including the entire way of poeticizing in Chan discourse. Thus, Linji's well-known verses in his explanation of "Four Procedures" are one example of using poetic language.[72] Some of Huangbo Xiyun's sayings are another:

> Mountains are mountains; water is water; monks are monks; laymen are laymen. Mountains, rivers, and the great earth; the sun, the moon, and the stars – none of them is outside your mind. . . . The green mountains that everywhere meet your gaze – this void world – are so clear and bright that no single hairsbreadth is left there for your cognitive understanding.[73]

Even Zhaozhou's famous answer, "The cypress tree in the yard," is a kind of poetic expression.

As Burton Watson correctly discerns, Chan masters prefer "brief, highly compact poetical expressions that are suggestive rather than expository in nature." This use of poetic language "eschews specifically religious or philosophical terminology in favor of everyday language, seeking to express insight in terms of the imagery and verse forms current in the secular culture of the period."[74] Observations of this kind point to the relation between the Chan use of poetic language and the Chan emphasis on the realization of enlightenment within all secular activities.

Other scholars also see factors contributing to the evolution of Chan poetic expressions from Buddhist *gāthās* (hymns) – the facilitation of poetic expressions by the analogical nature of Chinese language, the centuries-long cultivation of poetic sensibilities before the golden age of Chan, the great literary notion and tradition of metaphor and allegory (*bixing*), etc.[75] Hajime Nakamura, among others, particularly regards the Chan preference for figurative, suggestive language as indicative of the "non-logical character" of Chan Buddhism. He chooses Linji's explanation of "Four Procedures" to show that Linji favors using figurative language instead of giving logical, speculative expositions.[76]

All these interpretations may well provide answers, from a cultural perspective, to the question of why Chan Buddhists prefer using poetic language. However, they do not precisely answer the question of how poetic language functions in Chan communication. The study of the latter question, it seems to me, is crucial to a deeper understanding of the former question. This study will eventually reveal that poetic language is not a decorative feature of Chan discourse but plays a substantial role in the entire Chan communication.[77] It will disclose the inner logic of Chan poeticizing. My preliminary investigation of this question will thus elucidate, in line with this thinking, the following aspects.

First, the Chan use of poetic language is a kind of de-familiarization that proceeds by deviating from or violating conventional Buddhist usage and all conventional ways of thinking. There are two types of de-familiarization: moderate and radical. Moderate de-familiarization designates a type of poetic expression in combination with conventional discursive language, such as the foregoing passage quoted from Huangbo Xiyun's sayings. However, even in combination with conventional discursive language, this inclusion of poetic expressions in the main part of preaching violates the rhetorical canon of Buddhist discourse. The Chan poetic expressions are no longer subsidiary to theoretical inquiries and logical expositions, as those traditional Buddhist *gāthās* were. Moreover, the use of figurative, expressive language deliberately minimizes or marginalizes the conventional use of expository, propositional language and the cognitive mode of thinking. This is more prominent in the radical type of de-familiarization.

This radical type of de-familiarization often occurs in the master–disciple conversation. The masters give completely figurative, expressive answers to the students' intellectual inquiries, such as "The cypress tree in the yard" and "The river from the Land of Peach

Blossom goes around the pavilion of white cloud."[78] Answers of this kind produce elusive effects. This elusiveness becomes a decisive force before which all conventional sequential thinking is doomed to lose itself. Since this use of poetic expression forcefully interrupts the conventional sequential thinking represented by the student's question, it is, again, similar to a kind of "therapeutic shock." In this context, the Chan use of poetic language, it could be said, comprises its apophasis, denying the student's way of questioning and thinking. However, this denial is obviously different from any direct negation, for the poetic expressions here do not themselves directly engage in any negation.

Therefore, second, although the use of poetic language within the Chan Buddhist context contains apophasis, it cannot be characterized as apophatic discourse. It rather manifests a kind of kataphasis, a poetic affirmation that is different from both conventional negation and affirmation.[79] In such poetic expressions as "The cypress tree in the yard" and "The river from the Land of Peach Blossom goes around the pavilion of white cloud," we see that the everyday world, as vivid as it is, is poetically affirmed or reaffirmed in its naturalistic dynamism. To borrow Heidegger's words,"this multiple ambiguousness of the poetic saying . . . leaves what is as it is."[80] In this way Chan Buddhism remarkably poeticizes the Mahāyāna belief that the nirvanic world is not different from the samsaric world and the Chinese Buddhist notion of "true emptiness within wondrous beings (*zhenkong miaoyou*)." Therefore, even though the Chan masters ignore or deny the students' questions, they nonetheless say something meaningful and positive within the dialogical context by pointing to it poetically, thus guiding the students' soteriological practice.

Third, the elusiveness characteristic of these poetic expressions makes the understanding of their meanings more open to variation, to situational differences. In other words, it always allows or even encourages more than one understanding of what it says. The Chan masters maintain the necessity of this elusiveness and multiplicity of meanings in their use of poetic expressions. For instance, when Zhaozhou replies: "I do not use surroundings to show something," he asserts that there is no definite cognitive content or meaning hidden behind these metaphorical words – "The cypress tree in the yard." Just as Heidegger thinks the multiplicity of meanings necessary to thinking,[81] the Chan masters consider the elusiveness and multiplicity of meanings necessary to provoking each individual's situational realization of enlightenment.

Scholars have divided Chan poetry into different types.[82] Among these types, those that demonstrate Buddhist *dharmas* and enlightenment experience are of primary importance. As we have discussed earlier, the Chan students must experience, realize and resonate with enlightenment existentially (practically) and non-dualistically. This requires that Chan masters, in responding to the students' inquiries, must say something merely evocative, edifying, in order not to mislead the students, not to hinder their own realization. That is to say, they must speak indirectly. The elusiveness and multiplicity of meanings inherent in Chan poetic expressions best serve this indirection of communication. These expressions challenge students' own effort and arouse students' creative imagination through the imagery closely associated with everyday experiences.

Consider the following verses:

1   What green mountain is not a place for the practice
        of *dao*?
    Must you, cane in hand, make a pilgrimage to Qing
        Liang?
    Even if the golden-haired lion should appear in the
        clouds,
    It would not be an auspicious sight to the *dharma* eye![83]

2   The happy adventure of the romantic youth,
    His lady alone knows its sweetness.[84]

The first case mainly suggests that you should not seek the *dao* externally or dualistically. The second case hints that the realization and resonance of enlightenment must be achieved existentially and inwardly, and cannot be externalized or objectified. However, these are just hints or suggestions. They allow and even call forth divergent imaginings and understandings in terms of concrete, particular, personal experiences, and situations of the everyday world. Thus they inspire and provoke in a way that theoretic teaching and discursive speech cannot do. Because of their close relationship with secular experiences, these poetic expressions also demystify the Chan enlightenment experience. In the final analysis, the use of poetic language as an indirect strategy is demanded by the inner structure of Chan communication. As living words, Chan poetic expressions make Chan communication more effective and certainly more attractive to ordinary people.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Our investigation of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan Buddhism, with respect to three areas of language use, have come to an end only temporarily. A complete investigation of these three areas in the *Zhuangzi* and Chan Buddhism still lies ahead of us. As is now quite clear, my investigation is nonetheless preliminary. Each area deserves, and calls for, further studies. As I approached the end of my original project, I have realized clearly that what I set up for myself and for this project as its end could be just another beginning. This undertaking has exposed or revealed more questions or problems that deserve deeper investigation and must be taken into consideration, thought through or analyzed further. However, this fact does not reduce the significance of this preliminary work. If it brings more attention to these areas, points to the value of investigations of this kind, I see a merit in it. I expect the continuation of my exploration in the future, challenges from others and further works in the same areas done by others.

In conclusion, I would like to briefly address three issues.

First, it is now more evident than at the beginning of this book that one thread running through my investigation of the three topics is the investigation of linguistic strategies, of language uses, in these two traditions. This focus should not be lost despite the fact that my investigation of linguistic strategies is at the same time the investigation of many other things, as is especially shown by those chapters on deconstruction. As we have noted, to investigate Daoist and Chan Buddhist linguistic strategies, we must first investigate their overall concerns for soteriological practices. It is only in their practices or in the pragmatic contexts that these strategies play great roles. In other words, linguistic strategy never becomes a solely linguistic issue. It is always demanded by, and is inseparable from, practical matters. Therefore, my investigation of deconstructive operations in these two traditions,

for example, covers both linguistic patterns and extralinguistic purposes. This being simultaneously intralinguistic and extralinguistic, simultaneously inside and outside, is an enduring characteristic of language use in Daoism and Chan Buddhism. The intrinsic link among my investigations of deconstruction, liminology and indirect communication is thus perfectly discernible.

Second, this book is not a comparative work on the *Zhuangzi* and Chan Buddhism. My project is to let Zhuangzi and Chan Buddhists rediscover themselves and address postmodern issues from their own perspectives. To best address postmodern issues from different traditions, I choose the *Zhuangzi* and Chan Buddhism. After the preceding investigations we might see more clearly their similarities and differences, their continuities and discontinuities, between these two traditions, especially in the three areas we have studied. This might become a starting point for a close comparison between them concerning these areas. However, this comparative study is beyond the scope of my present undertaking. One may, nevertheless, ask what major differences there are between these two traditions, since their undertakings and perspectives do look so alike, as far as the three areas are concerned.

In this brief discussion, I want to emphasize two points of difference among others. One difference is that no matter how profound Zhuangzi's impact on Chan is, Zhuangzi's ideas and vocabularies have been assimilated and integrated into Buddhist teachings. The Four Noble Truths of the Buddha's teaching, many other notions of Mādhyamika, Yogācāra and the *tathāgatagarbha*, are maintained by Chan Buddhism. These notions cannot be found in Zhuangzi's teaching, even though the Chan inheritance of these notions is presented in the form of their Chinese transformation of them. In a word, it is a synthesis between Indian Buddhist teachings and indigenous philosophical–religious ideas. This synthesis makes otherness both possible and inevitable between Chan and Zhuangzi. For example, although Chan Buddhists talk about the identification of affliction and enlightenment, which is similar to Zhuangzi's equalization of happiness and unhappiness, Chan Buddhists still have more to say about afflictions, sufferings and how to turn them into enlightenment than Zhuangzi does.

Furthermore, because of this Buddhist inheritance and context, Chan Buddhists make their own contributions to the three areas investigated. Chan Buddhist deconstruction has its own target and operates in its own context. It shows a kind of maturity and sophistication in simultaneouly using kathaphatic language and

deconstructive strategy. The Chan Buddhist liminology of language spells out more plainly the necessity and inevitability of speaking. Chan Buddhists utilize tautological language that Zhuangzi does not use. All these facts indicate the differences between Chan and Zhuangzi that my investigation has helped to understand.

Third, what I indicated at the beginning – that in my investigation of three areas, two Chinese traditions and Western contemporary/postmodern philosophy would mutually illumine each other – is also more clear. On the one hand, the study or utilization of Western postmodern discourse and other contemporary philosophies is definitely helpful in highlighting certain aspects of these two traditions. It is hard to imagine that these aspects could be highlighted without the study or utilization of Western ideas and vocabularies. This kind of study or utilization enables us to look at two traditions anew. This is not to say that these two traditions must rely on our contemporary perspectives. Traditions stand on their own feet in the sense that they constantly provide raw materials for our understanding, imagination, and rediscovery. However, no traditions exist in and by themselves. They always present themselves in various historical forms and contexts. I repeat here that I advocate the Gadamerian notion of "the fusion of horizons." The implication of this notion is relational and dynamic for dealing with the interpretation of texts and traditions. From this relational perspective, we have no reason to hesitate in utilizing Western philosophy to rediscover Eastern traditions. I believe that my book has proven this rediscovery or reinterpretation fruitful.

On the other hand, I have shown that the discourses of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan contribute to, enrich, and cast new light on contemporary Western discussions of postmodern issues. Several cases from this treatise can further underline this aspect. The deconstructive operations of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan Buddhism show us an intrinsic link between their strategies and their philosophical–religious theses. Their philosophical–religious theses call forth deconstructive strategies; their deconstructive strategies serve their philosophical–religious theses. This link throws light on the contemporary debate about the relation between philosophy and deconstruction, suggesting reconciling both instead of polarizing each.

In the area of the liminology of language, the mastery of a complete interplay between silence and speaking in the *Zhuangzi* and Chan Buddhism enhances our understanding and interpretation of Heidegger's and Merleau-Ponty's relativizing of the distinction between speech and silence. It mirrors Derrida's halfway play when

compared with his mere affirmation of silence as speaking, and his lack of insight into speaking or non-speaking as silence.

In the area of indirect communication, the Zhuangzian and Chan Buddhist emphasis on the existential–practical dimension of communication reinforces the subversion of the Western privilege of direct communication. My investigation of this issue strongly echoes contemporary Western discourses on the indirection of communication. While Western thinkers start to find the possibility of indirect communication for Western philosophy, the long-time tradition of indirect communication in the *Zhuangzi* and Chan is able to provide useful resources for this exploration. Western thinkers would hopefully find inspiration in these two traditions of indirect communication. For example, the Chan Buddhist use of tautological and poetic language not only helps us to better understand Heidegger's use of similar language, but also calls for a displacement of these modes of language in Western philosophical discourse. It urges us to take seriously the issue of "other possibilities of philosophical language" and to see the prospect of actualizing these possibilities. All these cases forcefully demonstrate that contemporary Western philosophy can benefit, one way or another, from my investigation of three areas in the *Zhuangzi* and Chan Buddhism.

Finally, I must state that neither my approach to the *Zhuangzi* and Chan Buddhism nor my investigation of them involve "final vocabularies." I am fully aware that this is impossible, and intend to avoid leaving any such impressions. Great traditions such as the *Zhuangzi* and Chan Buddhism are always ahead of us, not in the sense that they contain some final or ultimate truths that we are still in the process of searching for and have no hope of reaching on our own. Traditions themselves are caught in the process of unfolding, in the web of textuality or ever-renewing contextualization.

