



REVISTA INCLUSIONES

TRABAJO EN EQUIPO SIN FRONTERAS

Revista de Humanidades y Ciencias Sociales

Volumen 7 . Número Especial

Octubre / Diciembre

2020

ISSN 0719-4706

CUERPO DIRECTIVO

Director

Dr. Juan Guillermo Mansilla Sepúlveda
Universidad Católica de Temuco, Chile

Editor

OBU - CHILE

Editor Científico

Dr. Luiz Alberto David Araujo
Pontificia Universidade Católica de Sao Paulo, Brasil

Editor Europa del Este

Dr. Aleksandar Ivanov Katrandzhiev
Universidad Suroeste "Neofit Rilski", Bulgaria

Cuerpo Asistente

Traductora: Inglés

Lic. Pauline Corthorn Escudero
Editorial Cuadernos de Sofía, Chile

Portada

Lic. Graciela Pantigoso de Los Santos
Editorial Cuadernos de Sofía, Chile

COMITÉ EDITORIAL

Dra. Carolina Aroca Toloza
Universidad de Chile, Chile

Dr. Jaime Bassa Mercado
Universidad de Valparaíso, Chile

Dra. Heloísa Bellotto
Universidad de Sao Paulo, Brasil

Dra. Nidia Burgos
Universidad Nacional del Sur, Argentina

Mg. María Eugenia Campos
Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, México

Dr. Francisco José Francisco Carrera
Universidad de Valladolid, España

Mg. Keri González
Universidad Autónoma de la Ciudad de México, México

Dr. Pablo Guadarrama González
Universidad Central de Las Villas, Cuba

Mg. Amelia Herrera Lavanchy
Universidad de La Serena, Chile

Mg. Cecilia Jofré Muñoz
Universidad San Sebastián, Chile

Mg. Mario Lagomarsino Montoya
Universidad Adventista de Chile, Chile

Dr. Claudio Llanos Reyes
Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso, Chile

Dr. Werner Mackenbach
Universidad de Potsdam, Alemania
Universidad de Costa Rica, Costa Rica

Mg. Rocío del Pilar Martínez Marín
Universidad de Santander, Colombia

Ph. D. Natalia Milanesio
Universidad de Houston, Estados Unidos

Dra. Patricia Virginia Moggia Münchmeyer
Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso, Chile

Ph. D. Maritza Montero
Universidad Central de Venezuela, Venezuela

Dra. Eleonora Pencheva
Universidad Suroeste Neofit Rilski, Bulgaria

Dra. Rosa María Regueiro Ferreira
Universidad de La Coruña, España

Mg. David Ruete Zúñiga
Universidad Nacional Andrés Bello, Chile

Dr. Andrés Saavedra Barahona
Universidad San Clemente de Ojrid de Sofía, Bulgaria

Dr. Efraín Sánchez Cabra
Academia Colombiana de Historia, Colombia

Dra. Mirka Seitz
Universidad del Salvador, Argentina

Ph. D. Stefan Todorov Kapralov
South West University, Bulgaria

COMITÉ CIENTÍFICO INTERNACIONAL

Comité Científico Internacional de Honor

Dr. Adolfo A. Abadía

Universidad ICESI, Colombia

Dr. Carlos Antonio Aguirre Rojas

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, México

Dr. Martino Contu

Universidad de Sassari, Italia

Dr. Luiz Alberto David Araujo

Pontificia Universidad Católica de Sao Paulo, Brasil

Dra. Patricia Brogna

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, México

Dr. Horacio Capel Sáez

Universidad de Barcelona, España

Dr. Javier Carreón Guillén

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, México

Dr. Lancelot Cowie

Universidad West Indies, Trinidad y Tobago

Dra. Isabel Cruz Ovalle de Amenabar

Universidad de Los Andes, Chile

Dr. Rodolfo Cruz Vadillo

Universidad Popular Autónoma del Estado de Puebla, México

Dr. Adolfo Omar Cueto

Universidad Nacional de Cuyo, Argentina

Dr. Miguel Ángel de Marco

Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina

Dra. Emma de Ramón Acevedo

Universidad de Chile, Chile

Dr. Gerardo Echeita Sarrionandia

Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, España

Dr. Antonio Hermosa Andújar

Universidad de Sevilla, España

Dra. Patricia Galeana

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, México

Dra. Manuela Garau

Centro Studi Sea, Italia

Dr. Carlo Ginzburg Ginzburg

Scuola Normale Superiore de Pisa, Italia

Universidad de California Los Ángeles, Estados Unidos

Dr. Francisco Luis Girardo Gutiérrez

Instituto Tecnológico Metropolitano, Colombia

José Manuel González Freire

Universidad de Colima, México

Dra. Antonia Heredia Herrera

Universidad Internacional de Andalucía, España

Dr. Eduardo Gomes Onofre

Universidade Estadual da Paraíba, Brasil

Dr. Miguel León-Portilla

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, México

Dr. Miguel Ángel Mateo Saura

Instituto de Estudios Albacetenses "Don Juan Manuel", España

Dr. Carlos Tulio da Silva Medeiros

Diálogos em MERCOSUR, Brasil

+ Dr. Álvaro Márquez-Fernández

Universidad del Zulia, Venezuela

Dr. Oscar Ortega Arango

Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán, México

Dr. Antonio-Carlos Pereira Menaut

Universidad Santiago de Compostela, España

Dr. José Sergio Puig Espinosa

Dilemas Contemporáneos, México

Dra. Francesca Randazzo

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras, Honduras

Dra. Yolando Ricardo

Universidad de La Habana, Cuba

Dr. Manuel Alves da Rocha

Universidade Católica de Angola Angola

Mg. Arnaldo Rodríguez Espinoza

Universidad Estatal a Distancia, Costa Rica

Dr. Miguel Rojas Mix

*Coordinador la Cumbre de Rectores Universidades
Estatales América Latina y el Caribe*

