

I. Deconstructing Chinese Philosophy

Don't Mix! Can Be Dangerous

De Anima in China

Abstract

De Anima in China made a sharp appearance in philosophico-religious debates between Christian missionaries and Buddhists in the seventeenth century and between Buddhists and Confucians in the fifth and sixth.

Christian missionaries attacked the Buddhist prohibition on hunting and fishing on the ground that the souls of animals were different from humans'. The Christians simply regarded animals differently from the humans. Rather than making a distinction among souls, Buddhists insisted on the inter-relationship between animals and human beings on the level of *Anima*, which they had utilized in a debate with Confucians during the Six Dynasties period.

Confucians, unlike the missionaries, denied the immortality of the human soul, but they affirmed, like the missionaries, the distinction among souls. Buddhists criticized Christians, saying: "If you totally separate human souls from animal souls, you cannot explain why we can communicate with others or why things change in our world." In a word, the main issue of *De Anima* in China consisted in communication with and transformation into others.

However, Buddhists did not monopolize the idea of communication and transformation. Chinese philosophico-religious thinking also found another form of imagination: Daoism in the *Zhuangzi*. Its desire would reach the extreme dream of enjoying every form of *Anima* while escaping from heavenly restriction.

Don't Mix! Can Be Dangerous

1. Debates between Christian missionaries and Buddhists in the seventeenth century

Aristotelian discourse on soul, i.e., *De Anima*, was introduced into a debate between Christian missionaries and Buddhists during the Ming Dynasty. The leading figure among the Christian missionaries was Matteo Ricci (1552–1610), and his Buddhist opponent was Yunqi Zhuhong 雲棲株宏.¹ The issue in dispute consisted in the prohibition on hunting and fishing, in other words, the advisability of killing (and eating) animals. But what was profoundly questioned in the dispute was the way of comprehending this world, especially how to grasp the order of different souls.

The Jesuit Matteo Ricci advocated a tripartite structure of souls based on Aristotle: “Vital Soul 生魂,” maintaining life and supporting growth; “Perceptive Soul 覺魂,” or organs to perceive things; and “Spiritual-Rational Soul 靈魂,” deducing and discriminating reason of things. Obviously, these correspond to Plants, Animals, and Human Beings, respectively.

Ricci asserted, “There was no reason to prohibit hunting and fishing” (*Tianzhu shiyi* 天主實義). It is noteworthy that in so doing, he used the order of souls as a basis for his criticism against the Buddhist prohibition. His reasoning was as follows: humans can treat animals as commodities and even kill them for their own sake, because “animal souls are different from human beings”; even sages were constrained to kill and eat animals in many countries. As long as we humans desire to eat, all we have to do is ensure we do not kill too many of them.

There lay a doctrine of metempsychosis 輪迴說, Ricci believed, behind the Buddhist defense of the prohibition on hunting and fishing. Metempsychosis would allow a soul to transmigrate from one genre to another. This was unacceptable to Ricci, as it permitted the intermingling of souls, which could even result in one soul’s migrating to a higher order. Even the slightest mixing of souls of different orders would invalidate Ricci’s argument in which human beings were allowed to treat animals as commodities and hence slaughter them for their own sake:

1. Cf. Araki Kengo, *Study on Yunqi Zhuhong*.

As long as we know that the human body is different from the animal body, the human soul cannot be the same as the animal soul. Thus we understand that it is absurd for Buddhists to maintain that the soul of a person can dwell in the body of another or souls can transmigrate in this world. As a matter of fact, the soul of a person should not accord with another’s body; it can only accord with its own body, let alone with other types of bodies; it can never accord with them.²

As this citation shows, it was extremely dangerous for Ricci to let a person’s soul dwell in another’s body. He not only refused the mixing of souls across the orders (e.g., mixing the human soul with the animal soul), but he also denied the mixture of souls of the same type, at least as far as human souls were concerned.