This process of unfolding, this web of textuality or contextualization, makes possible different understandings and interpretations of traditions. Every understanding or interpretation of tradition has its limit or is limited, but different understandings or interpretations are always possible and without limit. In this sense I believe that great traditions are always ahead of us. Nobody is able to exhaust them. On this view, my approach to the *Zhuangzi* and Chan Buddhism or my interpretation of them is only one among many. It does not obstruct other approaches or other interpretations, but merely supplements them. The value of supplementation is relative, but the relativity of supplementation does not cancel the value of supplementation itself. While I do not assert that my approach or my

interpretation is the only correct one, I have no doubt that it is valuable, and I want to share the results and value of this investigation with others. If my approach or my interpretation provokes, inspires, or triggers different approaches or interpretations, I will be happy, and will see this as part of the merit of my work.

NOTES

1 INTRODUCTION

1 Kupperman, 1989, 312.

   The reader may find confusing about the words "Zhuangzi" and "the *Zhuangzi*" I used here and throughout this book. The word "Zhuangzi" refers to the person, and the words "the *Zhuangzi*" refer to the book of which the name of Zhuangzi is also the title. Towards the relationship between the book of the *Zhuangzi* and Zhuangzi the person, I take a general attitude that is quite close to that of Victor Mair, who once stated: "My relatively uncritical approach to the text is to consider it as an anthology of [D]aoist writings in which the dominant impress derives from the corporate personality that I shall, for the sake of simplicity, refer to as '[Zhuangzi]'." Mair, 1983, 85–6. However, when treating more specific textual issues, I take a more cautious and critical attitude towards the relationship between Zhuangzi and what is said or recorded in the book of the *Zhuangzi* to avoid any inconsistency.

   Throughout this treatise, Chinese names and proper names are rendered according to the *pinyin* system except for titles of sources in which I leave original renderings unchanged. In quotations, those that originally appear in other than the *pinyin* form are changed with square brackets.

2 Magliola, 1984, 91.

3 For example, David Loy, 1992, 253.

4 Faure, 1993, 223.

5 The use of the terms "postmodern" and "postmodernism" in contemporary writings is very obscure. Sometimes they are interchangeable; sometimes they are not. Sometimes they are used in a narrow sense, sometimes they are used in a broad sense. I use "postmodern discourse" in a very broad sense. The philosophical currents covered by the term are clearly more than a narrowly defined postmodernism, for example that of Lyotard or Rorty. It also tends to include discussions such as those of Habermas, which in some way still participate in and contribute to a general "postmodern discourse."

6 Cf. Habermas, 1992, 46–7; Rorty, 1982, xviii.

7 Cf. the entry "postmodern" in Audi, 1995, 634.

8 Cf. Chomsky, 1986, 3–4.

9 Cf. Searle, 1990a, and 1969.
10 Cf. Rorty, 1991b, 50, and 1979, 257.
11 Cf. Deleuze and Guattari, 1988, chapter 4; Lyotard, 1984, chapters 6 and 7. Also cf. Lecercle, 1987, 21–40.
12 Hansen, 1987, 309–10.
13 For criticisms on Hansen's linguistic determinism represented by his book *Language and Logic in Ancient China* (Hansen, 1983a), cf. Chung-ying Cheng, 1983, 349, and Bao Zhiming, 1985a, 206, and 1985b, 428–29. For a postmodern critique of scientism or scientistic method of philosophy, cf. Rorty, "Pragmatism without Method," in Rorty, 1991a, 63–77. Also see Rorty, 1982, introduction.
14 Here I use the term *postmodernism* in a very broad sense, which includes not only Lyotard's postmodernism but also other philosophical currents in association with postmodernism such as poststructuralism, neo-pragmatism, etc.
15 Wu, 1982, 3.
16 Munro, 1969, 117.
17 I certainly disagree with Chad Hansen that conventionalism can be a category which applies not only to Confucianism but also to Daoism. I characterize Daoist teaching as trans-conventional. Cf. Hansen, 1983a, 62–3, and Heiner Roetz's criticism of Hansen's negligence of the post-conventional perspective in classical Chinese philosophy in Roetz, 1993.
18 Gadamer, 1989, 306.
19 I define multi-dimensional perspectivism as a philosophical position that allows for the possibility of multiple perspectives on one thing due to an ever-moving context of things, as opposed to realism and the correspondence theory of knowledge and language.
20 Habermas, 1992, 50–1.
21 Wood, 1990, 55.
22 Derrida, 1982, 17.
23 For a significant account of Zhuangzi's multi-dimensional perspectivism, see Fu, 1989.
24 For a forceful critique of postmodernism's dismissal of legitimative questions, cf. Margolis, 1995a, 17, 92.

2 UNDERSTANDING DECONSTRUCTION THROUGH THE *ZHUANGZI* AND CHAN

1 Rorty, 1991b, 128.
2 Norris, 1983.
3 Wood, 1987, 175–6.
4 Ibid., 176.
5 This view has been shared by such divergent thinkers and scholars as Rodolphe Gasche, Christopher Norris, David Wood, Peter Dews, and Richard Rorty, despite their discrepancies and in very different directions. See Gasche, 1986; Norris, 1987; Wood, 1990; Dews, 1995. Rorty also acknowledges a certain kind of continuity between deconstruction and the tradition of Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Wittgenstein. See Rorty, 1982, and other books.

6 Norris, 1987, 18.
7 Derrida, 1988, 3.
8 Derrida, 1982, 3.
9 Derrida, 1988, 5.
10 Norris, 1987, 19.
11 Derrida, 1988, 4.
12 Derrida, 1984, 111.
13 Derrida, 1988, 3.
14 Derrida, 1981, 10.
15 Ibid., 24.
16 Ibid., 59.
17 Ibid., 6, 41, 59.
18 Ibid., 41.
19 Ibid.
20 Ibid., 42. David Wood has analytically reconstructed Derrida's account of his general strategy as an account of three stages, namely, has analyzed Derrida's first stage into two stages. See Wood, 1990, 49.
21 Derrida, 1981, 43.
22 Derrida, 1984, 116.
23 Based on Derrida's own descriptions, David Wood has defined deconstruction as "a critical philosophical method," an operation of "defamiliarization." "Deconstruction reflexively applies to philosophy itself the defamiliarizing operation philosophy usually reserves for outer application." See Wood, 1990, 44–5.
24 For Rorty's view, see his "Is Derrida a Transcendental Philosopher?", in Rorty, 1991b, 128.
25 Caputo, 1993, 159. Caputo's view on the sedimentation of the term *differance* is similar to Rorty's, as Caputo admits. However, this view is expressed with a different direction by Rorty. See Rorty, 1991b, 102–3.
26 Derrida says: "The word 'deconstruction,' like all other words, acquires its value only from its inscription in a chain of possible substitutions, in what is too blithely called a 'context'." See Derrida, 1988, 4.
27 Ibid., 3. The italics are original.
28 Ibid. The italics are original.
29 Ibid., 4. The italics are original.
30 Derrida himself once used the term *contextual strategy*. See ibid., 2.
31 Norris, 1989, 193. The italics are in the original.
32 Gasche, 1986, 7.
33 See, for instance, Wood, 1990, 49; Margolis, 1997, 116. John Caputo also acknowledges: "Derrida does indeed have a certain 'philosophical idea' about language. You might even say he has a (kind of) 'theory'." Caputo himself calls this a "quasitheory." See Caputo, 1993, 156–7.
34 Peter Dews has addressed the problem and difficulty caused by such a view in defining the originality of Derrida's work. See Dews, 1995, 115.
35 Rorty, 1991b, 128.
36 Derrida, 1984, 108.
37 Dews, 1995, 141.
38 Caputo, 1993, 161.
39 Ibid., 158.

40 Ibid., 159. The italic is original.
41 Margolis, 1997, 116.
42 Ibid., 128.
43 I must admit that Caputo's and Margolis' views on deconstruction go in different directions.
44 Loy, 1992, 227. A similar view can be found in Jackson, 1989, 565.
45 See Introduction of this book, note 2.
46 John Caputo, among others, has clearly pointed out this ethical implication of Derrida's project: "the turn to the other, the openness to the other." See Caputo, 1993, 164.
47 My use of the term *logocentrism* or *logocentric* is based on Rorty's distinguishing of a broad sense of *logocentrism* from a narrow use of the term. According to Rorty, "in the wide sense," logocentrism includes "all the invidious binary oppositions." These binary oppositions or distinctions "are merely the ordinary strains that appear in any and every vocabulary (scientific, political, technical, or whatever) . . ." See Rorty, 1991b, 109. Rorty is arguing that logocentrism can be applied to various discourses outside Western philosophy, the tradition of metaphysics to which only a narrow sense of the term can be applied. I therefore define the broad sense of logocentrism or the logocentric as an intellectual maneuver to establish a fixed binary opposition, a hierarchy, a system of privileged concepts, and the like.

3 ZHUANGZI'S *DAO* DECONSTRUCTS . . . AND ZHUANGZI DECONSTRUCTS HIS *DAO*

1 See Yeh, 1983; Chien, 1990; Ownes, 1993.
2 See, for example, Tang, 1986, 284; Cui, 1992, 406.
3 See Hansen, 1992, 285, and 1983b, 47. I agree with Hansen that the traditional account identifies Shendao's conception of the monistic *dao* as the only concept in both Laozi and Zhuangzi (see Hansen, 1992, 401, note 11 and others).
4 There have not been many studies contributing to the specific discussion of Zhuangzi's philosophy of change. Among contemporary Chinese philosophers, Tang Junyi, and Xu Fuguan, in explaining Zhuangzi's notion of *dao*, provide their understanding of Zhuangzi's view of change. Xu Fuguan, in particular, observes that Zhuangzi's *dao* is to accommodate one's mind to all changes, an attitude more positive than Laozi's. This is accurate (see Xu, 1969, 364; Tang, 1986, 287). The two recent studies of the *Zhuangzi* done by Chinese scholars from mainland China, however, take a more systematic approach to Zhuangzi's philosophy of change, despite the Marxist framework of their interpretation. See Cui, 1992, 110; Wang, 1996, 84. I think that it is really the right time to recover Zhuangzi's philosophy of change when contemporary philosophers have been increasingly paying more attention to the problem of contingency and flux.
5 Fung, 1952, vol. 1, 225–6.
6 See Fung Yu-lan's Appendices to his *Chuang-tzu: A New Selected Translation*. Fung, 1989, 122.
7 Hansen, 1983b, 50.

8 Hansen, 1992, 50. For Heraclitus, see entry "Heraclitus" in Mautner, 1996, 186. Also see Kirk, 1983, 187.

9 Hansen, 1983b, 50.

10 Hansen, 1992, 50–1.

11 I use the term "soteriological" or "soteriology" in a very broad sense. Soteriology refers to religious–philosophical teachings or doctrines that aim at leading people to their ultimate freedom or liberation. It is no longer confined to the Christian context of salvation that is made possible only by the work of Jesus Christ, although it acknowledges Christian teaching as one soteriology among others. A word close to "soteriological" is "therapeutic." I use this word to describe a kind of teaching or practice that helps to free people from illness or suffering, not in a narrow physical or medical sense but in a broad sense of existential–spiritual transformation, freedom or liberation.

   I think that Mou Zongsan is fair when he subsumes Daoist practice, including Zhuangzi's, under the category of "soteriological practice (*jietuo de shijian*)." See Mou, 1983, 115.

12 *ZY* 4/2/13–14. Following the Yenching convention, I indicate the page, chapter, and line number(s) from the left to the right for each quoted passage. For the English translation see Mair, 1994, 13. I have made minor changes. Also see Watson, 1968, 37–8.

13 *ZY* 44/17/45–7. Watson, 1968, 182.

14 "*wanhua er weishi youji.*" *ZY* 55/21/34, 16/6/27. My translation. Cf. Mair, 1994, 203, 55.

15 *ZY* 37/14/17–19. Cf. Watson, 1968, 156–7.

16 *ZY* 44/17/45. Watson, 1968, 182.

17 "*wuliang wuqiong, shi wuzhi, fen wuchang, shizhong wugu.*" *ZY* 42/17/15. My translation. Cf. Watson, 1968, 177; Mair, 1994, 154.

18 *ZY* 73/25/78–9. Watson, 1968, 293.

19 My use of the term *temporization* here is close to Derrida's use in his paper "Differance," namely, temporization as differing and deferring in virtue of time (see Derrida, 1982, 18). However, I use this term strictly within the contextual limit of Zhuangzi's philosophy.

20 One may notice the similarities between Zhuangzi's philosophy of change and the well-known notions expressed by the *Yi Zhuan* (Treatise on the Classic of Change). Due to the limitation of my project, I am unable to offer a study of the similarities and differences between them. For a preliminary comparison between Zhuangzi's notion of change and that of the *Yi Zhuan*, see Chen, 1996, 91–3. For a recent interpretation of the notion of change in the *Yi Zhuan*, see Fu, 1979, 348–51.

21 See note 12 of this chapter.

22 *ZY* 4/2/14–17. This translation has benefited from Chad Hansen's rendering of the passage included in his essay "A Tao of Tao in Chuang-tzu." See Hansen, 1983b, 41–2. Hansen's related analysis in that essay is beneficial for our understanding of this passage as well. Also cf. Mair, 1994, 13–14.

23 *ZY* 18/6/78. Watson, 1968, 88.

24 *ZY* 44/17/47. My translation. Cf. Watson, 1968, 182; Mair, 1994, 158.

25 *ZY* 28/11/53–4, 28/11/56. Watson, 1968, 122. I have made a minor change.

