

Makeham, John, ed., *The Buddhist Roots of ZHU Xi's Philosophical Thought*

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This anthology is the first systematic study in English on Buddhist influences on ZHU Xi's 朱熹 (1130–1200) thought. Given Zhu's status as the completer of Song 宋 Neo-Confucianism, it introduces a new angle in understanding Chinese philosophy. Structurally, the volume consists of the editor's introduction and five chapters by different authors. Makeham's "Introduction" starts with a concise highlight of the development of Song Neo-Confucianism and a brief account of the three major schools in Song Buddhism: Chan 禪, Huayan 華嚴, and Tiantai 天台, and ends with a synopsis for each chapter. One must appreciate Makeham's succinct style and well-acquaintance of the relevant literature.

In Chapter 1, entitled "The Radiant Mind: ZHU Xi and the Chan Doctrine of *Tathāgatagarbha*," John Jorgensen argues for the thesis that Zhu's thought should be seen as a "Confucian 'Northern Chan'" (117). As a justification, Jorgensen writes that "the radiance of the mind or human nature that is covered by obscuring contaminants" is essentially common to Northern Chan and Zhu. In his youth, Zhu practiced Dahui's 大慧 (1089–1163) Chan. Even after his Confucian turn Zhu adopted "certain key themes and motifs from Chan" (39). Particularly, like Northern Chan, Zhu employed the mirror-metaphor and the pearl-metaphor in expounding his gradualism. Jorgensen's thesis is both innovative and provocative.

Critically, it is necessary to delimit the scope of validity of Jorgensen's thesis. As is well known, there was an essential distinction between the early and the mature Zhu. As Mou Zongsan 牟宗三 pointed out, the early Zhu identified mind with *Li* 理 (or nature), whereas the mature Zhu could hardly establish their genuine identity. In the mature Zhu, while the mind of *Dao* 道 is an activity, *Li* remains ontologically inactive. In this regard, he was closer to the Fa Xiang 法相 School (cf. Mou Zongsan 牟宗三, *Mind as Substance and Nature as Substance* 心體與性體 [Taipei 台北: Zhengzhong Shuju 正中書局, 1969, vol. 2, 464–478; vol. 1, 588]). This also explains why he

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eventually opposed LU Xiangshan's 陸象山 (1139–1193) assertion of the identity between mind and *Li*. However, Jorgensen seems to overlook this important distinction, and hence does not see that only the early Zhu could be identified as a “Confucian ‘Northern Chanist.’”

In Chapter 2, entitled “ZHU Xi's Critique of Buddhism: Selfness, Salvation, and Self-Cultivation,” Justin Tiwald holds that Zhu mainly produced two sorts of arguments against Buddhism: first, Buddhism failed to develop a “real” ethics. In ignoring the participation in the cosmological process of the “ceaseless life generativity,” Buddhists detached themselves from the ethical life; second, the goal of Buddhist salvation was “selfish” in seeking personal benefit only. Even Buddhist “great compassion” suffered from the similar limitation of Mohist “impartial love.” However, Confucianism overrode Buddhism in correctly seeing that ethical norms must be grounded in life generativity and human nature.

Tiwald successfully reveals that Zhu's critique was more than “instrumental,” but with a goal to intensify the fundamental conflict between Confucianism and Buddhism. His subtle analysis also enables us to see that it is incorrect to characterize Zhu's philosophy as Buddhism with a Confucian outlook. Zhu's “Confucian turn” signified a rapture from, rather than a continuation of, the Buddhist path. Moreover, Tiwald's understanding of Buddhist ethics as a “non-conventional ethics” helps us to recall Levinasian ethics. In fact, like Mahāyāna Buddhist ethics, Levinasian ethics, being a “non-ethical” ethics, is grounded in the thesis of the primacy of the other. This similarity not only helps explain why Buddhist ethics is beyond seeking personal benefit, but also indicates that Buddhist “ignorance” and Confucian “good” belong to different dimensions, and hence are incommensurable. That said, like the other contributors, Tiwald might suffer from the oversight of Huayan's influence on Zhu. Historically, Zhu was the first to develop a Confucian “system.” As noted by Kant, a “system” is “the unity of the manifold modes of knowledge under one idea” (Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. by Norman Kemp Smith [London: Macmillan, 1964], 653). Huayan represented a “comprehensive system of nature-origination” under the leading idea of *Li*. Although the concept of *Li* was already found in pre-Qin 秦 Confucianism, it is only in Zhu that *Li* becomes a unifying idea in formulating Confucianism as a “system.” This is especially shown in Zhu's articulation of the doctrine of the simultaneous oneness and manyness of *Li*. In extending CHENG Yi's 程頤 (1033–1107) primarily ethical approach into a metaphysical dimension, Zhu saw Huayan's holistic onto-cosmology as a model. This enabled him to claim that “*Li* is at the same time one *Li* (the Taiji [太極]) of all things, and at the same time is, in its entirety, all the many individual mutually differentiating ‘principles’ and ‘patterns’ and natures of things” (255). In illustrating this thesis, Zhu quoted Huayan's metaphor: “One moon universally shines in all rivers. The moons in all the rivers are the same moon” (Li Jingde 黎靖德, comp., *Topics Arranged Conversations of Master Zhu* 朱子語類 [Beijing 北京: Zhonghua Shuju 中華書局, 1986, 39]; here I follow Wing-tsit CHAN's translation in his *New Studies on CHU Hsi* [ZHU Xi] [Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press: 1989, 530]). This evidently indicates that Zhu was indebted to Huayan in borrowing its “holistic conceptual framework”—though their conceptions of *Li* are different. Regrettably, no author in this volume mentions this important connection—despite Wing-tsit CHAN's earlier references (cf. Wing-tsit CHAN, *A Sourcebook in*