It is difficult to find direct refutations of Ricci’s rejection of the mixture of souls in the Buddhist discourse, although Buddhists had previously attempted to defend it. There remained, however, the possibility in the Buddhist discourse of inventing an attitude for facing those who have different types of souls.

2. Attitude for facing those who have different type of souls

Ruchun 如純, a Buddhist from Luochuan 羅川, for instance, criticized Ricci as follows: “Since early times up until now, sages and saints in many countries have killed living creatures and eaten the flesh without regret; they have never regarded their deed as disobedience to a commandment.”³

As long as the art of *Ren* (benevolence 仁) is confirmed as in the case of an awed ox and conscience is found as in the case of a clue of pity, [Mencius said] “we cannot bear to see its death once we take a look at the lively figure of the ox, or to eat its flesh once we hear its voice” (“Liang Huiwang” in the *Mengzi*: 『孟子』梁惠王上). I can not imagine any other statement more solemn than this one. The former sages

2. *Tianzhu shiyi*, chapter 5.

3. Ibid.

as well as the later ones, albeit differently, have shown that they ultimately prefer life and cannot bear death. If Heaven created animals just for being killed and eaten up by human beings, why did the sages have *Xin* (mind 心) that could not bear the death of animals even temporally?⁴

He presented some evidence to demonstrate that Chinese saints had never allowed the arbitrarily killing of animals but that they regarded the killing of animals as unavoidable to realize other aims, and that they had *Xin* that could not bear the suffering of animals, preferring life and abhorring death. Needless to say, this “unbearable *Xin*” came from the episode in the *Mengzi* in which a sovereign gives an order to change the sacrificial animal from oxen to sheep when he sees an ox passing by in awe of him.

Feiyin Tongrong 費隱通容 also developed a similar criticism: “Whoever slaughters animals and says they have no souls kills them arbitrarily and simply satisfies his appetite. He has no virtue that cannot bear death.”⁵

Sur-rebuttals may arise against these criticisms. For example, the “unbearable *Xin*” may emerge only when one immediately faces an animal. This is nothing but the inferior mind of “small men 小人” who only love their neighbors but do not reach the profound *Ren* (benevolence) directed towards distant beings such as sheep sacrificed instead of oxen. Thus “the unbearable *Xin*” is only a feeling in the realm of experience, hence lacking the universality of principle in Kantian terms. It therefore does not lead to a deed based on duties.

“The unbearable *Xin*” that comes from the other unexpectedly, however, is irreducible to a natural feeling that takes interest in the others around oneself. When the sovereign in the *Mengzi* came to recognize the sheep’s being, he realized that there was no reason to distinguish an ox from a sheep and that he himself had not made a distinction; he was suddenly moved by the presence of the ox in awe. What is at stake here is not whether the human being is the same as the animals in the hierarchy of souls, but how “the unbearable *Xin*” spontaneously springs out in con-

4. Ruchun, “First Confutation to Christianity,” in *Confutation to Heresy*.

5. Feiyin Tongrong, “Dao-based Confutation to Heretical Discourse,” in *Confutation to Heresy*.

frontation with the other in crisis. It must be a radical affection free from any kind of interest or reflection.

Buddhists formed yet another important criticism. If we do not have “the unbearable *Xin*” and are allowed to kill animals arbitrarily, such an attitude can be easily turned against other human beings. That is to say, the arbitrary killing of animals may result in the killing of certain types of human beings. It was Yu Chunxi 虞淳熙 who advanced the criticism to this point:

Ricci said, “The prohibition on killing sacrificial animals wreaks much damage on the method of raising them,” and “It is better to kill and eat cows and horses with pain of momentary duration, because they suffer from their disastrous life.” If that is the case, one must hang oneself or hope to get killed by a stroke of the sword for those who carry goods for sale, those who carry shoulder spades, those who are imprisoned, those sick in bed, and those suffering from pain such as slaves, soldiers, and servants. Ricci’s doctrine about loving one’s neighbor could bring all the people in the country to death. One can hardly say that his teaching is the purification of intentions.⁶

Yu Chunxi was a disciple of Yunqi Zhuhong and exchanged letters with Ricci. In the above citation, he disagreed with Ricci as the latter’s view could result in the summary killing of people suffering from hard labor and illness. Once the idea that animals are to be regarded as mere tools is applied to people, it will reveal its cutthroat nature by providing the pretext for killing people in inferior positions.