26 *ZY* 4/2/27–9. Watson, 1968, 39–40.
27 *ZY* 4/2/27. Watson, 1968, 39.
28 "*fenyezhe, youbufenye*." *ZY* 5/2/57. Cf. Mair, 1994, 19.
29 *ZY* 4/2/27. I paraphrase Zhuangzi's original sentence here. However, my paraphrasing does not deviate from the spirit of Zhuangzi's sentence. Cf. Wayne E. Alt's translation in Alt, 1991, 68.
30 *ZY* 4/2/29. See Watson, 1968, 40.
31 See note 13 of this chapter.
32 *ZY* 4/2/36–5/2/37. Cf. Mair, 1994, 16 and Graham, 1981, 54.
33 *ZY* 18/6/78–9. Watson, 1968, 88.
34 See Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Mystical Theology*, in Pseudo-Dionysius, 1987, 133.
35 *ZY* 4/2/30–1. Mair, 1994, 15.
36 "*zhiren wuji*." *ZY* 2/1/21–2. Cf. Watson, 1968, 32.
37 Zhuangzi uses "*sangqiou*" and "*wusangwo*" to describe the state of "no-self." *ZY* 3/2/1, 3/2/3. For the meaning of the terms, see Wang, 1988, vol. 1, 41; Guo, 1964, 44.
38 *ZY* 18/6/80. Watson, 1968, 88.
39 *ZY* 16/6/27. Watson, 1968, 81.
40 *ZY* 46/18/17–18. Mair, 1994, 169.
41 See note 12 of this chapter.
42 *ZY* 60/22/81–61/22/83. Watson, 1968, 247. I have made a minor change.
43 "*Feibi wuwo, feiwo wusuoqu*." *ZY* 4/2/14–15. See Chad Hansen's translation of this sentence in Hansen, 1983b, 41.
44 Namely: the famous narrative of Zhuangzi's dreaming of being a butterfly. *ZY* 7/2/95.
45 *ZY* 6/2/83, 18/6/81.
46 "*bianyezhe, youbujianye*." *ZY* 5/2/58.
47 *ZY* 5/2/44–5. Cf. Mair, 1994, 17–18.
48 *ZY* 4/2/21. My translation. Cf. ibid., 14.
49 *ZY* 4/2/26. Watson, 1968, 39.
50 I use the term *empirical self* to mean the everyday activity and experience of self based on the conventional distinction of self and other. Zhuangzi's notion of no-self is not to deny such existence in the everyday sense, but only to offer a relational understanding or interpretation of such existence for the soteriological purpose, to end ordinary people's attachment to the conventional self. In other words, it does not offer an ontology of True Self or Eternal Self to replace any individual self including physical self and psychological or emotional self.
51 *ZY* 92/33/45.
52 *ZY* 92/33/51. Cf. Watson, 1968, 371; Mair, 1994, 340.
53 *ZY* 92/33/54. Cf. Watson, 1968, 371.
54 Freud, 1960, vol. 6, 239.
55 Taylor, 1990, 224.
56 However, it may be noticed that there are profound differences between Freud's forgetting and Zhuangzi's. Forgetting in Freudian psychoanalysis is a kind of everyday action occurring in the margin between consciousness and unconsciousness. Zhuangzi's forgetting is a soteriological notion. Although it is marginal, it occurs on a higher

level. It attempts to "forget what the ordinary person does not forget" (*wang qisuobuwang*, see *ZY* 14/5/51). A further comparative study between Freudian forgetting and Zhuangzi's might be interesting.

57 Cf. Cua, 1977, 306.
58 See "*wang shifei*," *ZY* 50/19/63; "*wang renyi*," *ZY* 19/6/90; "*wanghu wu*," *ZY* 30/12/45; "*wangren*," *ZY* 64/23/77; "*waisheng*," *ZY* 17/6/40; "*wai tianxia*," *ZY* 17/6/39; "*wanghu tian*," *ZY* 30/12/45. The Chinese word "*wai*" also means forgetting, see Guo, 1964, 253.
59 Zhuangzi says: "To forget things and to forget heaven is called forgetting the self." *ZY* 30/12/45. Mair, 1994, 109.
60 See Guo, 1964, 45.
61 "*Zuowang*," "*lixing quzhi*." *ZY* 19/6/92. Cf. Watson, 1968, 90. Here "sitting down and forgetting" is not only a philosophical notion, but a meditational practice. Zhuangzi's notion of forgetting self therefore is closely related to his practice and experience of meditation as self-therapy. However, due to the limitations of the present topic, I will not analyze "forgetting self" from the perspective of meditational practice, but treat it within the limit of a philosophical and ideological notion, while acknowledging its connection with Daoist meditational practice.
62 *ZY* 50/19/63. Cf. Mair, 1994, 184.
63 "*Buru liangwang er huaqidao*." *ZY* 16/6/23–4. Cf. Watson, 1968, 80.
64 *ZY* 18/6/73. Cf. ibid., 87.
65 The socio-ethical implication of Zhuangzi's discourse of no-self is a topic that deserves a lot more specific studies. Here I only mention in passing some of its implications. For an insightful study of Zhuangzi's teaching of no-self and its unique soteriological meaning, see Berling, 1985.
66 *ZY* 20/7/11, 74/26/37.
67 *ZY* 11/4/58–9. Mair, 1994, 36.
68 "*Dazhi, ruyuwuci*." *ZY* 11/4/59.
69 "*Shunwu ziran er wurongsiye*." *ZY* 20/7/11. The translation here assimilates something respectively from Watson's translation and Mair's. Cf. Watson, 1968, 94; Mair, 1994, 68.
70 *ZY* 7/2/92.
71 See Hansen, 1992, 208, 211, 230.
72 *Dao De Jing*, chapter 1. The original Chinese text is in Chen, 1987. Translation is mine.
73 Ibid., chapter 2.
74 Ibid., chapter 40.
75 Ibid., chapter 1.
76 Ibid., chapter 14. This translation is from Fu and Wawrytko's unpublished manuscript. I have made a minor change.
77 *ZY* 5/2/49–51. Watson, 1968, 43.
78 Cf. A. C. Graham's interpretation for this paragraph: "[I]f we negate the negation we do not return to the affirmation, but arrive at a third possibility. . . . This brings us nearer to what the two alternatives left out." See Graham, 1969–70, 145–6.
79 *ZY* 73/25/79–80. Watson, 1968, 293. I have made minor changes.
80 *ZY* 7/2/92, 3/2/4, 6/2/62, 5/2/40, 4/2/31.
81 Chapter 39 in Chen, 1987. My translation. Cf. Lau, 1963, 100.

82 *ZY* 93/33/56. Cf. Watson, 1968, 372.
83 *ZY* 92/33/44–5. Translation is from Hansen, 1992, 206.
84 Hansen, 1992, 285.
85 Ibid., 230.
86 Chapter 4 in Chen, 1987. The translation is from Fu and Wawrytko's unpublished manuscript.
87 Chapter 21. Ibid.
88 Chapter 25. Ibid. I have made a minor change.
89 See, for instance, Charles W. Fu's discussion of this point in his paper "Creative Hermeneutics: Taoist Metaphysics and Heidegger." Fu, 1976, 134.
90 I say that it is not purely metaphysical, not only because the context of Laozi's discussion of *dao* is prescriptive and pragmatic, but also because the distinctions of sensible and intelligible, of essence and phenomena, etc., that characterize Western metaphysics, are missing in Laozi's philosophy. Moreover, as I have mentioned, Laozi maintains some trans-metaphysical views that ultimately privilege neither being nor nothingness.
91 Chapter 34 in Chen, 1987. The translation is from Fu and Wawrytko's unpublished manuscript. I have made a minor change.
92 Chapter 32. Ibid.
93 *ZY* 59/22/50. Watson, 1968, 241.
94 *ZY* 44/17/45. Cf. ibid., 182.
95 *ZY* 60/22/75–6. Ibid., 246.
96 A. C. Graham might be the first person to note this point and carefully distinguish Zhuangzi's position from Hui Shi's saying that heaven and earth are one unit. See Graham, 1981, 56.
97 *ZY* 5/2/53–5. Mair, 1994, 18–19.
98 Cf. Fu and Wawrytko's unpublished manuscript, and Lau, 1963, 103.
99 *ZY* 5/2/55. Cf. Watson, 1968, 43.
100 *ZY* 59/22/44–5. Cf. ibid., 240–1.
101 *ZY* 12/5/7. Ibid., 69.

4 THE DECONSTRUCTION OF BUDDHA NATURE IN CHAN BUDDHISM

1 Magliola, 1984, 96–7.
2 Faure, 1993, 225.
3 Ibid.
4 By Chan Buddhism, here I refer to the main line of Huineng through Mazu/Shitou to Linji/Caodong, etc. Mazu was seen as the founder of the Hongzhou School of Southern Chan. About the main line or main stream of Chan Buddhism, cf. Dumoulin, 1988. Also cf. Yanagida and Umehara, 1969.
5 Faure, 1993, 225.
6 Matsumoto 1994. See also Lusthaus, 1997, 52–3.
7 For this question, see Takasaki, 1966a, 90.
8 These are actually criticisms from the expounders of *tathāgatagarbha* thought and the Yogācāra school. For criticisms and a different view of emptiness from the Yogācāra school, see Nagao, 1991, 53–7. For

criticisms from the thinkers of *tathāgatagarbha* thought, see Takasaki, 1966b, 54–7. For criticisms from a combined perspective of both *Tathāgatagarbha* and Yogācāra, see King, 1991, 6–19.

9 See, for instance, Nāgārjuna, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* 24:18, the English translation in Sprung, 1979, 238.

10 Takasaki, 1966a, 91. Also see Takasaki, 1988, vol. 1, 43.

11 Cf. Williams, 1989, 63.

12 For instance, the *Mahāparinirvāna Sūtra*, on one occasion, simply declares that Self (*ātman*) is the meaning of *tathāgatagarbha*, although on other occasions it distinguishes between them. See *Daban Niepan Jing*, *T* 12, 374:407b (following the *Taishō* convention, I give the volume, individual text, and page number, including register "a," "b," or "c," for each quote). Also cf. Williams, 1989, 98.

13 *T* 12, 374: 525a. For the English translation see Liu, 1982, 88.

14 Ibid.

15 For the English translation from Sanskrit text see Takasaki, 1966b, 305–6.

16 *Lengjia Aba Duoluobao Jing* (*Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*). *T* 16, 670: 489b. For the English translation see Suzuki, 1932, 69.

17 Ibid., 70.

18 Takasaki, 1966b, 290.

19 *Jiujing Yicheng Baoxinglun* (*Ratnagotravibhāga*), *T* 31, 1611: 839a.

20 Takasaki, 1966b, 293. Also see *Shengman Shizihou Yicheng Daofangbian Fangguang Jing*, *T* 12, 353: 222b. The English translation here is from Wayman, 1974, 105.

21 Takasaki, 1966b, 291. Wayman, 1974, 105.

22 *T* 12, 374: 524a.

23 Ibid.

24 Ibid., 557a.

25 Ibid., 533b.

26 Ibid., 530c. Cf. Liu, 1982, 74.

27 "*Xukongzhe jishi foxing.*" *T* 12, 374: 445c.

28 Ibid., 521b.

29 Ibid., 375: 747b.

30 Ibid., 374: 519b.

31 "*Zhongdoazhe mingwei foxing. . . .*" Ibid., 523b.

32 Ibid., 524b.

33 See Nāgārjuna *Kārikā* 24:10, in Sprung, 1979, 232.

34 *T* 12, 374: 523b.

35 See Takasaki, 1966b, 301; Wayman, 1974, 99. Cf. Williams, 1989, 101, 105; Nagao, 1991, 57–60.

36 Cf. Sallie B. King's explanation of the use of these terms in relation to another *Tathāgatagarbha*-Yogācāra text *Foxing Lun*: These terms are "just talking about what a Buddha is like and extolling the virtues of such a being." See King, 1997, 181.

37 I take a position similar to Peter Gregory's in defining the nature of this complicated text. Gregory once wrote, "[W]hatever else the text may or may not be, it is surely a hybrid." (See Gregory, 1986, 64.) However, by the term "hybrid" or "blending," I mean the combination of not only different Indian Mahāyāna schools, but also of Indian and Chinese

thought, regardless of whether its author is of Indian or Chinese origin. Although this position is highly hermeneutical rather than exegetical, it can be supported by careful examination of the use of terms in the text. Due to the limited space, however, I cannot pursue or demonstrate this kind of investigation any further here.

38 For instance, Paul Williams has asserted that the Buddha nature doctrine in the *Awakening of Faith* becomes a cosmological theory that combines an all-pervading Buddha-essence with an aversion to all forms of dualistic discrimination, namely, a metaphysical monism. See Williams, 1989, 112.

39 "*Yiqie yanshuo jiaming wushi. . . . Yan zhenruzhe yiwu youxiang. Wei yanshuo zhiji yinyan qianyan. . . .*" *T* 32, 1666: 576a. Cf. Hakeda, 1967, 33.

40 Ibid. Cf. Hakeda, 1967, 35.

41 Ibid. The non-empty virtues of the *dharma* body or the mind of suchness have nothing to do with an ontology of existence or non-existence.

42 Nagao, 1991, 60.

43 Hakeda, 1967, 28.

44 "*Suoyan jueyizhe wei xinti linian. Linianxiangzhe deng xukongjie.*" *T* 32, 1666: 576b; cf. Hakeda, 1967, 37.

45 "*Yinian xiangying*, . . ." Ibid.; cf. ibid., 39.

46 The reader may notice that I translate the Chinese word *xinti* as "the whole of the mind" and avoid translating it as the substance or essence of the mind. To my knowledge, the Chinese word *ti* originally means body and the organic whole. The *xinti* designates the non-objective dimension of the organic whole of a concrete world, a holistic dimension that the human mind may attain or experience. Since it is non-substantialistic, it may be even distinguished from the English word "subjectivity," which involves the meaning of substance in modern Western philosophy. However, the *ti* in Chinese philosophy nonetheless reflects the relatively static side of the whole and is distinguished from the dynamic side of the *yong*, the functioning of the whole. In the use of these words in the text we are discussing now, the word *ti* is related to other words such as *xiang* and *yong*. Scholars have argued whether the use of these categories indicates the author is Chinese. If so, the text must be considered the product of Chinese thought instead of Indian thought. Here I do not intend to provide a philological investigation or a simple solution to this problem. The text itself is, I would argue, more complicated than anything we can simply attribute to an Indian author or a Chinese one. When *ti* is related to *xiang*, these two words suggest an Indian way of thinking and involve the meanings of essence and attribute (or virtue), even though these meanings are restricted by the soteriological dimension of the text. The usage of *xiang* obviously does not come from original Chinese thought. When *ti* is related to *yong*, they do appear closer to the Chinese way of thinking, although one may not have sufficient reason to consider them belonging utterly to the terminology of Chinese philosophy and involving exactly the meaning of the dynamic and static sides of the whole. William Grosnick has pointed out the similarities or connections between some Sanskrit words and the Chinese *yong* (see Grosnick, 1989). His argument forcefully opposes jumping to the conclusion of

simply seeing the text as a Chinese product. What Grosnick does not take into consideration is the possibility of mutual influences and the blending of Indian and Chinese understandings embodied in this historical text, no matter whether there is an Indian or Chinese author. Since this text uses *ti*, *xiang* and *yong* together, at least in the extant form it is a mixture of Indian and Chinese usages. This mixture facilitates, if not misleads, the later Chinese use of the text. I thus think that it is reasonable to render *xinti* as the whole of mind in accordance with the Chinese usage and the historical tradition of the East Asian understanding of the text.