Dr. Luis Alberto Romero

CONICET / Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina

Dra. Maura de la Caridad Salabarría Roig

Dilemas Contemporáneos, México

Dr. Adalberto Santana Hernández

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, México

Dr. Juan Antonio Seda

Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina

Dr. Saulo Cesar Paulino e Silva

Universidad de Sao Paulo, Brasil

Dr. Miguel Ángel Verdugo Alonso

Universidad de Salamanca, España

Dr. Josep Vives Rego

Universidad de Barcelona, España

Dr. Eugenio Raúl Zaffaroni

Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina

Dra. Blanca Estela Zardel Jacobo

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, México

Comité Científico Internacional

Mg. Paola Aceituno

Universidad Tecnológica Metropolitana, Chile

Ph. D. María José Aguilar Idañez

Universidad Castilla-La Mancha, España

Dra. Elian Araujo

Universidad de Mackenzie, Brasil

Mg. Romyana Atanasova Popova

Universidad Suroeste Neofit Rilski, Bulgaria

Dra. Ana Bénard da Costa

*Instituto Universitario de Lisboa, Portugal
Centro de Estudios Africanos, Portugal*

Dra. Alina Bestard Revilla

*Universidad de Ciencias de la Cultura Física y el Deporte,
Cuba*

Dra. Noemí Brenta

Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina

Ph. D. Juan R. Coca

Universidad de Valladolid, España

Dr. Antonio Colomer Vialdel

Universidad Politécnica de Valencia, España

Dr. Christian Daniel Cwik

Universidad de Colonia, Alemania

Dr. Eric de Léséulec

INS HEA, Francia

Dr. Andrés Di Masso Tarditti

Universidad de Barcelona, España

Ph. D. Mauricio Dimant

Universidad Hebrea de Jerusalén, Israel

Dr. Jorge Enrique Elías Caro

Universidad de Magdalena, Colombia

Dra. Claudia Lorena Fonseca

Universidad Federal de Pelotas, Brasil

Dra. Ada Gallegos Ruiz Conejo

Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, Perú

Dra. Carmen González y González de Mesa

Universidad de Oviedo, España

Ph. D. Valentin Kitanov

Universidad Suroeste Neofit Rilski, Bulgaria

Mg. Luis Oporto Ordóñez

Universidad Mayor San Andrés, Bolivia

Dr. Patricio Quiroga

Universidad de Valparaíso, Chile

Dr. Gino Ríos Patio

Universidad de San Martín de Porres, Perú

Dr. Carlos Manuel Rodríguez Arrechavaleta

Universidad Iberoamericana Ciudad de México, México

Dra. Vivian Romeu

Universidad Iberoamericana Ciudad de México, México

**REVISTA
INCLUSIONES** M.R.
REVISTA DE HUMANIDADES
Y CIENCIAS SOCIALES

Dra. María Laura Salinas
Universidad Nacional del Nordeste, Argentina

Dr. Stefano Santasilia
Universidad della Calabria, Italia

Mg. Silvia Laura Vargas López
Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Morelos, México

**CUADERNOS DE SOFÍA
EDITORIAL**

Dra. Jaqueline Vassallo
Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Argentina

Dr. Evandro Viera Ouriques
Universidad Federal de Río de Janeiro, Brasil

Dra. María Luisa Zagalaz Sánchez
Universidad de Jaén, España

Dra. Maja Zawierzeniec
Universidad Wszechnica Polska, Polonia

Editorial Cuadernos de Sofía
Santiago – Chile
OBU – CHILE

Indización, Repositorios y Bases de Datos Académicas

Revista Inclusiones, se encuentra indizada en:





REX



UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN



Universidad de Concepción



BIBLIOTECA UNIVERSIDAD DE CONCEPCIÓN

NEW INTERPRETATION OF CHINESE CLASSICS: «THE GREAT LEARNING»

Ph. D. Ilya A. Kanaev

Jinan University, People's Republic of China

ORCID 0000-0002-2035-7483

2136135682@qq.com

Fecha de Recepción: 11 de junio de 2020 – **Fecha Revisión:** 24 de junio de 2020

Fecha de Aceptación: 26 de septiembre 2020 – **Fecha de Publicación:** 01 de octubre de 2020

Abstract

This article introduces a new approach to the interpretation of Chinese classics by means of modern epistemology language. The introductory part reveals particular similarities of the Old Chinese grammar with the modern methods of the Activity Realism approach elaborated in the Theory of Knowledge. Its application to interpreting the classical canons of Chinese philosophy makes it possible to include them in contemporary interdisciplinary studies. The author's translation of the Chinese classical text *Da Xue*, known as "The Great Learning" and included in the second part of the article serves to illustrate the practical application of the used method. The Great Learning was written by the first generation of Confucius students and became a part of the classical Confucian "Four books". It was the basis for the imperial examination system in dynastic China and now it is among the first learning objects in the Chinese classical education system, *Guo Xue*. Chinese Culture has preserved its continuity for three thousand years and represents the most stable social system among the existing ones. Such longevity rests upon the classical texts. Their interpretation through the lens of the modern epistemology language can reveal new possibilities of contemporary scientific development, especially in considering the problems of human consciousness and social being. The English translation of "The Great Learning" presented in this article is devoted to the problems of rightful governance and reveals the interconnection between the personal development of the leader and his ability to guide the people.

Keywords

Chinese classics – Translation – Education – Knowledge – Person – Leader – State

Para Citar este Artículo:

Kanaev, Ilya A. New Interpretation of Chinese Classics: «The Great Learning». *Revista Inclusiones* Vol: 7 num Especial (2020): 587-599.