Ricci may have found it impossible to apply such an idea to human beings, whose souls belonged to a different order from that of the animal souls. However, he sighed over a layperson who behaved however he desired, and he compared him to an animal enslaved by its desires. Furthermore, he equated “small men” who were not fully aware of “the distinction between the other and the ego” with animals. Thus, a reason “allowing us to kill animals” can be easily turned into one “allowing us to kill small men.”

6. Yu Chunxi, “On the contra-prohibition on hunting and fishing in *Tianzhu shiyi*,” in *Confutation to Heresy in the Ming Dynasty*.

We might trace a motif of the intercommunication of souls in the depth of the Chinese philosophical imagination, along with different attitudes towards this world deriving from that motif. Before encountering Christian missionaries, Buddhists had already set out the argument of intercommunication of souls among one another.

“Intercommunication of Souls” in Dreams

1. Debates between Buddhists and Confucians in the fifth and sixth

If my thought is not based on my body and can dwell in the body of another, it follows that *A*'s feeling can dwell in *B*'s body and *C*'s nature in *D*'s body. Is this possible? Never, it is impossible.

(Fan Zhen, *Shenmielun* 『神滅論』)

Fan Zhen 范縝 (450–515) took a strong anti-Buddhism position during the Six Dynasties, when the immortality of souls was discussed heatedly. This debate marked the apex of *De Anima* in Chinese philosophy. Its major issue was the relationship between the body and the soul. “If the body 形 perishes,” said Fan Zhen, “the soul 神 also perishes, because the body and the soul conform to each other as one.” For Fan Zhen, the body and the soul were two aspects of an “entity 体.” The “body 形” expressed the “material 質” aspect of the entity and the “soul” the aspect “in use 用.” The difference between the “body” and the “soul” was not substantial but semantic. This is why these two conformed to each other as one 形神相即.

Against Fan Zhen, those who sided with Buddhists maintained that the body and the soul did not conform to each other as one but that they were in a relationship of “coalescence 合.” In “Refutation against Fan Zhen's *Shenmielun*,” Cao Siwen 曹思文 said, “The body and the soul coalesce to be in use. This coalescence is not conformity. When one is born, the body and the soul coalesce to be in use; when one dies, the body remains but the soul goes away.” He brought two articles from “Qiwulun” in the *Zhuangzi*: 『莊子』齊物論 as a ground for the separation and

coalescence between the body and the soul:

While a person is sleeping, his *anima* intercommunicates [with others]. The reason why the soul can make a trip as a butterfly is its separation from the body. Once he wakes from sleep, the body begins to be active. Surprisingly, he becomes Zhuang Zhou, because his body and soul coalesced again. In this manner, once the body and the soul coalesce, they become one. Once they separate from each other, the body perishes and the soul goes away.⁷

According to the *Zhuangzi* passage referred to in this citation, the soul was not closed off within the body but was in intercommunication with others. The “intercommunication of souls 魂交” brought in the order of dreams in particular had a strong power to reduce reality. Using the framework of the *Zhuangzi*, Cao Siwen argued that the body and the soul were separable. The intercommunication of souls in dreams was introduced as a ground for criticizing “conformation of the body and the soul.”