47 "... *zhongsheng xianqian jieerxin* ...." Zhixu, *Liewang Shu*. *T* 44, 1850: 428c–9a.

48 For a recent discussion of the existentializing point implied by the text with respect to the realization of the Buddha nature, see Fu, 1990, 265–304.

49 Dumoulin, 1988, 133. I have made a minor change. I am aware that contemporary historians of Chan Buddhism have questioned the authenticity of the *Platform Sūtra* as the collection of Huineng's teaching in general and these verses historically attributed to Huineng and Shenxiu in particular. My use of these materials from the *Platform Sūtra* does not mean that I want to ignore or completely reject those critical studies by historians. My relatively uncritical approach to the text is based on the reason that the thoughts attributed to Huineng and Shenxiu in this text and others still reflect the strategies employed in the history of Chan discourse, that are religiously-philosophically significant and need to be studied. In other words, they are extremely useful materials for our examination of deconstructive and reifying tendencies in Chan. These materials can serve the purpose of this study well, helping to provide a coherent interpretation of different Chan strategies, no matter whom we could identify as the real thinker behind them. The significance of this text in collecting crucial Chan thought and its role in the evolution of Chan thought cannot be reduced for its suspicious authorship and for some historical inaccuracy of its narrative. I therefore focus basically on the analysis of these thoughts themselves and the related Chan linguistic strategies demonstrated in the text, shedding new light on the understanding of these inner struggles while utilizing the traditional divisions and distinctions.

50 *Dacheng Wusheng Fangbian Men*. See *T* 85, 2834: 1273c. I have quoted the same passage from the *Dacheng Qixin Lun* in this chapter. See note 44 above. For Shenxiu's quotation and the relation of this treatise with the *Dacheng Qixin Lun*, see McRae, 1986, 175, 221–3. Also see Faure, 1997, 41–5.

51 In this regard, I agree with Gadjin Nagao's position. In his "What remains in *Śūnyatā*," Nagao points out, the *Dacheng Qixin Lun* "seems to put more emphasis on 'the mind of suchness' ...." See Nagao, 1991, 60.

52 See McRae, 1986, 213, 225; Faure, 1997, 43–4.

53 *T* 85, 2834: 1273c. For the English translation see Faure, 1997, 43. I have made minor changes. Also see McRae, 1986, 174.

54 "*Tiyong fenming . . . ."* Ibid., 1274b. Cf. McRae, 1986, 178.

55 ". . . *jiang jingxinti chengfo*." See Yinshun, 1971, 141. For the English translation, cf. ibid., 195.

56 Yanagida Seizan has called this a sort of "Chan sickness," a word taken from the early Chan writings. See Yanagida, 1976, 12.

57 I take this sentence basically from Wing-tsit Chan's translation. See Chan, 1963b, 51.

58 Yampolsky, 1967, 138. I have made minor changes.

59 These two sentences are taken again from Wing-tsit Chan's translation. See Chan, 1963b, 51.

60 Yampolsky, 1967, 153.

61 Chan, 1963b, 83. I made minor changes.

62 Cf. ibid., 50.

63 Yampolsky, 1967, 136; Chan, 1963b, 46.

64 Here I follow Wing-tsit Chan's translation. Chan, 1963b, 49.

65 Yampolsky, 1967, 136. I have made a minor change.

66 Ibid.

67 Chan, 1963b, 47.

68 Cf. Yampolsky, 1967, 137.

69 "If in successive thoughts you practice it, this is called true existence." Ibid., 148.

70 Ibid.

71 Ibid., 151.

72 Ibid., 148.

73 Ibid., 150.

74 Cf. ibid., 146; Chan, 1963b, 68.

75 Cf. ibid.

76 Tang, 1984, 3–11.

77 Ibid., 29.

78 Ames, 1991, 145.

79 Ibid.

80 Ibid., 149–50.

81 Yampolsky, 1967, 150. I have made some changes.

82 *Lidai Fabao Ji.* See *T* 51, 2075: 185b; Yanagida, 1976, 154.

83 See, for instance, Mou, 1977, 1041–69; He, 1987, 244.

84 Here I follow Peter Gregory tentatively in translating *zhi* as awareness. See Gregory, 1991, 215. Note that Shenhui's notion of awareness or intuitive knowledge nonetheless involves the element of cognition, even though it is intuitive and different from ordinary knowledge. Cf. Jan, 1972, 40, note 1.

85 See Shenhui, *Nanyang Heshang Dunjiao Jietuo Chanmen Zhiliaoxing Tanyu, SL,* 10. This edition of the recorded sayings of Shenhui, which I am using here, not only is a synthesis, based on careful comparison and examination, of the previous editions by Hu Shi and D. T. Suzuki, but also includes the most recent discoveries of the different versions of Shenhui's sayings.

86 ". . . *bujia yuanqi*." *Nanyang Heshang Wenda Zazhengyi. SL,* 67.

87 "*Zhizhiyizi zhongmiao zhimen*." Zongmi, *Chanyuan Zhuquanji Duxu.* See *T* 48, 2015: 403a; Kamata, 1971, 95. Cf. Jan Yun-hua's translation in Jan, 1972, 40.

88 *Nanyang Heshang Wenda Zazhengyi. SL*, 119.
89 "*Jizhi zhiti.*" Zong Mi, *Yuanjue Jing Dashu Chao.* See *HTC* 14: 279d. Cf. Jan, 1972, 49.
90 *CF*, in *CJ* 13: 8975a. Cf. Ui, 1990a, 14–16. Also cf. Blofeld, 1958, 36–7.
91 Zongmi, *Zhonghua Chuanxindi Chanmen Shizi Chengxi Tu. HTC*, 110: 437d; Kamata, 1971, 336.
92 Ibid., 435b; ibid., 307. For the English translation see Gregory, 1991, 237. I have made some changes.
93 Ibid., 436d; ibid., 326. For the English translation see Jan, 1972, 52.
94 Zongmi, *Yuanjue Jing Dashu Chao, HTC*, 14: 279b. For the English translation, cf. Jan, 1972, 47.
95 Cf. ibid.
96 "*Renyun guoshi.*" The saying of Mazu Daoyi. *JCL*, fascicle 6, *T* 51, 2076: 246a.
97 ". . . *zhongri renyun tengteng*," by Huangbo. *WL*, in *CJ*, 13: 8987b; Ui, 1990a, 78–9. Cf. Blofeld, 1958, 90.
98 "*Renyun buju fangming jietuo.*" Ibid., 8996b.
99 ". . . *renyun zhuyishang.*" *LY*, in *CJ*, 11: 7351a; Yanagida, 1972, 79. Cf. Watson, 1993, 26; Sasaki, 1975, 9–10.
100 Ibid., 7357b; ibid., 145. Cf. ibid., 55; ibid., 27. It is alleged that this hymn was written by the Twenty-Second Indian Patriarch, Manorhita. Probably, however, it was fabricated by Chinese Buddhists. In any event, the hymn quoted by Linji reflects Linji's own thought.
101 See *GY*, fascicle 1, *CJ*, 11: 7310b. Cf. Cheng, 1992, 78.
102 *LY*, in *CJ*, 11: 7349a; Yanagida, 1972, 52. Cf. Watson, 1993, 13.
103 Ibid., 7352a; ibid., 94. Cf. Sasaki, 1975, 11.
104 Ibid., 7353a; ibid., 105. Cf. Watson, 1993, 36.
105 Ibid., 7357a; ibid., 140–1. See Schloegl, 1976, 44–5. Cf. ibid., 53.
106 "*Zhendao wuti.*" Ibid., 7359b; ibid., 159. Cf. Watson, 1993, 62.

5 WHAT IS A LIMINOLOGY OF LANGUAGE?

1 Foucault, 1977, 49.
2 Ibid., 85.
3 See Foucault, 1977, 34 and Derrida, 1978a, 289. I should not ignore the difference between Foucault's project and Derrida's, i.e. between a genealogical investigation and a deconstructive analysis. However, the difference cannot overshadow some similarities between them, such as relativizing the limit, eschewing traditional oppositions, assuming open-ended double structures, etc., which will be clearer in the ensuing discussion. Therefore, it seems tenable to assimilate expressions and vocabularies from both of them for the explanation of the general background of liminology.
4 See Foucault's own "Introduction" to *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. Foucault, 1972, 5.
5 Foucault, 1977, 34.
6 Cf. Foucault, 1984, 50.
7 Derrida, 1981, 6.
8 Ibid., 6, 59.
9 Wood, 1990, 53, 150.

10 The term *parapraxical* derives from parapraxis, a term which Mark Taylor borrows from Freud. As Taylor defines it, "Parapraxical writing is the praxis of the 'para.' This praxis involves the inscription of the boundary, threshold, margin, or limit. . . . The 'para' inscribed in parapraxis is 'inside' the written text as a certain 'outside' that cannot be internalized." See Taylor, 1990, 224–5.

11 Miller, 1979, 219.

12 Cf. Foucault, 1977, 35.

13 Wittgenstein, 1922, 187–9.

14 See Bertrand Russell's "Introduction" to the *Tractatus*, ibid., 22–3.

15 Blanchot, 1993, 337–8.

16 Wittgenstein, 1922, 187–9.

17 In Gadamer, this network or frame is termed "prejudice," in Foucault, "*episteme*," in Kuhn, "paradigm." See Gadamer, 1976, 9; Foucault, 1970, 365; Kuhn, 1970, 10.

18 I have benefited from David Wood for this understanding. See Wood, 1990, 17.

19 For a discussion of incommensurability with respect to the contributions of these philosophers, see Margolis, 1995a, 169–73.

20 Blanchot, 1981, 129.

21 Foucault, 1977, 65.

22 Cf. Blanchot, 1981, 129.

23 Foucault, 1977, 65.

24 Cf. Derrida, 1989, 11.

25 Wittgenstein, 1922, 27.

26 Ibid.

27 Ibid., 189.

28 Heidegger, 1962, 208.

29 In "The Way to Language," Heidegger explicitly states: "[O]ur saying – always an answering – remains forever relational. Relation is thought of here always in terms of the appropriation, and no longer conceived in the form of a mere reference." See Heidegger, 1971, 135.

30 Heidegger, 1971, 120.

31 Ibid., 122.

32 Ibid., 133. I owe much of this understanding to David Wood. Cf. Wood, 1990, 16.

33 Merleau-Ponty, 1964, 46.

34 Ibid.

35 "The empirical use of already established language should be distinguished from its creative use." Ibid., 44.

36 Ibid.

37 Derrida, 1978a, 54.

38 Derrida, 1989, 15. Derrida makes, at this point, no progress after Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty. It could be said that Derrida shows no insight into a complete interplay between speech and silence. Derrida is still very much concerned with the origin and source of speaking, how speaking is necessary and possible, how speaking has its trace in silence, but not vice versa. In the ensuing discussion of Zhuangzi's and the Chan masters' superb understanding of the interplay between speaking and silence, we will find that compared with Zhuangzi and the Chan masters, Derrida's play is only a halfway measure.

39 Foucault, 1977, 41.
40 Blanchot, 1993, 337.
41 Ibid., 338.
42 I use the term *trans-metaphysical* in the sense that the vocabularies and concepts of a metaphysical tradition are used to subvert or deconstruct the original hierarchies of that tradition, to transform that tradition.
43 Nishitani, 1981, 31.
44 Zhu, 1948, 87.
45 See chapter 1 "Introduction" of this book.
46 The trans-temporal or trans-historical dimension of the *Zhuangzi* and Chan Buddhism deserves a substantial study and examination. I shall pursue this examination elsewhere. For a preliminary analysis of Chinese, including Daoist and Confucian, views on time and the timeless, see Cheng, 1974, 155–9. However, Cheng's paper did not refer to any Chan Buddhist view.

6 ZHUANGZI'S LIMINOLOGY OF "SPEAKING NON-SPEAKING"

1 Graham, 1989, 199. Also cf. Graham, 1981, 25.
2 Ibid.
3 Graham mentions Bai Juyi's poem "Laozi" in which the poet asks why Laozi writes a book of five thousand words if he believes that those who speak know nothing; those who know are silent. (Cf. Waley, 1946, 190.) Graham also sees this paradox in the *Zhuangzi*. Since Graham offers no convincing solution to the contradiction, he makes no progress from these predecessors who talked about the problem.
4 Hansen, 1983b, 24–55. Also cf. Hansen, 1992, chapter 8.
5 I agree with Allinson's comment: "Hansen's view has the merit of clarity and consistency." See Allinson, 1989, 113.
6 My translation. *ZY* 5/2/59. Cf. Watson, 1968, 44; Legge, 1962, 189. Here I accept Herrlee Creel's suggestion to translate *dao* with lower case. Cf. Creel, 1970, 2, note 4.
7 Tang, 1986, 355–7, 410–12.
8 "*Dadao bucheng, dabian buyan.*" *ZY* 5/2/59. Cf. Watson, 1968, 44.
9 See Tang, 1986, 411–12.
10 "*Yanbian er buji.*" *ZY* 5/2/59.
11 *ZY* 5/2/57–8. Cf. Mair, 1994, 19.
12 *ZY* 3/2/8–9. Cf. Graham, 1981, 49.
13 Cf. *The Analects*, 13: 3, in Chan, 1963a, 40.
14 Cf. the *Xunzi*, chapter 22, "On the Rectification of Names," in Chan, 1963a, 125.
15 Cf. Fung, 1952, vol. 1, 253 and Fung, 1966, 119–20; Graham, 1978, 285–7, 327–8 and Graham, 1989, 140–1; Lao, 1991, 325–6.
16 See Fung, 1952, vol. 1, 205 and Chan, 1963a, 243.
17 Cf. Fung, 1952, vol. 1, 206.
18 *ZY* 5/2/39. Watson, 1968, 41.
19 *ZY* 4/2/33. Ibid., 40.
20 *ZY* 5/2/55. Ibid., 43.

21 *ZY* 4/2/23–4. Cf. Graham, 1981, 52; Hansen, 1992, 280. In interpreting the original sentences to which I am referring, I agree with Chad Hansen that the sentence "Saying is not only blowing breath" should be regarded as an objection to Zhuangzi's view. But in accord with this sentence, I also consider the next sentence, "Saying says something," as part of this objection.