Licencia Creative Commons Attribution Non-Comercial 3.0 Unported
(CC BY-NC 3.0)

Licencia Internacional



PH. D. ILYA A. KANAEV

Introduction

The most well-known and worldwide used English translations of Chinese classical texts were made by James Legge, a famous missionary of XIXth century who presented Chinese ancient culture to the West¹. The most inclusive of the recent publications is the *Source Book of Chinese Philosophy* by Wing-Tsit Chan². There are many new translations, especially of *Dao De Jing* and *Yi Jing*. In addition, there are numerous interpretations of Classics into modern Chinese, simply because the contemporary language is quite different from the ancient. Apart from the classical comparative tradition, there is one new approach that inherits the tradition of analytical philosophy. It is based on computer calculations that allow one to 'extract' the meaning of a character from comparing large corpora of texts dating back to certain historical periods. This method provides the outward appearance of strict scientific justification and its popularity has been increasing. However, there is one circumstance that should be taken into account while dealing with the Chinese language, especially with its ancient form.

Western languages have quite a strict system of morphology, with nouns, verbs, adjectives and others words distinguished by their form. A noun is the symbol of a specific thing, an adjective is the quality of this thing, a verb means some action by or to things and so on. Modern Chinese also has certain classes of words, but ancient Chinese is quite different. It is well-known that in different situations almost any character could be used as a noun, a verb or an adjective. One can see from the sentence, which general structures are stable and simple, and, therefore, transparent. That's why the grammar of ancient Chinese is quite easy to formalize in the beginning. But the simpler is the system, the more complex are its elements: a big part of ancient Chinese grammar descriptions is devoted to the meaning of certain characters that say something about the status of a proposition: the characters 也 *ye*, 矣 *yi*, 者 *zhe*, and others. There is a hypothesis that the image of 'grammatical particles' was created by borrowing characters from similarly sounding words³. This 'rebus strategy' is derived from the structure of Indo-European languages and its application to a Sino-Tibetan one could be incorrect. Moreover, the effect of the interpreter couldn't be reduced and any interpretation represents just one point of view. This is justified by authors of textbooks dedicated to the grammar of ancient Chinese. For example, one of such sincerely complained that there were no formal descriptions of Chinese grammar before his generation, and researchers had to extract it from existing translations and oral interviews Chinese people⁴. Therefore, a conventional system of ancient Chinese grammar is just the formalization of a certain way of interpreting, whose roots could also be traced to the legacy of James Legge and some other classical interpreters. For example, whereas there are a lot of new translations of "The Book of Change" *Yi Jing*, most scientists use the interpretations made by J. Legge⁵ or R. Wilhelm.

The existence of a firm foundation allows subsequent development, but it hides other ways that are fundamentally different. Despite the fact that the classical translations by

¹ J. Legge, *The Chinese Classics in 5 vols. Volume 3: The Shoo King (Book of Historical Documents)* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1865).

² Chan. Wing-Tsit, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy* (Princeton: University Press, 1963).

³ W. Boltz, *The Origin and Early Development of the Chinese Writing System* (New-Haven: American Oriental Society, 1994).

⁴ E. Pulleyblank, *Outline of Classical Chinese Grammar* (UBC Press: Vancouver, 1995).

⁵ J. Legge, *The Sacred Books of China: The Texts of Confucianism. Volume 16. The Yi King* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1879).

Legge, Wilhelm and Wing-Tsit Chan are of high quality, it is unlikely that the three thousand years of cultural development could be exhausted by so few men.

Recent advances often follow established patterns of text interpretation, while an essentially new way could be found only by studying the original texts. It is important that the basis of interpreting the Old Chinese language was established before several meaningful sources, such as ancient Oracle Bones characters⁶, became available, whereas they provide meaningful information about the structure and idea of initial Chinese characters. Since the formal structure of grammar has so much to do with semantics, this information could be crucial to understanding the whole meaning of the text⁷. Treating all characters as symbols with a certain meaning doesn't break the logic of the language; therefore, it has sufficient grounds and follows the least action principle that is one of the foundations of modern science. This approach is in line with the most well known philosophical texts of the XXth century – *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* by Ludwig Wittgenstein⁸. It claims that human thought forms a logical picture that unites symbols of things, which represent concrete possibilities of human actions. Since all actions are performed by the concrete subject, they cannot be alienated from them; therefore, any picture of Reality represents one's personal language. This theme was further elaborated by Wittgenstein in his *Philosophical Investigations*⁹ and is fully coherent with the Activity Realism approach that is one of the most recent trends in the Theory of Knowledge¹⁰. The application of this method to studying Ancient Chinese assumes that all characters are considered as real possibilities of human actions that are united in a picture of Reality. Since human thought that pictures the Reality is a complex system of subject's possibilities, it can only be understood as a whole, just because the divided parts cannot represent all the possibilities of action, which are depicted in this picture. For example, a spider perceives a pendulum of the watch, on which it wove the net; however, a malfunctioning pendulum does not represent the watch. Only a human who is able to comprehend the watch as a whole can understand the function of its parts and fix them. An attempt to understand the symbols of a thought separated from the entire meaning and context is like crawling around the pendulum without seeing the watch¹¹. That is why, profound philosophical texts can only be understood as a whole – and this is the reason to present the entire translation of Classical texts. The criterion of preferring a particular point of view is the fruitfulness of its practical application. The common interpretation of the notions of Chinese philosophy was established quite long ago and often bears some mystical connotations in modern language. These notions were natural for the 19th century but in opposition to contemporary science – and this just hides the profound legacy of the Classics. I believe Chinese philosophy has much to offer to contemporary science, especially in the understanding of the interaction between the human individual and the society. Therefore, this paper aims at encouraging an interdisciplinary exchange of ideas.

⁶ Rusen. Ma., *Yinxu Oracle Bones Practical Dictionary* (Shanghai: Shanghai University Press, 2014).