Cao's argument, however, was dismissed by Fan Zhen on the basis of a dream:

[Cao's] criticism attains the ultimate in logic but not in reason. You say the soul made a trip as a butterfly. Does this mean that he really became a flying worm? If so, when a person becomes an ox, he will pull a cart. When another becomes a horse, he will take on a passenger. The next morning, there should be a dead ox and a dead horse. But we can't find anything like them. By what reason do you explain it?⁸

Fan Zhen's conclusion was as follows: As long as “dreams and illusions are fictitious,”⁹ they do not touch on the reality and they cannot be regarded as a basis for reasoning.

Indeed, the Dream of the Butterfly in the *Zhuangzi* mentioned here is not a real event that Fan Zhen demanded as a basis for reasoning. For Cao Siwen and Xiao Chen 蕭琛, however, dreams were a gateway for

7. Cao Siwen, “Refutation against Fan Zhen's *Shenmielun*.”

8. Fan Zhen, “Reply to Cao Siwen's Refutation against *Shenmielun*.”

accessing the truth of this world through changes in things. The logic based on dreams as changes in things was a kind of hyperbole exposing the depth of reality. If we understand dreams in this manner, it is futile to criticize it for its fictitious nature.

One cannot, however, accept the conclusion that Cao and Xiao drew from dreams: the separation and coalescence between the body and the soul and the immortality of the soul. It is undeniable that Buddhists profited from the soul's immortality, suggesting that there should be pleasure and suffering in the afterworld.

Even so, we cannot sufficiently comprehend the truth of this world if we dismiss dreams only because they are fictitious, just as Fan Zhen did. Furthermore, Fan Zhen might have contradicted himself in terms of the conformation of the body and the soul as one if he laid too much stress on reality to reject the fictitious or dreams.

2. “Kokoro/ Xin 心” and “Heart 心器”

First, if, for example, the body and the soul conform to each other as one on the level of reality, the names designating the body must correspond to those of the soul on a one-to-one basis, but they do not. This was the point Shen Yue 沈約 made in “Refutation against Fan Zhen’s *Shenmielun* 『難范縝神滅論』”: the body had much more names than the soul.

Second, concerning the “use 用” of discretion for judging right or wrong, if Fan Zhen had required real “material 質” to be coalescent with discretion, he should have brought out “Xinqi 心器,” i.e., the heart, which was a specific organ, instead of “Xin 心,” the mind or soul:

Question : If discretion for judging right or wrong is not related to one’s hands and feet, what should it be related to?

Answer : It is governed by “Xinqi.”

Q : Isn’t the *Xinqi* (heart) one of the five organs?

A : Yes, it is.

Q : What distinction is made among the five organs? Why does the

9. Ibid.

heart in particular govern discretion for judging right or wrong?

A : The seven holes—the eyes, ears, nose, and mouth—have different roles because each one of them is distinctive from the others.

Q : But discretion for judging right or wrong is not a specified function.

Why can a specified organ like the heart govern discretion for judging right or wrong, whose function is unspecific?

A : The five organs have respective objects to govern. With the exception of the heart, however, no discretionary organ exists. That is why, I think, the heart is used as the basis of discretion.¹⁰

The questioner still continued to ask questions: namely, that the answerer’s argumentation contradicted the fact that discretion was not restricted to the heart but was shared by other sense-organs such as the eyes and the ears; its function was nonrestrictive, free from any specified organs. Fan Zhen was not able to give a valid answer to this last question.

Third, Fan Zhen, as mentioned above, stubbornly insisted that if the dream had been true, there should have been a dead body when the person awoke from it. Strangely enough, however, Fan Zhen did not apply his doctrine of coalescence between the body and the soul to the dead body, as if the corpse did not really exist. Had he applied the doctrine to the corpse, he might have introduced “dead soul 死神” in the manner of Shen Yue. In sum, the reality to which Fan Zhen appealed was an extremely restricted concept and his doctrine of coalescence between the body and the soul had a limited scope of application.