22 My own translation. *ZY* 4/2/27. Cf. Wayne E. Alt's translation in Alt, 1991, 68 and Graham, 1981, 52.

23 *ZY* 36/13/71–3. Watson, 1968, 152–3.

24 *ZY* 7/3/6. Ibid., 50–1.

25 *ZY* 36/13/70. Ibid., 152–3. The subjectivity mentioned here bears an existentio-experiential or practical dimension, which cannot be reduced to any objective or categorical "presence." This is due to the fact that the other of every subjectivity would never be the same and is always conditioned by the temporal–spatial, by the flux of natural–cultural events.

26 The experience of *dao* has a close relation with meditational experiences in the *Zhuangzi*. This can be best seen in Zhuangzi's account of how one attains the dimension of wholeness in one's meditation. "I slough off my limbs and trunks, dim my intelligence, depart from my form, leave knowledge behind, and go along with the universal thoroughfare. This is what I mean by 'sitting in forgetfulness'." (*ZY* 19/6/92–3. Cf. Mair, 1994, 64. I have made some minor changes in the translation.) Fung Yu-lan, in his *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, points out that Zhuangzi holds this kind of mystical experience as "the supreme state," "the highest aim of individual self-cultivation." "In such a state, the individual becomes one with the whole of the universe, and all distinctions between the self and non-self, between what is internal and what is external, are obliterated." (Fung, 1952, vol. 1, 129–30.) It will be significant to investigate how meditational experiences, typical of Eastern cultures, play a role in Zhuangzi's soteriological or therapeutic perspective of wholeness. This investigation will help to clarify the difference between Zhuangzi's dimension of wholeness and a metaphysical monism. Undoubtedly, Zhuangzi's thought cannot be exhausted by the account of meditational experiences. A unique aspect of Zhuangzi's thought consists in the fact that the perspective and method derived from meditational experiences are always applied to, assimilated by, and therefore become an integral part of, the experience of everyday life and its philosophizing. Recent interpreters of Zhuangzi, such as Wayne E. Alt and Chad Hansen, in rejecting the theme of mysticism (whether or not *mysticism* is an appropriate category for the study of meditational experiences is a different issue), utterly overlook the soteriological or therapeutic side of Zhuangzi, not to mention paying no heed to meditational experiences. Hence they fail to explain where Zhuangzi really stands after he steps out of purely philosophical arguments. (Cf. Alt, 1991 and Hansen, 1983b.) This reveals the predicament of putting Zhuangzi's thought within the framework of Western philosophy – cutting the feet to fit the shoes.

27 Cf. my discussion of this point in chapter 3 of this book.

28　In this regard, Zhuangzi's notion of *dao* may well provide an alternative to both the Kantian search for the transcendental condition of possibility and the postmodernist, such as Rorty's, dismissal of any perspective on the condition of possibility. For Rorty's critique of the Kantian theme and its contemporary variations, and his rejection of "the condition of possibility," cf. his "Wittgenstein, Heidegger, and the Reification of Language," and "Is Derrida a Transcendental Philosopher?" in Rorty, 1991b, 52–3, 55–7, 59–60, 127–8. Zhuangzi's view also challenges the Derridean failure to distinguish between a metaphysical totalization and a therapeutic perspective of wholeness, as I have mentioned in the Introduction of this book.

　　When stating that Zhuangzi's notion of *dao* addresses the relativity of all things, I do not accept the view that Zhuangzi is a relativist or his philosophy a kind of relativism. Advocating the notion of relativity does not necessarily mean to be a relativist. This is particularly true in the case of Zhuangzi since he does not feel any need to attach himself to any "*-ism.*" The interpretation of Zhuangzi as relativist has hitherto encountered various problems. For example, in order to conceive Zhuangzi as a relativist, Chad Hansen completely disregards Zhuangzi's soteriological perspective of wholeness. A result of this neglect is, of course, the lack of textual accuracy. Furthermore, because of his repudiation of Zhuangzi's holistic dimension, Hansen cannot coherently explicate why as relativist, Zhuangzi's perspective on perspectives nonetheless is, according to Hansen himself, a universal one or a "meta-perspective." Hansen's interpretation thus involves self-contradiction. (Cf. Hansen, 1992, 281, 283–4, 290–1.) For a quite useful account of the issue of relativism and non-relativism in the *Zhuangzi*, see Allinson, 1989, chapter 8.

29　Zhuangzi states: "In calling it *dao* we are only adopting a temporary expedient." *ZY* 73/25/80. See Watson, 1968, 293.

30　*ZY* 72/25/72–3. Ibid., 292.

31　*ZY* 72/25/76, 73/25/77. Ibid., 293.

32　*ZY* 60/22/63–4. Ibid., 244.

33　*ZY* 59/22/43. Ibid., 240.

34　*ZY* 15/6/16, 16/6/17. Cf. Mair, 1994, 53.

35　*ZY* 75/26/48–9. Watson, 1968, 302. I have made minor changes in the translation.

36　My translation. *ZY* 73/25/81–2. The translation of the first sentence is based on the punctuation adopted by: Charles W. Fu's unpublished manuscript; Cao Chuji, *Zhuangzi Qianzhu* (Cao, 1982, 403); Liu Fengbao, *Nanhua Xuexin Bian* (see Chen, 1990, 699); Mair, *Wandering on the Way* (Mair, 1994, 267).

37　Cf. Radhakrishnan and Moore, 1957, 15, 68.

38　Tang Junyi properly observes the intrinsic connection between Zhuangzi's transcending of speech and silence and his view of using both speech and silence. See Tang, 1986, 412.

39　*ZY* 7/2/84. For the translation and interpretation of *diaogui*, cf. Fung, 1989, 53; Mou, 1983, 140, 142; Wu, 1990, 168.

40　*ZY* 93/33/64. Cf. Watson, 1968, 373.

41　*ZY* 75/27/1. Cf. ibid., 303.

42 *ZY* 59/22/47. Mair, 1994, 218.
43 Wang, 1976, 190.
44 *ZY* 59/22/44–5. Mair, 1994, 217.
45 My translation. See *ZY* 59/22/47. Cf. Mair, 1994, 218.
46 Zhuangzi mentions "the teaching of non-speaking" twice. *ZY* 57/22/7, 12/5/2. Cf. Watson, 1968, 235, 68; Mair, 1994, 211, 42. Laozi's "*buyan zhijiao*" appears in chapter 2 of *Dao De Jing*. Cf. Lau, 1963, 58.
47 I would like to make a distinction between non-speaking and no-speaking. "No-speaking" can be used in a way that Zhuangzi's notion of "no-mind" exemplifies. "No-mind" does not simply mean "having no mind." It aims at going along with things and letting your mind "move freely" (Watson, 1968, 61). By the same token, "no-speaking" does not mean stopping speaking or silence. It can be seen as an abbreviation of Zhuangzi's notion of "speaking non-speaking." It is a kind of speaking by way of non-speaking, a negative way of speaking.
48 *ZY* 6/2/74. Cf. Mair, 1994, 21. In "Qi Wu Lun," Zhuangzi's blurring of the distinction between speaking and non-speaking also appears in a form of self-interrogation: "I do not know whether what I have said is really saying something or not." (*ZY* 5/2/51. Cf. ibid., 18.)]
49 Merleau-Ponty, 1964, 44.
50 *ZY* 75/27/6. Cf. Watson, 1968, 304.
51 Ibid. We find the striking resemblance between Zhuangzi and Heidegger when we read Heidegger's following words: "A man may speak, speak endlessly, and all the time say nothing. Another man may remain silent, not speak at all and yet, without speaking, say a great deal." (Heidegger, 1971, 122.) Both Zhuangzi and Heidegger show their insights into the mutual connection and transition between speaking and silence, both have a dynamic, relational view of speaking and silence, both reject an absolute distinction between them. However, Heidegger bases his insight on a distinction between "Saying" and speaking. "Saying" is more primordial than human speaking. As "the essence of language" or "the origin of the word" (Heidegger, 1971, 130, 133), "Saying" appropriates human beings to the needfulness of bringing its soundless voice to the sound of human language. It is on this ground that the Heideggerian interplay between speaking and silence – the authentic speaking which lets the silent Saying be heard, or the inauthentic speaking in which nothing is said, nothing is heard from Saying – is to be understood. (For a critique of the onto-theological residue in the later Heidegger's exploration of the nature of language, see Rorty, "Wittgenstein, Heidegger, and the Reification of Language," in Rorty, 1991b, 50–65.) Although Zhuangzi distinguishes the language of *dao* and the language of things, as our preceding discussion has shown, he does not assert the ontological status of *dao* or any meta-language. Rather, he grounds his insight into the interplay between speaking and silence solely on the soteriological and therapeutic function and practice.
52 See chapter 3 of *Dao De Jing*, in Chen, 1987. Cf. Lau, 1963, 59.
53 *ZY* 74/26/33. Cf. Watson, 1968, 299.
54 *ZY* 12/4/90–1. Cf. ibid., 67.
55 *ZY* 74/26/31–2. Cf. ibid., 299.

56 The trans-conventional is neither conventional nor unconventional. It does not completely abandon the conventional, nor does it confine itself to the conventional. In general, I prefer using trans-conventional to unconventional.

57 Cf. Lau, 1963, 57.

58 Cf. Wu, 1990, 263–4, and Wu, 1988, 1–8.

7 THE CHAN CONTRIBUTION TO THE LIMINOLOGY OF LANGUAGE

1 Fung, 1966, 341.

2 Suzuki, 1955, 141–2.

3 See Wright, 1992; Faure, 1993, chapter 7.

4 I restrict my criticism to his 1992 paper only. His more recently published book does a much better job in analyzing, and reflecting upon, the Chan texts and their view of language. See Wright, 1998.

5 Mervyn Sprung's translation in Sprung, 1979, 177. Cf. David J. Kalupahana's translation of this verse: "When the sphere of thought has ceased, that which is to be designated also has ceased. Like freedom, the nature of things is non-arisen and non-ceased." (Kalupahana, 1986, 268.) It is interesting to read Gadjin Nagao's translation of this verse (from Sanskrit) here: "When there is a quiescence of mental activity,/Then the need for discourse ceases and/Reality, like unto cessation,/Neither arises nor passes away." Evidently, his translation is still close to the original Chinese translation. Both, if compared with Sprung's and Kalupahana's, more easily give the impression that Nāgārjuna here is expressing a total negation of language (see Nagao, 1989, 67).

6 Nagao, 1989, 67–8.

7 Kalupahana, 1986, 268–9.

8 Nāgārjuna, *Kārikā* 22: 11; Candrakīrti, *Prasannapadā*. See Sprung, 1979, 155, 201.

9 Sprung, 1979, 230–2.

10 Ibid., 155, 178.

11 Ibid., 229.

12 Suzuki, 1932, 91–2.

13 Ibid., 124. The square bracket is mine.

14 Ibid., 166. A further analysis may distinguish between two kinds of inadequacy of language, which are both reflected in the *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*. One is the cognitive, reifying use of language; another is the discriminative nature of language itself, which is particularly linked to the issue of how to designate the non-dualistic dimension of meditational, especially enlightenmental, experience. In my view, these two are closely related to each other. The problematic of the latter becomes prominent only in relation to the problematic of the former. Giving heed merely to the latter makes both Suzuki's and Kalupahana's accounts of the notions of linguistic inadequacy in the *Sūtra* inaccurate, although they differ in that Suzuki offers a positive estimate and Kalupahana a negative one (cf. Suzuki, 1930, 105–10; Kalupahana, 1992, chapter 18). For a more recent exposition of the view of linguistic inadequacy in the *Sūtra*, cf. Sutton, 1991, 156–63.

15 *GY*, fascicle 2, *CJ*, 11: 7324b.
16 "*Buke yiyanyu qu.*" *CF*, in *CJ*, 13: 8976a. Cf. Ui, 1990a, 22–3.
17 "*Xunwen quzheng zhe yizhi,*" by Dazhu Huihai, see *JCL*, fascicle 6, *T* 51, 2076: 248a. Cf. Ogata, 1990, 199.
18 *LY*, in *CJ*, 11: 7359b; cf. Yanagida, 1972, 160–1.
19 Ibid., 7361b; ibid., 171.
20 Ibid., 7355b; ibid., 129–30. Also cf. Watson, 1993, 47.
21 Ibid., 7359b; ibid., 156–7. There is no strong evidence to support Faure's accusation that Linji is logocentric and regards written words as robes, while considering speech superior to writing, and mental activities superior to language (Faure, 1993, 223). As a matter of fact, Linji regards all writings, speeches, mental activities as robes, because, in his view, all these things are devoid of self-existence and in the process of constant change. See Watson's translation of the relevant sentences in the *Linji Lu*: "Because of mental processes thoughts are formed, but all of these are just robes. . . ." (Watson, 1993, 61.) For an important interpretation of Linji's view of language, see Burr, 1983.
22 Baizhang Huaihai's saying "not being restricted by words (*buju wenzi*)," *GY*, fascicle 1, *CJ*, 11: 7313a.
23 See chapter 6 of this book.
24 *Kārikā* 24: 10, in Sprung, 1979, 232.
25 Sprung, 1979, 230.
26 Sengzhao, *Zhao Lun*, *T* 45, 1858: 153c. Cf. Robinson, 1978, 216.
27 Yampolsky, 1967, 150–1. I have changed the translation of the first sentence.
28 *JCL*, fascicle 7, *T* 51, 2076: 252a-b. Also see Ogata, 1990, 224.
29 *CF*, in *CJ*, 13: 8979a. Cf. Ui, 1990a, 36–7.
30 *LY*, in *CJ*, 11: 7357b; Yanagida, 1972, 145–6. Cf. Watson, 1993, 55.
31 "*Dongyong sanshiliu dui, chumo jili liangbian.*" Cf. Chan, 1963b, 120–1.
32 "*Geduan liangtou ju.*" *BG*, in *CJ*, 11: 7316a. Cf. Cleary, 1978, 34. Cleary's translation misses the meaning of "*ju* (sentence)," and, therefore, Baizhang's instructions about the special use of language.
33 *LY*, in *CJ*, 11: 7350a; Yanagida, 1972, 67. Cf. Watson, 1993, 19.
34 *Liuzu Dashi Fabao Tanjing*, *T* 48, 2008: 360b. Also see Guo Peng, 1981, 143.
35 Cf. Kalupahana, 1986, 101; Sprung, 1979, 32.
36 Suzuki, 1932, 67–8.
37 *Weimojie Suoshuo Jing*, *T* 14, 475: 551c. English translation see Thurman, 1976, 77. Cf. Lu, 1972, 100.
38 In Conze, 1958, 52. Also see *Jingang Boruo Boluomi Jing*, *T* 8, 235: 751c.
39 This view is obviously close to Nāgārjuna's statement of *Kārikā* 25: 24 in which he says: "[N]o Truth has been taught by a Buddha for any-one, anywhere." (Sprung, 1979, 262.)
40 Suzuki, 1932, 123–4.
41 *WL*, in *CJ*, 13: 8994a. Cf. Blofeld, 1958, 121.
42 *DY*, in *JCL*, fascicle 28, *T* 51, 2076: 442b. Cf. Ui, 1990b, 106–7. Also cf. Blofeld, 1962, 81.
43 "*Yan yousuo buyan.*" Sengzhao, *The Reply to Liu Yimin*, *T* 45, 1858: 157a. In the transition from Zhuangzi's liminology of language to a Chan Buddhist liminology of language, the role Sengzhao's view played and

the contributions Sengzhao made to the liminology of language are significant topics for further research.