⁷ Han Tang, *Exploring Chinese Scripts* (Beijing Red Flag Press, 2014) y Caijun. Chen, *Pure "Shuowen Jiezi"* (Beijing: Haichao Publishing house, 2014)

⁸ L. Wittgenstein, "Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus". *Annalen der Naturphilosophie*, Vol: XIV issue 3/4 (1921). English translation by D.F. Pears and B.F. (McGuinness. Routledge, London, 1961).

⁹ L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, 1953).

¹⁰ V. A. Lektorskiy, "Cognition, Action, Reality". *Voprosy Filosofii*, Vol: 9 (2017): 5-23.

E. Agazzi, *Scientific Objectivity and its Contexts*, Springer: Heidelberg (New York, Dordrecht, London, 2014).

H. Lenk, *Grasping Reality: an Interpretation-Realistic Epistemology* (Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Company, 2003).

¹¹ V. A. Lektorskiy, "Cognition, Action, Reality". *Voprosy Filosofii*, Vol: 9 (2017): 5-23.

This work provides a complete translation of the Great Learning 大学 *daxue*; the original text is taken from the source now used in the Chinese system of 'state education' 国学 *guoxue*, follows its form and sequence of chapters¹². The quotations from the Book of Songs 诗经 *shijing* (Shijing) have footnotes to indicate a concrete song. The quotations from the Book of Documents 书经 *shujing* (Shujing) have footnotes that indicate their common translation¹³. The footnotes to historical figures follow the classical version of grand historian Sima Qian to avoid disputes.

Materials and Methods

"The Great Learning" is one of the cornerstone texts of the classical Chinese educational system. The text was written by the first generation of Confucius students and finally compiled by Zhu Xi, a famous scholar of the 12th century, as part of the classical Confucian "Four books". The text is supposed to be devoted to problems of governing the state: not by accident, it was one of the bases for imperial examination in dynastic China¹⁴. The title of the text consists of two characters: 大 *da* – 'big', 'great', 'adult' and 学 *xue* – 'learning', 'education'. According to the simplest interpretation, the text is devoted to educating adults, not children. Without doubt, such meaning is present in the text, however its foundation is much deeper and focuses on a certain 'Way of life' – it is about learning how to become a 'Great Man'. This 'Way' starts from the investigation of things and ends up in grasping all people in one's heart. A practically oriented description of it is presented in Chapter 11, while its original meaning is given in Chapter 1 that is ascribed to Confucius himself; the rest of the text is the explanation, compiled by his students. In addition, the Way of becoming a Great man could be described as broadening and deepening the humanness associated with Confucianism. Daoism provides its opposition in exhausting of being human. The common translation of the title was preserved, because it grasps all possible meanings, including the idea that this text is the foundation of real education.

The explanation of several key characters will be provided further below. The first character is 道 *dao*. It is broadly used even in modern Chinese, for example, on road signs as the word for an avenue or a highway. In the text it is also used in this intuitive meaning of 'the Way'. Obviously, it carries a more profound meaning in philosophical texts. The ancient Chinese character is composite and represents such ideas as 'movement', 'stop' and 'personal intention' on such state of being¹⁵. In its complexity, the character 道 *dao* could be described as collecting a variety of one's own states of being in one movement and pursuing their aim.

The second character is 德 *de*. In Western philosophy it is usually translated as 'virtue', 'good' or some other personal merit. This character could already be found on the Oracle bones, and it consisted of such ideas as 'movement', 'ten' and 'eye'¹⁶. An 'eye' is a standard symbol of the human being; the numeral 'ten' represents a certain quantity.

¹² Daxue (The Great Learning). Da Xue in Xue Yong Lun Yu. Ed. Xiamen Shaonan (Hangzhou: Cultural Transmission Company Ltd. Hangzhou Xiling Yinshe Press, 2009).

¹³ J. Legge, The Chinese Classics in 5 vols. Volume 3: The Shoo King (Book of Historical Documents) (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1865).

¹⁴ Rui. Wang, The Chinese Imperial Examination System: An Annotated Bibliography (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2013).

¹⁵ Shen. Xu, Shuowen Jiezi (Beijing: Chinese Publishing House, 2013).

¹⁶ Rusen. Ma., Yinxu Oracle Bones Practical Dictionary (Shanghai: Shanghai University Press, 2014).

The Chinese counting system is decimal; therefore, *'ten'* is not merely a number but represents the idea of improving the level of polity. In later scripts, the symbols *'one'* and *'heart'* were added to the structure of the character to represent the idea of uniting many people in one aspiration. Therefore, the original meaning of 德 *de* couldn't be connected with individuality – in contrast, it is the movement many should follow. In addition, it could be interpreted as the expansion of one's consciousness to embrace many in their heart and take responsibility for them. This is much more coherent with all trends of Confucianism than the concept of individual merit. This was the reason to translate 德 *de* as *'the Order'*. Without any doubt, to arrange surrounding people in order, one should start from one's own heart, body and mind – and The Great Learning unfolds exactly these steps of the evolution of one's Orderliness.

The third notion is 君子 *junzi*; its literal meaning is *'Ruler's Heir'*¹⁷. The heir should demonstrate perfect merits; this is the only way to let people follow his father without any coercion. However, at the times of Confucius, dukes and kings were quite often unworthy, the same as their children. That's why the title of *Heir* began to symbolize the one who possessed certain knowledge and was used to address the sages. The second text of the Confucian Four Books, the 中庸 *Zhong Yong*, demonstrates very clearly that the title of 君子 *junzi* was applied to the one who had the true right to govern people. That's why this notion was interpreted in the text as *'True Ruler'*. In Confucian tradition, his antagonist is called a *'small man'* 小人 *xiao ren*. Being small is an inevitable step in human life. It is usual for small children to be egoistic and undisciplined, which is why adults should raise them and give them knowledge. But when someone is already an adult but still tries to apply anything for their own sake and measure everything according to their own ideas, they are truly a *'small man'*, according to Confucius.