3. One’s Soul’s Intercommunication with Others’ Souls

Another theme Fan Zhen rejected along with the concept of dream was one’s soul’s intercommunication with others’ souls. This theme was probably what he truly wanted to reject. As such it is worth quoting a relevant passage again:

If my thought is not based on my body and can dwell in the body of another, it follows that *A*’s feeling can dwell in *B*’s body and *C*’s nature

10. Fan Zhen, *Shenmielun*.

in *D*'s body. Is this possible? Never, it is impossible.¹¹

This passage is taken from Fan Zhen's final response to the catechism quoted earlier. On the basis of the impossibility of mixing a person's soul with another's body, Fan Zhen mentioned that discretion was not an unspecific function and therefore must correspond to a specified organ, which was the "heart."

In Chinese Philosophy, communication has been a huge problematic and still is an important key concept in considering *De Anima* in China. The intercommunication of souls in the privileged space of dreams is not necessarily reducible to a simple model of communication of one's intention to others. Even in ordinary communicative situations, however, something other than the mere transmission of intentions may supervene. It was such a possibility of intercommunication of one's soul with others' that Fan Zhen wanted to reject. In this regard, we may cite Xiao Chen 蕭琛's criticism:

Fan Zhen said, "Since the heart is the basis of discretion, it cannot dwell in places other than its own." Although this might be valid to the mouth, the eyes, the ears, and the nose, it is irrelevant to others' souls. While the eyes and the nose share the same body, they are never mixed together, for the places they govern have different functions and the organs' functions are different from one another. Our souls, however, can communicate with others' souls, though they dwell in the others' bodies over there. It is because both the principle of soul and the function of discretion operate in the two sides at the same time. Thus, they said, "Open your mind, and let it pour into my mind" in the *Shujing* 『書經』, or "The other has his own mind, which I am guessing" in the *Shijing* 『詩經』, Prince Huang 桓公 of Qi 齊 followed Guan Zhong 管仲's plot, and Emperor Gaozu 高祖 of Han 漢 adopted Zhang Liang 張良's scheme. In both cases, the first made discretion in his body dwell in the second's body. It is absurd to say that "it is impossible that *A*'s feeling would dwell in *B*'s body and *C*'s nature in *D*'s body."¹²

11. Ibid.

12. Xiao Chen, "Refutation against *Shenmielun*."

Here Xiao Chen extended the concept of one's communication with others to his soul's intercommunication with others' souls, suggesting his soul can dwell in others' bodies.

This criticism is indeed not effective since Fan Zhen did not admit such a communication model as one's soul's intercommunication with others' souls. The model itself is not, moreover, sufficiently persuasive. It is not necessary for us to proceed to the separation of the body and the soul and on to the immortality of souls, following Xiao Chen.

Nonetheless, this model may potentially transcend Xiao Chen's own framework, because one's soul's intercommunication with others' souls through its dwelling in their bodies can be applicable not only to the discretionary function but also to "feelings" and "nature." Let us assume that our "feelings" dwell in others and a butterfly's "nature" dwells in us. This is a situation in which the inter-generic mixture of souls takes place. We could say that this is the central potentiality of *De Anima* in Chinese Philosophy: one's soul's intercommunication with others' souls, this being neither its identification with them (like the anthropomorphism of animals) nor its imitation of or sympathy with them. It is thought of as matter in utter reality, neither in dreams as the fictitious nor in illusions.

Becoming Others

1. The Dream of a Butterfly and the Transformation of Things 物化

The most symbolical expression of the inter-generic mixture of souls in China is, after all, the dream of a butterfly:

Zhuang Zhou 莊周, once became a butterfly in a dream. He was fluttering, and was a butterfly. He enjoyed himself as much as he liked. He did not realize he was Zhuang Zhou. When he suddenly woke up, he was Zhuang Zhou as before. It is uncertain that Zhuang Zhou became a butterfly in the dream or a butterfly became Zhuang Zhou. There must be a distinction between Zhuang Zhou and the butterfly. That is why we say it is a transformation of things.¹³

13. "Qiwulun" in the *Zhuangzi*.