44 Huangbo, *WL*, in *CJ*, 13: 8994a.

45 Huangbo, *WLL*, *T* 48, 2012B: 385c. Cf. Ui, 1990a, 70–1. The edition printed in the *Taishō* omits some sections which the edition of *Changzong Jicheng* includes. Therefore, on occasion I quote from different editions.

46 See my discussion of this point at note 46 in chapter 4 of this book. For the Hongzhou sect's radical shifting of the Chan focus from the *ti* to the *yong*, also see Yanagida and Umeharai, 1969, 156–9. The term *quasi-metaphysical* is used here to assert, again, the difference between Western metaphysics and the Chinese use of *ti*. The Chinese character *ti* originally involves the meaning of body or organic whole, as indicated earlier. Even if *ti* is distinguished from *yong* in Chinese philosophy, at the very beginning it is made clear by Wang Bi, the Neo-Daoist, that *ti* and *yong* are united in *dao* or nonbeing. It has never had the meaning of essence as opposed to accidents in Western metaphysics. Nor has it meant self-existence. These meanings are absent from both Neo-Daoist and Chinese Buddhist uses of the term. At worst, *ti* is relatively static in contrast to the more dynamic feature of *yong*. In the present context, Hongzhou Chan Buddhists are obviously more concerned with how one's mind can respond freely to the change and flux of one's daily life, overcoming all forms of quietism and dualistic separation. This concern underlies their claim that outside *yong* there is no *ti*. Therefore, what they oppose might be called a quasi-metaphysical fixation on *ti*, a tendency to see the *ti*, the Buddha nature, as separable from everyday activities, from the dynamic state of living flux.

47 *WLL*, *T* 48, 2012B: 386b. Cf. Ui, 1990a, 74–5, and Blofeld, 1958, 87.

48 Ibid., 385c. Ui, 1990a, 68–9.

49 Dazhu, *DY*, in *JCL*, fascicle 28, *T* 51, 2076: 444a. Cf. Ui, 1990b, 128–9; and Blofeld, 1962, 96.

50 Ibid., 444b.

51 Huangbo, *WL*, in *CJ*, 13: 8994a.

52 Mazu Daoyi's saying, see *JCL*, fascicle 6, *T* 51, 2076: 246a.

53 Dazhu Huihai's saying, see *JCL*, fascicle 6, *T* 51, 2076: 247b. Cf. Ui, 1990b, 80–1.

54 *DY*, in *JCL*, fascicle 28, *T* 51, 2076: 441b. Cf. Ui, 1990b, 96–7. One of the reasons I afford these quotations so much space is that they have long been neglected by modern scholars and interpreters, both in the West and in the East.

55 The Hongzhou Chan masters would definitely disagree with Gadjin Nagao's interpretation that the *paramārtha* should remain silent forever. Cf. Nagao, 1991, 42.

56 *WL*, in *CJ*, 13: 8994a.

57 Ibid., 8996b.

58 It is interesting to note that Dongshan Liangjie also discusses two aspects of "non-speaking within speaking (*youjuzhong wuju*)" and "speaking within non-speaking (*wuyuzhong youyu*)." The liminological play of speaking and silence is a common characteristic of early Chan masters. It is absolutely not confined to the lineage of Mazu-Linji, but rather

shared by the lineage of Shitou-Caodong. For Dongshan's discussion, see *DL*, in *CJ*, 13: 9064a.

59 "*Shuo siyiwu ji buzhong.*" The saying of Nanyue Huairang. See *Nanyue Huairang Chanshi*, *WH*, fascicle 3, vol. 1, 126. This sentence was quoted by Linji in the recorded sayings of Linji. Cf. Yanagida, 1972, 167–77. Also cf. Watson, 1993, 79.

60 "Never tell too plainly" or "never say anything too plainly" is the English translation of original Chinese words "*bu shuopo.*" Cf. Chan, 1963a, 428.

8 THE DISPLACEMENT OF INDIRECT COMMUNICATION

1 Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, in Barnes, 1984c, 2153–4, 2159, 2163.
2 For a recent critical examination of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and its relation to his metaphysical theory, see Margolis, 1995b, 109–19.
3 Aristotle, *De Interpretatione*, in Barnes, 1984a, 25. This notion of language has been seen as "basic and predominant through all the centuries of Western-European thinking" and has been especially criticized by Heidegger in his article "The Way to Language." See Heidegger, 1971, 115.
4 Heidegger, 1962, 197, 205.
5 Ibid., 205.
6 Ibid.
7 Ibid. The italicization is original.
8 Wittgenstein, 1953, 304e.
9 Ibid., 363e.
10 Ibid., 83e–84e.
11 Merleau-Ponty, 1964, 42.
12 Ibid., 43.
13 Ibid., 44–5.
14 Merleau-Ponty's view of language described and quoted here is limited to his essay "Indirect Language and the Voices of Silence" from the work *Signs*. According to M. C. Dillon, this essay involves some tension between infra-referentiality and extra-referentiality that is not solved until his later work *The Visible and the Invisible*. What I have presented here shows Merleau-Ponty's affirmation of the infra-referentiality of language. It contradicts his view of the extra-referentiality of language held in the early work *Phenomenology of Perception* and also appeared in the same essay without explanation. This tension is solved when Merleau-Ponty completes his transition from the early *Fundierung* (founding) model of language, which ignores infra-referentiality, to the reversibility model of language in *The Visible and the Invisible*. The reversibility model incorporates infra-referentiality within extra-referentiality and maintains the correlation between them. Therefore, what I describe and quote here belongs to a transitional work. Although his theory of language seems complicated and I cannot discuss it for its entirety, I think the view I presented here is still the important element of his theory and is significant to my project. For Dillon's detailed discussion, see Dillon, 1997, 194–223.

15 Derrida, 1982, 311.
16 Ibid., 316–17.
17 Ibid., 315.
18 Ibid., 329.
19 Contemporary Anglo-American studies of speech acts, including the study of indirect speech acts, base themselves nonetheless on the classical model of communication. Therefore, they contribute little to our understanding of the indirect nature of communication. For an influential critique of Anglo-American studies of speech acts, cf. Derrida's criticism of Austin in his *Margins of Philosophy* (Derrida, 1982, 321–7). For the subordination of the study of indirect speech acts to the general theory of speech acts, cf. Searle, 1990b, 162.
20 Kierkegaard, 1941, 68, 71.
21 Ibid., 320.
22 Ibid., 245.
23 Ibid., 70.
24 Ibid., 247.
25 See Walter Lowrie's Introduction to his English translation of Kierkegaard's *Training in Christianity*. Kierkegaard, 1944, xvii.
26 Mackey, 1986, 185.
27 Poole, 1993, 4, 24.
28 Kierkegaard, 1941, 68–9.
29 Here I use Roger Poole's translation provided in his *Kierkegaard: The Indirect Communication*. Poole, 1993, 256. Also cf. Kierkegaard, 1944, 133–4.
30 Agacinski, 1988, 20.
31 Poole, 1993, 2.
32 Kierkegaard, 1944, 124.
33 Wittgenstein, 1953, 31e, 11e.
34 Davison, 1986, 446.
35 Derrida, 1981, 41.
36 Poole, 1993, 2.
37 Kierkegaard, 1941, 181. The italicization and capitalization are original.
38 For the special meaning of the term *pragmatics* used in this study, see my clarification in the Introduction of this book.
39 Cf. Rorty, 1982, xviii–xix, and Rorty, 1991b, 127.

9 THE PRAGMATICS OF "GOBLET WORDS": INDIRECT COMMUNICATION IN THE *ZHUANGZI*

1 I adopt Kuang-ming Wu's translation of *yuyan* as "dwelling words." See Wu, 1988, 5. I also adopt one of his translations of *chongyan* as "double-layered words." See Wu, 1990, 263. I do not conceal the fact that this study benefits from Kuang-ming Wu's precursory discussion of Zhuangzi's indirect communication in his *Chuang Tzu: World Philosopher at Play*. However, readers may find that the ensuing investigation is more systematic when compared with Wu's discussion. Furthermore, this examination of Zhuangzi's strategy of indirect communication is presented in a postmodern context, addressing issues that have been the primary concerns of postmodern discourse.

2 Graham, 1981, 25; Graham, 1989, 200.

3 See Hansen, 1992, chapter 8. I take a more comprehensive attitude towards the textual materials of different chapters of the *Zhuangzi*. Contrary to Hansen's ignorance of the value of the outer and the mixed chapters for the study of Zhuangzi's thought, I find no reason to neglect the significant content of those chapters in my investigation. However, I maintain the principle of consistency between useful materials in those chapters and Zhuangzi's thought present in the inner chapters that have been conventionally considered the core of Zhuangzi's philosophy.

4 Graham, 1989, 201.

5 Cf. Zhang, 1993, 16–17; Qian, 1985, 228; Huang, 1974, 320.

6 Wang, 1988, vol. 2, 1090–1.

7 Lin, 1988, 384.

8 Denegation is an untranslated form of the French word *denegation* recently adopted by some English writers. The cause for this usage is connected to Derrida's essay "How to avoid speaking: Denials." See Taylor, 1993, 36–7; and Foshay, 1994, 547.

9 For the study of similar strategies used by deconstruction, negative theology and Eastern religious–philosophical traditions, see Coward and Foshay, 1992 and Scharlemann, 1992.

10 Watson, 1968, 303, note 1.

11 *ZY* 75/27/5. Cf. Watson, 1968, 304; Mair, 1994, 279; Legge, 1962, vol. 2, 143.

12 Italics are mine. *ZY* 7/2/90–2. The translation is partially based on Mair's and Watson's. See Mair, 1994, 23 and Watson, 1968, 48–9.

13 *ZY* 4/2/30–1. Cf. Graham, 1981, 53.

14 Here I follow Kuang-ming Wu's interpretation that nature says it in silence, that nature's silence signifies, and that nature is a mute metaphor, a generative expressiveness. See Wu, 1982, 44.

15 *ZY* 89/32/17. Cf. Mair, 1994, 326.

16 *ZY* 75/27/8–9. My own translation.

17 *ZY* 93/33/64–7. My own translation. Cf. Mair, 1994, 343; Watson, 1968, 373; Graham, 1981, 283; Legge, 1962, vol. 2, 227–8.

18 *Cancha chugui zhici* is the rephrasing of the original Chinese words "*qici sui cancha er chugui keguan.*" *ZY* 93/33/67.

19 Gao, 1982, 44.

20 Wang, 1992, 222.

21 Gao, 1982, 44.

22 The term *chugui* carries the same meaning as the term *diaogui* does. Both refer to paradoxical words. See Wang, 1988, vol. 3, 1348 and Chen, 1990, 886.

23 See *Webster's Third New International Dictionary*, and *The Oxford English Dictionary*, second edition.

24 *ZY* 36/13/65–6.

25 *ZY* 15/6/4. My translation.

26 Lin Xiyi, *Nanhua Zhenjing Kouyi*, in Yan, 1972, vol. 8, 1026, "*ren jieke yin, yinzhi er youwei.*"

27 Wu, 1982, 18.

28 *ZY* 5/2/51. Mair, 1994, 18.

29 *ZY* 4/2/24. My translation. Cf. Graham, 1981, 52; Watson, 1968, 39.

30 See Guo, 1964, 948, ". . . *suiwu erbian, fei zhiyi shougu. . . . suiren congbian, jiwu changzhu.*"

31 This definition is provided by Xuan Ying, quoted and followed by Wang Xianqian in his *Zhuangzi Jijie*. See Wang, 1992, 181.

32 The majority of commentators since Guo Xiang have followed this definition. Also see Watson, 1968, 303, note 1.

33 "*Jiwai lunzhi.*" *ZY* 75/27/1. Cf. Watson, 1968, 303; Mair, 1994, 278.

34 For a full discussion of Heidegger's position on the concept of metaphor, see Ricoeur, 1977, 280–4; Kockelmans, 1992.

35 Davidson, 1984, 262.

36 Wu, 1990, 108.

37 Here I borrow Derrida's words. See Derrida, 1978b, 22.

38 Lin, 1988, 398. The similar interpretation also appears in Liu, 1986, 253.

39 *ZY* 28/11/63–5. The translation is based on Mair's and involves some changes made by me. The interpretation of the last sentence follows those of Guo Xiang and Cheng Xuanying. See Guo, 1964, 396–7; Huang, 1974, 152; Cao, 1982, 157; Mair, 1994, 101.

40 Such as an Aristotelian "hearer," whose function in communication is merely that of a passive "observer," or an "object" of the speaker. See Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, in Barnes, 1984c, 2159.

41 Wu, 1982, 39.

42 *ZY* 5/2/49–51. Watson, 1968, 43. I made slight modifications in the translation.

43 Elsewhere Zhuangzi says: "*Dao* cannot be thought of as being, nor can it be thought of as nonbeing." And: "There is no past and no present, no beginning and no end." *ZY* 73/25/79–80, 60/22/73. Watson, 1968, 293, 245.