The Great Learning

1

The Way of the Great Man's learning is to illuminate the clear Order, to unite the people, to retain the highest excellence.

When one is settled in the peak of excellence, they achieve the knowledge and become firm, therefore, not confusing their own states of being. The one who holds distinction of their states can be calm. The one who is calm can stay at peace with themselves and the rest of the World. The one who is at peace can take care of others. The one who cares for others can reach the aim of their Way. Things have roots and branches, affairs have ends and beginnings. To know the order of the former and the latter - this is how to approach the Way.

The one who sincerely strives to illuminate the clear Order over all the Land starts from governing their own country¹⁸. The one with the will to govern their own country must first regulate their own house. The one with the will to regulate their house first develops their own body and mind. The one with the will to develop their body and mind first makes

¹⁷ Han. Tang, Exploring Chinese Scripts (Beijing: Red Flag Press, 2014).

¹⁸ The first character of the phrase 古 *gu* is usually translated as *'ancient'*. However, its original meaning is *'straight (honest) speech'* - Shen. Xu, Shuowen Jiezi (Beijing: Chinese Publishing House, 2013). Confucian tradition considered ancient rulers as ideal ones; that's why, the meanings were transferred and the additional meaning became general.

their own heart straight. The one with the will to make their own heart straight first reaches sincerity in their states of being. The one with the will to be sincere in their states of being first extends their knowledge. Extension of knowledge is in investigation of things.

When things are investigated, knowledge is complete. When knowledge is complete, one's own states of being are sincere. When one's states are sincere, one's heart is straight. When one's heart is straight, their body and mind are developing. When the body and mind are developed, the family is regulated. When the family is regulated, the country is governed. When one's country is governed, then there is peace all over the Land.

The only foundation for everybody, from the Keeper of Time to a most ordinary man, is to develop their own body and mind. It has never been that the root is corrupted, but the branches flourish and could be well ordered. It is not to be that the significant and important are abandoned, but the trivial and insignificant are valued. This is the knowledge of the foundation. This is the utmost knowledge.

2

If someone desires to reach the sincerity of their own state, they shall not allow self-deception: neither show disgust at feeling disgust at bad smells, nor being attracted by pretty colors. This is what it means to be sincere with one's own Self. That's why a True Ruler must be cautious of his own Self. A small man, being alone, cannot distinguish what is not right. There is no corner of the world that he won't try to measure and thus equate with himself. When a small man observes a True Ruler, he feels disgust, conceals his vices and exposes his achievements. However, a wise man can look as if he sees through one's lungs and liver. What is the point of deception?

It is said: "What is truly in the Essence, forms the appearance". Because of this, a True Ruler is always cautious of his own Self. Zeng Zi said: "Ten eyes are watching, ten hands are pointing. But one's own concern should it be."¹⁹ The wealth benefits the house, the Order benefits the body and mind. When the heart is broad, the body is healthy and flourishing. That's why the True Ruler is necessarily sincere in his own states of being.

3

The "Songs" read: "Look at this Qi River bay: its shores are green and luxuriant. There is an outstanding True Ruler. He is divided as jade and engraved, carved as jade and polished. He is fierce and courageous, bright and broad. There is an outstanding True Ruler; until the end of time he cannot be forgotten"²⁰.

"He is divided as jade and engraved" – this is the Way of learning; "He is carved as jade, and polished" – this is one's own training. "He is fierce and courageous" – this is rightful dignity. "He is bright and broad" – this is a mighty virtue. "There is an outstanding True Ruler, until the end of time he cannot be forgotten" – when the Way flourishes, the Order is perfect. People cannot forget this.

¹⁹ V. Zeng Zi, century BCE, one of the most respected student of Confucius.

²⁰ The Book of Songs: I.V.1.

4

The “Songs” read: “Oh! Do not forget the former rulers!”²¹ A True Ruler is worthy of their merits and holds intimate relations to their bloodline. Small men focus on their pleasures and use opportunities available to a governor. While people exist in the world, this should not be forgotten.

The “Instructions to Kang” read: “Look for the clearness of the Order”²². “Tai Jia” reads: “Strive for a clear embodiment of that which is predetermined by Time”²³. “Di Dian” reads: “Seek the clearness of the highest Order”²⁴. All of this pertains to obtaining clarity of the proper Order.

The engraving on the vase of Tang read: “Daily renewal is most important. Renew every day. A new day brings new renewal”²⁵. The “Instructions to Kang” read: “Renew the people”²⁶. The “Songs” read: “Although Zhou was an ancient land, its destiny was renewed”²⁷. That’s why there is no place, where a True Ruler can allow himself any imperfection in his action.

5

The “Songs” read: “The great country of the People stretches for thousands of miles. It is the only place for them to be safe”²⁸. “Songs” reads: “The yellow bird sings without worry. It has its own place to hide in the hill”²⁹. Confucius said: “To be safe, one needs to know and have their own place. Aren’t humans, in this, not the same as birds?”³⁰ The “Songs” read: “Great was Wen Wang in choosing his position to settle down”³¹. When he was the ruler, he settled in humanness. When he was an official, he settled in respect. When he was a son, he settled in filiality. When he was a father, he settled in kindness and care. In dealing with common people he settled in honesty.

²¹ The Book of Songs: IV.I.4

²² The Book of Documents. Documents of Zhou: Announcement to the Prince of Kang. The speech of Zhou Gong周公, the regent of the Zhou 周dynasty that ruled in the 11th-3rd centuries BC; was pronounced during the construction of Luoyang city洛陽 in the 11th century XI BC.