It can be admitted that a situation in which things are transformed has supervened, that is, a person is transformed into another: the avatar of a human in a different figure, becoming others. This transformation is irreducible to the Confucian “change through teaching 教化,” which is a directed change to support an enlightenment program, making small men become men of virtue and sages. In contrast with this, the transformation of things is a change, which is not pre-arranged in a politico-esthetico-economical system and interests.

Nonetheless, this becoming-others does not lack the distinction between one and the other. As many scholars have mentioned, Daoism in the *Zhuangzi* aims at the unity of myriad things where one and others are amalgamated into one. If this is the case, the transformation of things would become useless, and the *Zhuangzi* passage that “Zhuang Zhou and the butterfly should be distinguished from each other” could be redundant. Daoism in the *Zhuangzi* is not in a transcendental position, although it claims to be so by putting every difference and distinction into a mutual relationship.

It might be worth referring to an old interpretation of the *Zhuangzi*. Guo Xiang 郭象 (252–312) in the Six Dynasties explained the transformation of things as follows:

The distinction between awakening and dreaming is not essentially different from the one between life and death. One enjoys oneself as much as one likes, not because the distinction is annihilated, but because it is determined. Time never stops even for a moment, and the now will never exist in the end. Thus, a dream we dreamt yesterday should become another in the now. The transformation between life and death is nothing but this becoming. Even if our minds are busy with a lot of worries, this lasts only while we exist. Just as Zhuang Zhou did not know he had been a butterfly when he awoke from the dream, we know nothing about “that” when “this” happens to us. If this is applied to man, he knows nothing about his “afterlife” while alive. Liji 麗姬 is a case in point. The idiot pretends to know that life is pleasure and death is suffering, because he does not yet know what the transformation of things means.¹⁴

14. Guo Xiang, *Commentary on the Zhuangzi*.

“[W]e know nothing about ‘that’ when ‘this’ happens to us.”—this principle is consistently applied to the relationship between Zhou and the butterfly, between dreaming and awakening, and between life and death. It is important here that Guo Xiang considers it impossible to “put oneself into another’s position” because one always thoroughly enjoys his own position and is self-sufficient both before and after “the transformation of things.” According to Guo Xian’s thinking, two positions exist in the world, and their positions are not interchangeable. Moreover, he assumes neither a subject who lives through avatars nor the world of truth beyond this world. What he has presumed is as follows: while, on the one hand, one exists absolutely self-sufficiently in his own limited world and at this moment (e.g., Zhuang Zhou as Zhuang Zhou and the butterfly as the butterfly), one is indifferent to other positions; on the other hand, one changes his own nature, becomes another being, and his own world itself is also transformed into another.

This argumentation of “transformation of things,” however, has often been criticized as a simple fatalism that affirms everything and accepts fate.

2. “Untie One’s Bondage 縱解”

Hu Shi 胡適 (1891–1962) criticized Zhuangzi’s philosophy as old-guard philosophy after defining it as a “supermundane attitude”: the “theory of Zhuangzi sounds reasonable when we first hear it, but it is far removed from real competition for a half an inch of difference in the worldwide progress of academic knowledge as well as in the worldwide social restoration or political revolution.”¹⁵

Zhuangzi’s philosophy is a kind of life philosophy. It aims at “reconciliation with the mandates of Heaven 樂天安命,” that is, to accept one’s fate calmly. In consequence, it only produces those who truckle with present situations or those who are not at all affected unless they are isolated from society. It is no more than an attitude of “looking down from the Eiffel Tower.”¹⁶

15. Hu Shi, *History of Chinese Philosophy* : 201.

16. Ibid: 189–90.

Hu Shi tried to find a way of supporting a political revolution within Chinese Philosophy. In so doing, he discovered the political philosophy of Non-Action in Laozi, which brought about a revolutionary change in Chinese society. Although he regarded the content of “revolution” by Non-Action as an economic system of laissez-faire to support the British Empire, he became attached to the “half an inch of difference” and dismissed the philosophy of Zhuangzi.