Chinese Philosophy [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963, 590]; *New Studies on Chu Hsi*, 530).

In Chapter 3, “Buddhism and ZHU XI’s Epistemology of Discernment,” Stephen Angle attempts to explore the relationship between Buddhist and Zhu’s epistemology. Angle begins with a recapture of interactions between Buddhism and Confucianism up to the rise of Zhu’s epistemology. This gives Western readers a deeper understanding of their connections. Angle then succinctly observes that Zhu’s epistemology involves three distinct types of knowing: “Type One: One knows a rule to which things should conform. Type Two: One see an isolated instance of how things should be and cannot help but follow it. Type Three: One awakens to the underlying reason or basis why things are as they are and responds aptly to whatever situation one encounters” (176). But against Angle’s claim that though “knowing does not necessarily develop in a Type One → Type Two → Type Three succession; in different ways, both Type One and Two can be useful in the process of developing Type Three” (176), one should rather understand Zhu’s ordering as follows: Type Two → Type Three → Type One. In quoting Zhu’s statement on Type Two: “‘Among babies in arms, there is none that does not know to love its parents. When they grow older, there is none that does not know to revere its elder brothers.’ Naturally these are places at which one cannot stop” (177), Angle does not recognize that this is a type of “pre-reflexive” knowing which enjoys a foremost priority in order. In Zhu, it is by means of a “primordial feeling” that one rushes to save the child about to fall into a well. This kind of feeling, though spontaneous, complies well with *Li* (*Zhuzi Yulei*, 1297). That is also why Zhu attributed Mencius’ “four beginnings” as “feelings” (*Zhuzi Yulei*, 89). Since this kind of feeling arose prior to any reflective execution of “the investigation of things in order to know the *Li*,” Type Two is more primordial than the other two types of knowing—it is rather their basis (see 184; *Zhuzi Yulei*, 264). Surely, Zhu also noticed the limitation of this type of knowing. This points to a necessary shift to “genuine knowing”: to move to Type Three in figuring out and thereby formulating the underlying reason why things are, and then, by means of Type One, the rules to which things and our behaviors should conform. The reason why Type Three precedes Type One is also shown in a necessary mediating role played by “knowing what the *Li* of the tree is,” for example, in order to discover the right time for cutting the tree (*Zhuzi Yulei*, 284). Accordingly, one needs to admit one more type of knowing in Zhu: knowing the *essence* (*Eidos*) of things. Zhu, in pointing out “the *Li* of a chair” as “having four legs” and so on was a “metaphysical *Li*” (*Zhuzi Yulei*, 1296), indeed understood *Li* as *Eidos*. However, these modifications should not undermine Angle’s illuminating contribution in uncovering Buddhist influences on Zhu’s epistemology.

In Chapter 4, entitled “The *Ti-Yong* 體用 Model and Its Discontents: Models of Ambiguous Priority in Chinese Buddhism and ZHU XI’s Neo-Confucianism,” Brook Ziporyn begins with a comparison of the *ti-yong* models of Tiantai, Huayan, and Zhu. Ziporyn then argues that the mature Zhu changed his early *ti-yong* model in a way that looks like a move from Huayan’s to Tiantai’s *ti-yong* model. In conclusion, he characterizes these *ti-yong* models as follows: first, in Huayan, *ti* refers to *Li* as Emptiness, *yong* covers all things; second, in Tiantai, each thing functions both as *ti* and *yong*; and third, the mature Zhu “continued to present the relationship between *Taiji/li* and *qi* 氣 as a *ti-yong* relationship (despite his earlier reservations)” (317–318). In justifying his claim, Ziporyn particularly develops a new interpretation of Zhu’s

understanding of the Taiji Diagram. Ziporyn's lengthy penetrative analyses have done a great service in deepening our understanding of these three schools.