²³ The Book of Documents. Documents of Shang: Tai Jia I. Tai Jia was the fourth ruler of the Shang 商dynasty that ruled in the 17th-11th centuries BC. The Book “Tai Jia” is ascribed to Yi Yin伊尹, the prominent figure that helped to establish the Shang dynasty, was a minister for a long time.

²⁴ The Book of Documents. Documents of Yu: Canon of Yao. Emperor Yao尧 was the fourth of the Five legendary emperors of China who ruled in the 24th-23rd centuries BC.

²⁵ Cheng Tang成湯 was the ruler of the Shang tribe that defeated Jie桀, the last ruler of the Xia夏dynasty in the 17th century BC. Cheng Tang established Shang 商dynasty that reigned in the 17th-11th centuries BC.

²⁶ The Book of Documents. Documents of Zhou: Announcement to the Prince of Kang.

²⁷ The Book of Songs: III.I.1.

²⁸ The Book of Songs: IV.V.3. It says that people need to possess their own place of living.

²⁹ The Book of Songs: I.I.2. The song of the Zhou land, possibly from the times of the Shang dynasty, the last ruler from which robbed the common people, so even the life of birds seemed better.

³⁰ At the time of the Confucius in the 6th century BC, people also suffered from internecine wars and unworthy rulers

³¹ The Book of Songs: III.I.1. Ode to the Wen Wang, the ruler of Zhou.

Confucius said: “While hearing litigations, in court or within myself, I am still a man. It is better to have no litigations at all. The one who cannot feel compassion for others must not have a chance to convince them. Strong should be the fear before the peoples’ will. This is what is said about the foundation.

6

What is meant is that “the development of one’s body and mind is in making the heart straight”. If there is a place for anger and hatred, it means that the straightness of one’s heart is yet to be achieved. If there is a place for fear and dread, it means that straightness of one’s heart is yet to be achieved. If there is a place for addiction to pleasures, it means that the straightness of one’s heart is yet to be achieved. If there is a place for worries and regret, it means that the straightness of one’s heart is yet to be achieved. When the Heart is not present, men look but do not see; listen but do not hear; eat but do not taste. Thus, it is said that the development of the body and mind is in making one’s heart straight.

7

How is it that “regulating one’s family is in training one’s own body and mind”? The one who is addicted to something is biased and falls under its will. The one who hates and feels disgust for something is biased and under its will. The one who is afraid and tries to avoid something is biased and under its will. The one who is lazy and idle is biased and under its will. That’s why, the one who can love but knows the disadvantages of what he loves and the one who dislikes but still knows the advantages of what he distastes, could rarely be found all over the Land. That’s why there is a proverb: “Man does not know his son’s vices, does not know the future size of a planted seed”. Thus, it is said that if one does not train their body and mind, it is impossible to regulate one’s family.

8

What does it mean “to govern one’s state, it is necessary to regulate one’s family first”? It can never be that the one who cannot teach his relatives could instruct other people. That’s why, a True Ruler does not leave his family while engaging in state affairs. The filial one can serve his ruler well. The one who respects an elder brother has the right attitude to the authorities. The one who is kind to his children can guide other men.

“Instructions to Kang” read: “As a mother protects her child”³². Her heart is sincerely striving for this, whereas she may not be perfect at everything, she won’t be far away from right actions. Even though she has never learned how to give birth to and nurture a child before marriage.

If one family is humane, the whole country aims for humanity. If one family is polite, the whole country strives for politeness. If one man commits a crime, the whole country is in disorder. This is how personal example works. It is said about this: “One word can spoil an affair. One man can consolidate the country”.

³² The Book of Documents. Documents of Zhou: Announcement to the Prince of Kang.

Yao³³ and Shun³⁴ led the Land by way of humanity, and the people followed their example. Jie³⁵ and Zhou³⁶ led the Land through by way of cruelty, and the people were cruel. The commands of Jie and Zhou were opposite to their own aspirations and people didn't follow their commands. That's why a True Ruler must first take control of all the merits in his own Self and only then demand the same from others. If he does not take control of anything in himself, he has no right to demand it from others. It can never be that a man can guide others in something he cannot be aware of in their own body and mind. That is why governing the state is in regulating their own family.

The "Songs" read: "Beautiful is this peach tree. Its leaves are fresh and green. This girl is getting married. She will bring good to her new family"³⁷. Be useful to your own family first, and then you will be able to instruct the country's people.

The "Songs" read: "Worthy is the elder brother, worthy is the younger brother"³⁸. Be a worthy elder brother, be a worthy younger brother, then one will be able to teach the country's people.

The "Songs" read: "When one's own duty is completely fulfilled, one can establish order in all the four corners of the world"³⁹. If one's actions as father, son, elder and younger brother are fully embodied, then the people aim for their implementation, too. This is what is said about the government of one's state as the regulation of one's family.

9

How is it that "the pacification of all in the Land is about governing one's state"? When those in power respect their elders, people strive to be filial. When those in power respect their subordinates, people strive to be respectful of their younger brothers. When those in power are kind to the misfortunate, the people also won't abandon them.

³³ Emperor Yao 尧 was the fourth of the Five legendary emperors of China, an example of ideal ruler in Confucianism. Yao is honored for his modesty and unselfishness: looking for the heir, he gave Shun 舜 different tests, in the end he had given his two daughters in marriage to test his ability to be the ruler. The legend dates back the tradition of Imperial examination to these tests.

³⁴ Shun 舜 was the fifth of the Five legendary emperors of China in the 23rd-22nd centuries BC. Successfully passed the examination of Yao and inherited the throne. He was also a person of the highest merits, especially filial piety. Passed the throne to the Great Yu 大禹 who succeeded in controlling the Great Flood. Great Yu passed the throne to his son; this precedent gave rise to the Xia dynasty and the Hereditary System of dynastical government.