However, we should not oversimplify Zhuangzi’s case, since we might be able to ask whether Zhuangzi touched on the possibility of transforming this world itself in a manner other than Hu Shi’s political revolution. While totally affirming the present through self-enjoyment, it seemed to touch on the radical possibility of letting this world transform itself into a liberated space. In other words, it puts into question differences other than Hu Shi’s “half an inch of difference.”

The following passage may clarify Zhuangzi’s philosophy and what is meant by the transformation of things:

Ziyu 子輿 suddenly fell sick, and Zisi 子祀 went to see him. Ziyu said, “The Creator is great! See how He has bent me.” His back was so hunched that his five organs were moved up to the top of his body. His cheeks were level with his navel, and his shoulders were higher than his neck. His neck bone pointed up towards the sky. “The economy of *yin* and *yang* was deranged.” However, his mind was calm without getting confused. He walked to a well with tottering steps, and said again, “Alas, the Creator bent me like this.”

“Do you dislike it?” asked Zisi. “No, why should I?” replied Ziyu. “If the Creator lets my left arm become a cock, I would like to announce the hour. If He lets my right arm become a sling, I would like to shoot down an owl to broil. If He lets my buttocks become wheels and my heart a horse, I would like to ride on it. What need would I have of a chariot? I obtained something due to time and I am now losing it due to submission to Dao.

“Since I am content with time and submissive to Dao, feelings of sorrow and joy never penetrate me. This is, as the old saying goes, to untie my bondage. Those who cannot be freed from their bondage are so because they are bound to things. Things have never been superior to

Heaven for quite a while. Why, then, should I dislike my situation?”¹⁷

Although this may sound strange, the scene of letting arms become a cock and sling etc. does not have to be taken as a mere illusion. On the contrary, what we are asked to imagine is to invent a new term for grasping the realities of transformation 化, including general changes such as birth by the combination of spermatozoon and ovum; becoming man or woman; growth from child to adult; growing old to die. Beyond these changes, for which we do not have adequate terms, the *Zhuangzi* suggested “accidental transformation,” which had been put aside under the name of deformity or abnormality. In his imagination, this was not thought of as an “abnormal” or “deformed” situation. But he affirmed that the left arm becomes a cock in terms of general “transformation,” in which the left arm was kept as such, only that its determined composition changed into that of a bird, announcing the hour.

This reality is different from that of the historical world that Hu Shi grappled with. This might be called “diabolic reality,” to quote Gilles Deleuze.¹⁸ This diabolic reality is not independent from the reality of the historical world, but it haunts the latter as virtuality. If we affirm this diabolic reality, our combination changes into those of things and becomes others. Furthermore, our real world (the amalgam of the two realities) itself will be transformed into its extremity, wherein our bondage is untied. However, it seems almost impossible to affirm this diabolic reality, because, in order to carry out the affirmation, it is necessary for us not to accept our fate in a disinterested manner, but to run a risk of going mad to become others.

To return now to the *Zhuangzi*, it announced the liberation from bondage in terms of “縣解.” This term is also found in “Yangshengzhu 養生主” in the *Zhuangzi*, which reads: “bondage of ‘the Emperor of Heaven 上帝’ is untied.” This means that the Emperor of Heaven restrains us and hangs us from Heaven; if, then, the bondage is untied, we will be liberated from and to Heaven.

Our souls not only intercommunicate with one another across the different orders of souls, but they also radically transform the *status quo* of

17. “Dazongshi” in the *Zhuangzi*.

18. Gilles Deleuze et Félix Guattari, *Mille plateaux*: 309.

this world by becoming others: the souls and the world are released from the bondage of the Heavenly Emperor. *De Anima* in China has already reached the limits of ancient imagination.

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