44 *ZY* 60/22/67–8. My translation. Cf. Mair, 1994, 220.

45 "*Taichu you wuwu, . . .*" *ZY* 30/12/37–8. My translation benefited from Charles W. Fu's unpublished manuscript of translation. For Fu's interpretation, which I have followed in my translation, see Fu, 1989, 392. The punctuation and reading of the original Chinese sentence I have adopted in this translation were supported by a number of important Chinese commentators, such as Ma Qichang (Ma, 1989, 84), Yao Nai (*Zhuangzi Zhangyi*, quoted by Ma, 1989, 84), Liu Wendian (Liu, 1980, 390), Lin Yunming (*Zhuangziyin*, quoted by Cui, 1988, 378), etc. Also see Wang, 1988, vol. 1, 435. Wang mentions some of these commentators' readings, but does not follow them.

46 For the contextual meanings of these two passages, see the previous chapter on Zhuangzi's deconstruction. Here I restrict my discussion to Zhuangzi's use of denegation.

47 Taylor, 1993, 36.

48 Kierkegaard clearly connected negativity with the indirection of communication. He wrote: "The highest principles for all thought can be demonstrated only indirectly (negatively)." Kierkegaard, 1941, 197.

49 Despite the parallels between Zhuangzi and Kierkegaard in their play of negativity, Kierkegaard's goal of "deceiving" the reader into coming to Christ and his retreat into faith from reason (based on an absolute distinction between them) are obviously not shared by Zhuangzi. For an elementary account of the differences between Zhuangzi and Kierkegaard, see Wu, 1982, 37–8.

50 *Dao De Jing*, chapter 78, "*zhengyan ruofan*," in Chen, 1987, p. 350. Cf. Lau, 1963, 140.

51 The soteriological and therapeutic concern in the *Dao De Jing* is not as explicit as in the *Zhuangzi*. This might be one factor, among others, that underlies the contextual differences between Laozi's use of paradoxes and Zhuangzi's. Here we confine ourselves only to the discussion of Zhuangzi's use.

52 "[T]here is something whose nature is changeless. . . . [I]f anything is of necessity, it will not be both so and not so." Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, bk. IV, chapter 5 (1010a–1010b), in Barnes, 1984b, 1595–6.

53 See Margolis, 1995b, 114–15. A similar criticism can be found in Wu, 1990, 260. Notably, Nishida Kitaro has also criticized Aristotelian logic as a "substance logic" from the perspective of Eastern philosophy and maintained that historical reality "transforms itself without underlying substance or ground." See Nishida, 1987, 62, 75, 126. A quite systematic investigation of the limits of traditional logic in dealing with changes and meaningful contradictions can be found in Melhuish, 1973, especially 1, 18–19.

54 *ZY* 55/21/34. My translation. Cf. Mair, 1994, 203.

55 *ZY* 44/17/46–7. Watson, 1968, 182.

56 In the "Qi Wu Lun" chapter, Zhuangzi says: "That comes out of this, and this is too conditioned by that, which is to say, that and this give birth to each other." *ZY* 4/2/27–8. Cf. Watson, 1968, 39.

57 *ZY* 4/2/29–31. Watson, 1968, 40.

58 *ZY* 4/2/35. Graham, 1981, 53.

59 *ZY* 6/2/74. Cf. Mair, 1994, 21.

60 Graham, 1989, 142–3.

61 See Mou, 1983, 142. However, Mou incorrectly interprets Zhuangzi's paradox as a dialectical paradox similar to Hegel's dialectic. Hegel does utilize paradox, integrating paradox into his dialectical system, which is based upon the absolute synthesis of Being overcoming all paradoxes. (For a recent examination of Hegel's use of paradox and his system, see Kainz, 1988.) Zhuangzi does not fabricate a system which supersedes all paradoxes. For Zhuangzi, the world and human existence are paradoxical as they are.

62 Zhuangzi regards Hui Shi's use of paradoxes only for winning disputes as "bewildering flamboyance," which should be rejected by the sage (see *ZY* 5/2/47, and Mair, 1994, 18), and as being "confined by things" (see *ZY* 66/24/34, and Mair, 1994, 242). Cf. Schwartz, 1985, 222.

63 See Quine, 1976, 5, 7.

64 Ibid., 16.

65 I borrow this term from Kuang-ming Wu; see Wu, 1990, 258.

66 *ZY* 6/2/83. Mair, 1994, 23.

67 *ZY* 45/17/88–91. Mair, 1994, 165.

68 See Graham, 1981, 9.

69 Lyotard uses the term "paralogy" to designate the generally irregular movement of the language game, which cannot be reduced to the rules of logic and allows for the formation of paradoxes. See Lyotard, 1984, 43, 60. According to Thomas Kent's interpretation, paralogy subsumes and lives beyond logic. See Kent, 1993, 4–5. Here I use both "trans-logical" and "paralogical" to mean that Zhuangzi's paradox works and plays at the boundaries and limits of logic. It cannot be reduced to either logic or the illogical.

70 For the discussion of Zhuangzi's liminological play, with respect to the use of paradoxical terms, see chapter 6 of this volume.

71 For the definition of irony, cf. the entry *irony* in Mautner, 1996, 215; *The Oxford English Dictionary*, second edition, vol. 8, 87; *Webster's Third New International Dictionary*, 1195; Kierkegaard, 1966, 32.

72 Wu, 1990, 375.

73 Price, 1965, 25.

74 See note 42 of this chapter.

75 *ZY* 6/2/83. Watson, 1968, 48.

76 Wu, 1990, 375.

77 Kierkegaard, 1966, 286.

78 We find some similar attitudes between Zhuangzi and what Rorty defines as "ironists," when we read Rorty's description that ironists are "never quite able to take themselves seriously," because they are "always aware that the terms in which they describe themselves are subject to change, always aware of the contingency and fragility of their final vocabularies, and thus of their selves." (See Rorty, 1989, 73–4.) However, the contexts and undertakings for Zhuangzi, the Daoist ironist, and a "postmodern" – such as Rortian – ironist are very different. A comparison between them would be interesting enough, a task I will pursue elsewhere.

79 *ZY* 7/2/96. Watson, 1968, 49.

80 Cf. Kierkegaard's observation that as the ironist, "I am free both in relation to others and in relation to myself." Kierkegaard, 1966, 265.

81 Booth, 1974, ix.

82 It is interesting to note that Paul de Man observes that irony "could be a kind of therapy." See de Man, 1983, 216.

10 THE PRAGMATICS OF "NEVER TELL TOO PLAINLY": INDIRECT COMMUNICATION IN CHAN

1 DeMartino, 1983, 17. Italic is original.

2 Suzuki, 1955, 150.

3 Hu, 1953, 21.

4 Ibid.

5 ". . . *zhizhongta buweiwo shuopo.*" *DL*, in *CJ*, 13: 9024b. For English translation see Powell, 1986, 28. Although Hu's translation of this sentence is not as complete as Powell's, Hu's translation of *buweiwo shuopo* as "he never explained anything plainly to me" seems to have grasped the original point more accurately. See Hu, 1953, 21.

6 Suzuki, 1955, 150.
7 Suzuki also mentions that Chan "is not purposely shunning" all plain speaking. See ibid., 159.
8 Ibid., 158–9.
9 Ibid., 159–60.
10 Ibid., 66.
11 See Suzuki, 1994 (originally included in Suzuki, 1950). I must point out that contrary to Suzuki's neglect of the study of Chan linguistic strategies, at least two Chinese scholars, Bao Hutian and Wu Yi, echoing Hu Shi one way or another, have done some significant studies in exploring these strategies. The present project of mine can be seen as a further step from their precursory works. However, the works of these Chinese scholars have not been widely known or studied by most of Western scholars of Chan Buddhism. See Bao, 1971, 127–44, and 1988, 12–24. Also see Wu, 1981, 69–81.
12 Suzuki, 1955, 144.
13 Ibid., 153.
14 See chapters 4 and 7 of this book.
15 DeMartino, 1983, 24. Italics are original.
16 Ibid., 17.
17 Suzuki, 1955, 66.
18 *Jiangxi Mazu Daoyi Chanshi Yulu*, *CJ*, 13: 8962a. Cf. Cheng, 1992, 65. As one may note, Cheng's translation of "*jiewu*" as "dealing with people as they come" strays too far from the original meaning of the Chinese.
19 See Suzuki, 1955, 66, 143, 147.
20 See his *Dunwu Rudao Yaomen Lun*, part II, *CJ*, 1: 47a. Cf. Blofeld, 1962, 61.
21 *LY*, in *CJ*, 11: 7357a; Watson, 1993, 53.
22 *CF*, in *CJ*, 13: 8980b. See also Ui, 1990a, 42–3; Blofeld, 1958, 59–60. The patriarch whom Huangbo mentions here is the alleged Twenty-Third Indian Patriarch Haklenayasas.
23 Ibid., 8978a. Ui, 1990a, 30–1.
24 See *Hanyu Dacidian*, vol. 2, 513.
25 Ibid., 1532.
26 See *CJ*, 13: 8978a; Ui, 1990a, 30–3.
27 Ibid., 8995a–b. Cf. Blofeld, 1958, 126.
28 Ibid., 8987b; Ui, 1990a, 80–1, 121.
29 See *JCL*, fascicle 9, *T* 51, 2076: 273a. Also see Ui, 1990a, 88–9, 145. For a study of Pei Xiu's Buddhist life and thought, including his relationship with Huangbo, see Jan, 1995.
30 See *DL*, in *CJ*, 13: 9023b. Cf. Powell, 1986, 25. Here I disagree with Powell's translation.
31 *JCL*, fascicle 11, *T* 51, 2076: 284a.
32 See Heidegger, 1971, 123. The Chan Buddhist insight into the non-duality between speaking and listening is the foundation for their understanding of the role of listening in communication. This insight is inseparable from the pragmatic wisdom that guides the Chan soteriological practice. However, Heidegger's main interest is the search for an understanding of the essential Being that appropriates and calls forth human listening and speaking.

33 Kierkegaard, 1941, 246. Nobody would deny the huge differences between the Chan Buddhist undertaking and Kierkegaard's, despite the parallels and similarities between their insights into indirect communication. For one thing, the Chan art of communication involves a naturalistic perspective that Kierkegaard obviously does not share. According to this perspective, indirect communication is the art of *dao*, and is the consequence of being an enlightened person who leaves what is as it is. Kierkegaard's notion of indirect communication is rooted in his Christian belief and in the tradition of negative theology.

34 See *GY*, fascicle 1, *CJ*, 11: 7310b–11a. Cf. Cheng, 1992, 78.

35 The four procedures are as follows: "Sometimes I take away the person but do not take away the surroundings. Sometimes I take away the surroundings but do not take away the person. Sometimes I take away both the person and the surroundings. Sometimes I take away neither the person nor the surroundings." See *LY*, in *CJ*, 11: 7350a; Yanagida, 1972, 69; Watson, 1993, 21–2.

36 *Zhaozhou Zhenji Chanshi Yulu*, *GY*, fascicle 13, *CJ*, 11: 7457a.

37 *JCL*, fascicle 7, *T* 51, 2076: 254c. Cf. Ogata, 1990, 240.

38 *GY*, fascicle 13, *CJ*, 11: 7457b.

39 Ibid., fascicle 14, *CJ*, 11: 7469b, 7472a.

40 "*Xu bianta shengsiyu*, . . ." *BG*, in *CJ*, 11: 7321a. Cleary, 1978, 50.

41 *Foguo Keqin Chanshi Xinyao*, *CJ*, 14: 9858a. A similar statement can also be seen in his *Biyan Ji*, fascicle 2, in *CJ*, 10: 6453a. Cf. Cleary and Cleary, 1992, 134. There is no strong evidence in the text to support the translators' interpretation that this statement is made by Deshan.

42 Dahui repeats, in his own teaching, this statement originally made by Yuanwu. See *Dahui Pujue Chanshi Yulu*, fascicle 14, *T* 47, 1998A: 870b.

43 The Chan notion and use of "living words" have not been closely examined in the contemporary study of Chan thought. I find no discussion of the notion and use of "living words" in the early studies of Chan *koan*, such as that of Miura and Sasaki (1965) and Suzuki's *The Zen Koan as a Means of Attaining Enlightenment*. Baizhang Huaihai's important account of the use of "living words" and the later development of the notion of "living words" in Chan are neglected as well in writings on the history of Chinese Chan thought, such as those of Nukariya Kaiten (1925), Sekiguchi Shindai (1964), and Suzuki Tetsuo (1985). Among American scholars, recently Robert E. Buswell, Jr (Buswell, 1987, 348) and Robert M. Gimello (Gimello, 1991, 376), both refer to the notion of "living words." Buswell also places the notion of "living words" within three Chan hermeneutic devices, although he discusses it mainly from a Korean Chan perspective (Buswell, 1988, 246–8). However, two books published in mainland China (Pan, 1992; Du and Wei, 1993) have given more detailed studies than any others in the Chan notion and use of "living words."

44 In this regard, see Ch'ien, 1984. Ch'ien differentiates the Indian mode of serial, progressive negation, and Sengzhao's and Chan Buddhists' simplified uses of paradox. Also see Ichimura, 1985. Ichimura points out that the difference between the methods of Indian Mādhyamika and Sengzhao, on the part of the Chinese Buddhist world, "was to be further made magnified in the Zen tradition in later periods."