³⁵ Jie 桀 was the last ruler of the Xia dynasty, personified despotism and greediness, was dethroned by Cheng Tang who established Shang dynasty.

³⁶ Zhou 紂 was the last ruler of the Shang dynasty and the personification of an unworthy ruler who disregards people for the sake of his own pleasures. Killed himself after the defeat from the Wu Wang, the ruler of Zhou kingdom.

³⁷ The Book of Songs: I.I.6.

³⁸ The Book of Songs: II.II.9. In Confucianism the relationships between the ruler and his subjects are rooted in the family relations between the father and his sons and between brothers.

³⁹ *The Book of Songs*: I.XIV.3 One of the central ideas of The Great Learning is that the spreading of the Order outwards is possible only after its establishing in oneself.

This is how a True Ruler manages the square and the circle – the perfect method – for measuring his Way. What you do not like in the higher one, do not do it to the one who is lower. What you do not like in the one who is lower, do not do it to the one who is higher. What you do not like in the one who is in front of you, do not do it to the one who is behind you. What you do not like in the one who is behind and after you, do not do it in turn to the one who is in front of you. What you do not like in the one who is on your right side, do not do it to the one who is on your left. What you do not like in the one who is on your left side, do not do to the one who is on the right. This is what is said about the Way of a perfect method.

10

The “Songs” read: “Happy is only the Ruler who is like the father and the mother to his people”⁴⁰. To love what people should love, worry about things the people should worry about– this means to be father and mother to the people.

The “Songs” read: “High is the Southern mountain, its rocks are steep and unreachable. Bright and mighty teacher Yin, all the people look up to you”⁴¹. However, the one who possesses the country should not be incautious. Make one wrong step, and you will be blamed forever. The “Songs” read: “While the Yin dynasty hasn’t lost the ability to guide the people, it could match the orders of the High. Remember the Yin – the ruler’s destiny does not change”⁴². It is said that to obtain the people’s support is to obtain the state; to lose the people’s support is to lose the state.

That is the reason why a True Ruler concerns himself first of all with the Order. To possess the Order – is to possess the people. To possess the people is to possess the land. To possess the land is to possess the wealth. To possess the wealth is to possess usefulness. Order is the foundation, wealth is the consequence. If the foundation is exposed outside, while the consequences are hidden inside, then the people will be taught to be greedy and rob each other. That’s why, when wealth is accumulated, people wander away; when wealth is used, people appear and gather around. That’s why words that harms others will return and injure the speaker; bad money will be lost.

11

The “Instructions to Kang” read “Embodying one’s destiny shall not be routine and unconscious”⁴³. It is said: The perfect realization of the embodied form allows one to possess destiny; if one does not strive for perfection, they will lose their destiny. The “Book of Chu” reads: “In the Chu country there are no tangible things treated as treasures. The only treasure is Excellence”⁴⁴. Uncle Fan said: “The exiled have no treasures but for the humanity of relatives”⁴⁵.

⁴⁰ The Book of Songs: II.II.7.

⁴¹ The Book of Songs: II.IV.7. Yi Yin, 17th-16th centuries BC was a common man that became the counselor of Cheng Tang, who dethroned the previous dynasty and established his own. Evaluation of Yi Yin differs according to source.

⁴² The Book of Songs: II.I.1.

⁴³ The Book of Documents. Documents of Zhou: Announcement to the Prince of Kang.

⁴⁴ Kingdom of Chu楚 was one of the strongest at the times of Warring states in the 5th-3rd centuries BC. Occupied southern lands; was conquered by Qin in the 3rd century BC.

⁴⁵ Jiu Fan is mentioned in The Spring and Autumn Annals. Was the relative of exiled prince.

“Qin Oath” reads: “If there is a minister who is completely unskilled but sincerely devoted to their way, whose heart is broad and peaceful, able to grasp everything, they will value the skillful one as themselves, love the wise one sincerely with all their heart, not only by lip-service – truly, the one able to grasp all this can protect my sons, grandsons and my people. Isn’t it great to have such a person! But if there is a skillful one who is envious and hates other skillful people, makes obstacles for wise men and does not raise them up – he cannot embrace others with his heart. He cannot protect my sons, grandsons and my people. Isn’t it a great danger to have trust in such?”⁴⁶ Only a humane ruler can banish such a man; exile him to all the four corners of the world among the wildings, but do not let him stay among us in the Central Lands. This shows that only a humane man is able to love people as they deserve, only a humane man is able to punish people as they deserve.

To see the worthy one but not be able to raise him, raise him, but not in time is to rely on determination. To see the unworthy one but not be able to exile him, exile him but not far away enough is a mistake. To love what people hate and hate what people love is to go against human nature. Disasters will necessarily catch such a man. Therefore, a True Ruler follows the way of becoming great: they are necessarily loyal to righteousness and honest in its embodiment. Arrogance and indulgence lead to the loss of the Way.

12

There is a straight way for making wealth: the creators should surpass the consumers, the production should be fast, while the use should be slow – in this case the wealth will be sufficient and everlasting. A humane person uses wealth for developing the body and mind. A non-humane person uses the body and mind to obtain tangible goods. It can never be that the higher ones strive to be humane, and the lower ones do not strive to be righteous. It can never be that the ones who strive to be righteous will not fulfill their duty; and it cannot be that they will consider the state treasury as their own storehouse. Meng Xian Zi said: “The family of the official, who possesses at least one carriage with four horses, does not deal with chicken and pigs. In the house, where sacrifices are made on ice, do not keep sheep and cows. The house with hundreds of chariots should not have servants that will amass wealth by heavy tax collection, it is better to have thievish servants rather than have such servants”.