45 *BG*, in *CJ*, 11: 7316a. Cf. Cleary, 1978, 34–5.
46 Ibid., 7317a–b; Cf. ibid., 37–8.
47 *GY*, fascicle 2, *CJ*, 11: 7325b.
48 Cf. Chan, 1963b, 120–1.
49 The translation presented here is my own compromise, a combination and minor revision of Wing-tsit Chan's and Yampolsky's translations of the original Chinese sentences. Cf. Chan, 1963b, 127; Yampolsky, 1967, 172–3.
50 "... *zhuxin kanjing*, ... *shexin neicheng*." See *Heze Shenhui Chanshi Yulu*, in Shijun, Lou, *et al.*, 1983, vol. 2, no. 4, 89.
51 See Yanagida and Umehara, 1969, 128.
52 Here I basically repeat what I have quoted and discussed in chapter 4 of this book for the sake of convenience and clarity.
53 *JCL*, fascicle 6, *T* 51, 2076: 246a.
54 *WL*, in *CJ*, 13: 8987b; Ui, 1990a, 78–9. Cf. Blofeld, 1958, 90.
55 Ibid., 8996b.
56 *LY*, in *CJ*, 11: 7351a; Yanagida, 1972, 79. Cf. Watson, 1993, 26; Sasaki, 1975, 9–10.
57 Ibid., 7357b; Yanagida, 1972, 145. Cf. Watson, 1993, 55; Sasaki, 1975, 27.
58 *GY*, fascicle 2, *CJ*, 11: 7327b-28a.
59 *JCL*, fascicle 7, *T* 51, 2076: 253b. Cf. Ogata, 1990, 231.
60 In this regard, Chung-ying Cheng's analysis of the principle of contextual reconstruction, in his paper "On Zen (Ch'an) Language and Zen Paradoxes," is still valid. See Cheng, 1973, 95.
61 Suzuki, 1964, 58.
62 See *Webster's Third New International Dictionary*, 2344; *The Oxford English Dictionary*, second edition, vol. 17, 672.
63 See the entry *tautology* in Audi, 1995, 788–9.
64 Hegel and Wittgenstein both noted the tautology of the principle of identity. Their critiques are discussed more intensively by contemporary thinkers. See Hegel, 1965, 213; Wittgenstein, 1922, 5.5303, 139; Toms, 1962, 55; Kainz, 1988, 45; etc.
65 For a detailed examination of Heidegger's use of tautological expressions, see Schofer, 1972, 287–301.
66 "The source of Caoxi" here designates (Caoxi) Huineng Chan or Southern Chan. "One drop of water from the source of Caoxi" symbolizes the inherited teaching of Huineng Chan.
67 *Dafayan Wenyi Chanshi Yulu*, *CJ*, 13: 9150b.
68 *Touzi Heshang Yulu*, in *GY*, fascicle 36, *CJ*, 12: 7771a–b, 7775b.
69 *Fuzhou Dongchanyuan Kelong Liaokong Dashi*. See *JCL*, fascicle 21, *T* 51, 2076: 376c.
70 Juefan Huihong says: "When there are words within the words (*yuzhong youyu*), these words are called dead words (*siju*); when there are no words within the words (*yuzhong wuyu*), these words are called living words (*huoju*)." See *Chanlin Sengbao Zhuan*, fascicle 12, *HTC*, 137: 247b.
71 Schofer, 1972, 293–4.
72 Linji's verses are translated into English by Burton Watson as follows. For the procedure of "taking away the person but not taking away the environment," Linji says: "Warm sun shines forth, spreading the earth

with brocade. The little child's hair hangs down, white as silk thread." For "taking away the environment but not taking away the person," he says: "The king's commands have spread throughout the realm. Generals beyond the border no longer taste the smoke and dust of battle." For "taking away both the person and the environment," he says: "All word cut off Ping and Fen – they stand alone, a region apart." For "taking away neither the person nor the environment," he says: "The king ascends his jeweled hall; country oldsters sing their songs." See Watson, 1993, 21–2 and his explanation of the verses in the notes. For the original Chinese, see *LY*, in *CJ*, 11: 7350a; Yanagida, 1972, 69–70.

73 *WLL*, *T* 48, 2012B: 385c; Ui, 1990a, 70–1. Cf. Blofeld, 1958, 81–2. To experience the poeticity of Huangbo's sentences, we must read the original Chinese. My English rendering does not preserve the original poeticity well.

74 Watson, 1988, 106.

75 See Du, 1976, 197–8; Zhou, 1994, 29–34; Iriya, 1983, 77 and 1973, 56; Wawrytko, 1992, 344–7. Among various studies I have mentioned so far, Wawrytko's paper seems to be the only one that has paid attention to the theoretical issue of how Chan poetry contributes to Chan enlightenment experience.

76 Nakamura, 1964, 193.

77 I agree with Robert Gimello's opinion: "[O]ne must credit to poetry and the other modes of literary expression associated with Ch'an meditation an operative and transformative power." See Gimello, 1986, 11.

78 *Deshan Shaoyan Chanshi. WH*, fascicle 15, vol. 3, 969.

79 Robert Gimello has insightfully argued that Chinese Buddhism in general, and Huayan in particular, has moved toward a more kataphatic mode of discourse, which is a significant departure from traditionally Indian forms of conceptualization and expression (see Gimello, 1976, 119, 122). Chan Buddhism can be regarded as a further move in the same direction through its poeticizing. However, the Chan use of poetic language involves both apophatic and kataphatic functions, as I indicated in this discussion.

80 Heidegger, 1971, 192.

81 Heidegger, 1968, 71.

82 Du, 1976, 1.

83 This poem is written to Zhaozhou by a learned monk. See *JCL*, fascicle 10, *T* 51, 2076: 277a. The English translation of this poem is from Wu, 1996, 100. I made minor changes. Also see Ogata, 1990, 349. For the explanation of the verses, see Du, 1976, 213.

84 "*Shaonian yiduan fenliushi, zhixu jiaren duzizhi.*" *Zhaojue Keqin Chanshi. WH*, fascicle 19, vol. 3, 1254. The English translation of the verses is from Wu, 1996, 204.

GLOSSARY

Bai Juyi　白居易
Baizhang Huaihai　百丈懷海
baoguang　葆光
ben　本
benzhi zhiyong　本智之用
bi　彼
bian　辨
bian　辯
bianyezhe youbujianye　辯也者有不見也
bixing　比興
budang　不讜
bujia yuanqi　不假緣起
buju wenzi　不拘文字
buke yiyanyu qu　不可以言語取
bukeyu zhuangyu　不可與莊語
buru liangwang er huaqidao　不如兩忘而化其道
bushiwu　不是物
bu shuopo　不說破
buyan zhijiao　不言之教

cancha chugui zhici　參差諔詭之辭
Caoxi　曹溪
Chan　禪
chengxin　成心
Cheng Xuanying　成玄英
chongyan　重言
chuan　傳
chuanda　傳達
chuanshu　傳書
Chuanxin Fayao　傳心法要

chugui　詋詭
chumo jili liangbian　出沒即離兩邊
cuyan　粗言

dabian buyan　大辯不言
Dacheng Qixin Lun　大乘起信論
dadao bucheng　大道不稱
Dahui Zonggao　大慧宗杲
Damei Fachang　大梅法常
dang　讜
dao　道
dao xu tongliu　道須通流
dayan　大言
dazhi ruyuwuci　達之入於無疵
Dazhu huihai　大珠慧海
Deshan　德山
diaogui　弔詭
Dongshan Liangjie　洞山良介
dongyong sanshiliu dui　動用三十六對

fa　法
fa jishishuo　法即是說
fangbian　方便
fashuo buer　法說不二
fazhongfa　法中法
fei　非
feibi wuwo　非彼無我
feili yuyan feibuli yuyan　非離語言非不離語言
feiwo wusuoqu　非我無所取
feixin feifo　非心非佛
fei zhiyi shougu　非執一守故
fen　分
fen wuchang　分無常
fenyezhe youbufenye　分也者有不分也.
fo　佛
fofa　佛法
foxing　佛性
foxingyin　佛性因
Funiushan Zizai　伏牛山自在

Gao Heng　高亨
geduan liangtou ju　割斷兩頭句

gongan　公案
Guishan Lingyou　潙山靈佑
Guo Xiang　郭象

heyi tianni　和以天倪
Hongzhou　洪州
Huangbo Xiyun　黃檗希運
huangtang zhiyan　荒唐之言
Huineng　慧能
huoju　活句
Hu Shi　胡適

ji　藉
jiang jingxinti chengfo　將淨心體成佛
jian wen jue zhi　見聞覺知
jiaowai biechuan　教外別傳
jietuo de shijian　解脫的實踐
jiewu　接物
jieyin zhici　接引之詞
ji fannao shi puti　即煩惱是菩提
Jingde Chuandeng Lu　景德傳燈錄
jiwai lunzhi　藉外論之
jiwu changzhu　己無常主
jixin jifo　即心即佛
jiyu　寄寓
jiyu zhiyan　寄寓之言
jizhi zhiti　寂知指體
Juefan Huihong　覺範慧洪

kanhua Chan　看話禪
koan　公案
kongji zhi zhi　空寂之知

Laozi　老子
lengnuan zizhi　冷暖自知
li　理
lianghang　兩行
linian　離念
linianxiangzhe deng xukongjie　離念相者等虛空界
Linji　臨濟
Linji Lu　臨濟錄
Lin Yunming　林雲銘

Liu Fengbao 劉鳳苞
lixing quzhi 離形去知
li zhijian 立知見

Mazu Daoyi 馬祖道一
ming 名
ming 明
miuyou zhishuo 謬悠之說
mo ji yu 默即語
moqi 默契

Nanhua Xuexin Bian 南華雪心編
Nanyue Huairang 南嶽懷讓

pan 判
Pei Xiu 裴休

qi 契
qici sui cancha er chugui keguan 其辭雖參差而諔詭可觀
qihe 契合
qihui 契會
qiwu 契悟
Qi Wu Lun 齊物論
quji 去己

ren jieke yin 人皆可飲
renxin 任心
renxing 人性
renyun 任運
renyun buju fangming jietuo 任運不拘方名解脫
renyun guoshi 任運過時
renyun zhuyishang 任運著衣裳
renyun zizai 任運自在
ruhe shi caoyuan yidishui 如何是曹源一滴水
ruhe shi dao 如何是道
ruhe shi fazhongfa 如何是法中法
ruhe shi fofa 如何是佛法
rulai shuo jishifa 如來說即是法
rulaixingyin 如來性因
rulaizang 如來藏
ruren yinshui 如人飲水

sangqiou　喪其耦
satori　悟
Sengzhao　僧肇
shaonian yiduan fenliushi　少年一段風流事
Shendao　慎到
shengyu　生語
Shenhui　神會
Shenxiu　神秀
shexin neicheng　攝心內澄
shi　是
shi　實
shi　事
shi caoyuan yidishui　是曹源一滴水
shiren xingkong　世人性空
shishe　施設
shi wuzhi　時無止
shizhong wugu　始終無故
shunren　順人
shunwu　順物
shunwu ziran er wurongsiye　順物自然而無容私焉
shuo siyiwu ji buzhong　說似一物即不中
siju　死句
siyu　死語
suiren congbian　隨人從變
suiwu erbian　隨物而變
suiyong er shuo　隨用而說
suiyuan yingyong　隨緣應用
suoyan jueyizhe wei xinti linian　所言覺義者謂心體離念
suoyi qiongnian　所以窮年

taichu youwuwu　太初有無無
ti　體
tianlai　天籟
tianni　天倪
tihui dadao　體會大道
tiyong fenming　體用分明
tong　通

waisheng　外生
wai tianxia　外天下
wang　亡
wang　忘

Wang Bi　王弼
wanghu tian　忘乎天
wanghu wu　忘乎物
wangji　忘己
wang qisuobuwang　忘其所不忘
wangren　忘人
wang renyi　忘仁義
wang shifei　忘是非
Wang Shumin　王叔岷
Wang Shuzhi　王叔之
Wang Xianqian　王先謙
wangyan　忘言
wanhua er weishi youji　萬化而未始有極
weiren benxing　爲人本性
wei wuwei　爲無爲
wei yanshuo zhiji yinyan qianyan　謂言說之極因言遣言
wo ziwang　我自忘
wu　悟
wu　無
wu　物
wuduanya zhici　無端崖之辭
wuhua　物化
wuji　無己
wuliang wuqiong　物量無窮
wuming　無名
wunian　無念
wusangwo　吾喪我
wushi　無事
wuwei　無爲
wuxin　無心
wuyan　無言
wuyong　無用
wuyong zhi weiyong　無用之爲用
wuyong zhiyong　無用之用
wuyuzhong youyu　無語中有語

xiang　相
xin　心
xing　性
xinti　心體
xinxin buyi　心心不異
xinzhishi　心之適

Xuan Ying　宣穎
xu bianta shengsiyu　須辯他生死語
xukongzhe jishi foxing　虛空者即是佛性
xunwen quzheng zhe yizhi　尋文取證者益滯

yan　言
yanbian er buji　言辯而不及
yanchuan　言傳
yan wuyan　言無言
yan yousuo buyan　言有所不言
yan zhenruzhe yiwu youxiang　言真如者亦無有相
yaofang　藥方
Yao Nai　姚鼐
yin　印
yinhe　印合
yinian xiangying　一念相應
yinke　印可
yinyi manyan　因以曼衍
yinzheng　印證
yinzhi eryouwei　飲之而有味
yiqie yanshuo jiaming wushi　一切言說假名無實
yiqi weichuan　以契爲傳
yixin chuanxin　以心傳心
yixin yinxin　以心印心
Yi Zhuan　易傳
yong　用
yong　庸
youjuzhong wuju　有句中無句
youyong　有用
yuan　緣
Yuanwu Keqin　圓悟克勤
yuanyin　緣因
yu ji mo　語即默
yulu　語錄
yumo buer　語默不二
yuyan　寓言
yu yi shuo mo yi shuo　語亦說默亦說
yuzhong wuyu　語中無語
yuzhong youyu　語中有語

Zhaozhou　趙州
zhendao wuti　真道無體

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zheng　證
zhenglun　正論
zhengshi dao　正是道
zhengyan ruofan　正言若反
zhengyin　正因
zhenkong miaoyou　真空妙有
zhenren　真人
zhenxin　真心
zhenzai　真宰
zhi　知
zhi　智
zhijian　知見
zhijie　知解
zhiren wuji　至人無己
zhixin　直心
zhixu jiaren duzi zhi　祇許佳人獨自知
zhiyan　厄言
zhiyan　直言
zhiyan richu　厄言日出
Zhizang　智藏
zhizhiyizi zhongmiao zhimen　知之一字眾妙之門
zhizhongta buweiwo shuopo　祇重他不爲我說破
zhongdaozhe mingwei foxing　中道者名爲佛性
zhongri renyun tengteng　終日任運騰騰
zhongsheng xianqian jieerxin　眾生現前介爾心
zhuangyu　莊語
Zhuangzi　莊子
Zhuangziyin　莊子因
Zhuangzi Zhangyi　莊子章義
zhuxin kanjing　住心看淨
Zhu Ziqing　朱自清
ziran　自然
zixing　自性
zixing benyong　自性本用
Zongbao　宗寶
Zongmi　宗密
zuowang　坐忘

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