What does it mean that the state should not consider tangible goods as advantages, but should consider Truth as an advantage? If the head of the home country strives only to obtain wealth, he is necessarily a small man, even if doing something good. When a small man guides his home country, there will inevitably be natural disasters and social troubles. Even if there are men of perfect virtue, they cannot change anything. It is said such a state should not consider tangible goods as advantages, but should consider Truth as an advantage.

Conclusion

The Great Learning is one of the most important texts of the Confucian tradition and the whole Chinese culture. It establishes the foundation of the Way of the Scholar who must

⁴⁶ *The Book of Documents. Documents of Zhou: Speech of the Marquis of Qin.* The Zhou dynasty lost influence in the period of Warring states and their reign was just a formality. In 249 BC it was conquered by Qin 秦. Then, Qin Shihuan 秦始皇, 258-210 BC, finally united all kingdoms and established the state of China.

inevitably participate in government affairs – this is how he can develop his body and mind to be on top of form. This text introduces particular milestones along the Way of becoming the Great Man. The concrete description of these milestones is given in other texts: for example, the second of the “Four Books”, 中庸 *Zhong Yong*⁴⁷, is devoted to the metaphysical correspondence between the subject’s sincerity and the Order of the state and whole World. Thus, the interpretation of character 德 *de* as ‘Order’ will be fully justified only through studying this and other texts. The same is true for other notions. Especially meaningful for understanding the principles of the Old Chinese is “The Book of Change” 易经 *yijing*: it contains the most ancient layer of text that was the transition from the Oracle Bones divination practice to the creation of philosophical texts.

This article presents a view on Chinese philosophy from the perspective of the contemporary Theory of Knowledge. This fact determines its strong and weak points. The latter is the shallow correspondence with the established academic tradition of interpreting Old Chinese. At the same time, this allows departing from crystallized meanings. Thus, it can be meaningful for the professional linguist as an object of sharpening critics and sophistry. On the other hand, the emphasis on aspects of natural sciences allows establishing interdisciplinary correlations between the Ancient Classics and the contemporary studies of culture, society and human being.

References

- Agazzi, E. *Scientific Objectivity and its Contexts*. New York, Dordrecht, London: Springer: Heidelberg. 2014.
- Boltz, W. *The Origin and Early Development of the Chinese Writing System*. New-Haven: American Oriental Society. 1994.
- Chen, Caijun. *Pure “Shuowen Jiezi”*. Beijing: Haichao Publishing house. 2014.
- Daxue (The Great Learning). *Da Xue in Xue Yong Lun Yu*. Ed. Xiamen Shaonan. Cultural Transmission Company Ltd. Hangzhou: Hangzhou Xiling Yinshe Press. 2009.
- Legge, J. *The Chinese Classics in 5 vols. Volume 3: The Shoo King (Book of Historical Documents)*. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1865.
- Legge, J. *The Sacred Books of China: The Texts of Confucianism. Volume 16. The Yi King*. Clarendon Press: Oxford. 1879.
- Legge, J. *The Chinese Classics in 5 vols. Volume 1: Confucian Analects, the Great Learning, and the Doctrine of the Mean. Revised 2nd edition*. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1893.
- Lektorskiy, V. A. “Cognition, Action, Reality”. *Voprosy Filosofii*, Vol: 9 (2017): 5-23.
- Lenk, H. *Grasping Reality: an Interpretation-Realistic Epistemology*. Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Company. 2003.

⁴⁷ *Zhongyong (The Doctrine of the Mean)*. *Zhong Yong in Xue Yong Lun Yu*. Ed. Xiamen Shaonan (Cultural Transmission Company Ltd. Hangzhou Xiling Yinshe Press, Hangzhou, 2009).

Ma, Rusen. *Yinxu Oracle Bones Practical Dictionary*. Shanghai: Shanghai University Press. 2014.

Pulleyblank, E. *Outline of Classical Chinese Grammar*. Vancouver: UBC Press: 1995.

Shi, Jing. Ed. Xiamen Shaonan Cultural Transmission Company Ltd. Hangzhou: Hangzhou Xiling Yinshe Press. 2014.

Shu, Jing. Ed. Xiamen Shaonan Cultural Transmission Company Ltd. Hangzhou: Hangzhou Xiling Yinshe Press. 2015.

Tang, Han. *Exploring Chinese Scripts*. Beijing: Red Flag Press: 2014.

The I Ching or Book of Changes. Hellmut Wilhelm (ed). Bollingen Series 19. 3rd edition. Princeton: Princeton University Press: 1967.

Wang, Rui. *The Chinese Imperial Examination System: An Annotated Bibliography*. Lanham: Scarecrow Press. 2013.

Wei, Tat. *An Exposition of I-CHING*. Hong Kong: China Academy of Translation. 1977.

Wing-Tsit, Chan. *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*. Princeton University Press. 1963.

Wittgenstein, L. "Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus". *Annalen der Naturphilosophie*, vol: XIV, issue 3/4 (1921). English translation by D.F. Pears and B.F. McGuinness. London: Routledge. 1961.

Wittgenstein, L. *Philosophical Investigations*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing. 1953.

Xu, Shen. *Shuowen Jiezi*. Beijing: Chinese Publishing House: 2013.

Zhongyong (The Doctrine of the Mean). *Zhong Yong in Xue Yong Lun Yu*. Ed. Xiamen Shaonan. Cultural Transmission Company Ltd. Hangzhou: Hangzhou Xiling Yinshe Press. 2009.

REVISTA
INCLUSIONES M.R.
REVISTA DE HUMANIDADES
Y CIENCIAS SOCIALES

CUADERNOS DE SOFÍA
EDITORIAL

Las opiniones, análisis y conclusiones del autor son de su responsabilidad y no necesariamente reflejan el pensamiento de **Revista Inclusiones**.

La reproducción parcial y/o total de este artículo debe hacerse con permiso de **Revista Inclusiones**.