Nonetheless, Ziporyn seems to overlook that in granting "identity" between *ti* as Emptiness and *yong* as all things, Huayan's approach is "dialectical." As Fazang 法藏 (643–712) remarked, this "identity" involves a three-step developmental process: first, "mutual contradiction"; second, "mutual non-obstruction"; and third, "mutual achievement" (cf. Fazang, *A Brief Commentary on Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra* 般若波羅密多心經略疏, T 33: 553a–b). It is accordingly an "identity of difference and identity" and well-matches Hegelian "dialectical identity." In contrast, Ziporyn conceives Tiantai's approach to be "dialectical" (208). However, as shown in Tiantai's thesis that all things are *as such* inherent in *Dharmatā*, the "paradoxical identity" of Three Truths is primarily "simultaneous," rather than "developmental." All this helps to see that Huayan's *ti-yong* model is "dialectical" and Tiantai's *ti-yong* model is "paradoxical" (but not "dialectical"), whereas Zhu's *ti-yong* model is "analytical." Nevertheless, in supporting Ziporyn's major thesis, one can add that Huayan's *ti-yong* model is idealistic, while Tiantai's and Zhu's are nonidealistic. Moreover, Ziporyn does not discern Zhu's use of *qi* in a double sense. In addition to following Cheng's notion of *qi* (hereafter *qi1*), Zhu understood *qi* along the lines of ZHANG Zai 張載 (1020–1077) (hereafter *qi2*). While *qi1* is basically "material force," *qi2* is primarily "actualizing force." Functionally, the difference between *qi1* and *qi2* is "equivalent" to that between "material cause" and "dynamic cause" in Aristotle. As a result, in interpreting Zhu's understanding of the Taiji Diagram, Ziporyn misses its "onto-cosmological" character. The oversight of the existence of *qi2* also affects Ziporyn's interpretation of Zhu's doctrine of unifying Nature and emotions in mind (see 263). Given Zhu's definition of mind as "vividness of *qi*" (*Zhuzi Yulei*, 85), it is *qi2*, rather than *qi1*, that primarily functions as the dynamic power in actualizing Nature into emotions. Finally, there seems to be no textual evidence to support Ziporyn's identifying Zhu's *Li* as "possibility" or "compossibility." It is therefore problematic to construe Zhu's idea of the simultaneous oneness and manyness of *Li* in terms of the thesis that "The possibility of A is the compossibility of A with all other things" (256). In view of Zhu's *Li* as "the underlying reason why things are," it should be replaced with the thesis that "The ground of possibility of A is the ground of compossibility of A with all other things."

In the final chapter, entitled "Monism and the Problem of the Ignorance and Badness in Chinese Buddhism and ZHU Xi's Neo-Confucianism," Makeham mainly argues that in contrast to Chinese Buddhism, "ZHU Xi was able to reconcile the origin of badness with a monistic ontology in such a way that it provided a more compelling case for affirming the phenomenal world, the life-world, as the ground for ethical practices" (278). In reaching this goal, Makeham shows that Zhu's solution to the problem of badness in terms of *qi* and psychophysical staff resulted from his understanding of the Taiji Diagram along the lines of the doctrine of "One Mind Two Gateways" in the *Dasheng Qixin Lun* 大乘起信論 (*Treatise on Giving Rise to Faith in the Great Vehicle*). He then remarks that in Chinese Buddhism, the *Dasheng Qixin Lun*, Huayan, and Tiantai Off Mountain were alike in maintaining the externality of ignorance to Pure Mind, and hence failed to solve the problem of the origin of ignorance, whereas Tiantai Home Mountain, in seeing ignorance as internal to Reality, provided an "inclusive monist" solution to this problem. In conclusion, Makeham asserts that Zhu's "position bears close affinities with both (1) the Off Mountain thesis that the locus of badness is

in phenomena, not in *Li*; and (2) the mutual entailment of *Li* and phenomena in the Home Mountain nature inclusion thesis, as well as its attendant affirmation of the phenomenal world” (306). This sheds new light to the understanding of the nature of Zhu’s solution from a Buddhist perspective.

Critically, one might wonder why Makeham characterizes Zhu’s ontology as “*li-qi* polar monism” (321). Zhu’s thesis of *Li*’s preexistence over *qi* implies that his *ontology* is rather “*Li*-monism.” One surely agrees with Makeham’s observation that in Zhu, “it is by virtue of *li* that *qi* is able to transform into all kinds of phenomena” (314). However, it is the due task of Zhu’s *cosmology* to address this process. Certainly, recalling Zongmi 宗密 (780–841) is helpful. Nevertheless, one might rather focus on his cosmogony. Here Zongmi asserted that Taiji is the beginning of the *qi*’s taking form, and “[a]s soon as *yin* [陰] and *yang* [陽] blend together, they are able to engender and bring [all things] to completion” (*Inquiry into the Origin of Humanity*, trans. by Peter Gregory [Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1995, 140]; my italics). Zongmi further saw the human being as resulting from an endowment of *qi* and psychophysical staff. These ideas might have influenced the rise of Zhu’s cosmology and his tracing the origin of badness in the human being’s *qi* and psychophysical staff. Within the Confucian tradition, Zhu blamed Mencius for lacking the concept of endowment of *qi* and psychophysical staff, and thereby failing “to develop an account of the origin of badness” (335). However, Zhu also departed from Zongmi’s Buddhist “cosmogony” to a Neo-Confucian “onto-cosmology.” Ontologically, he rejected Zongmi’s identification of True Mind as the origin of all things. Cosmologically, he saw the origin of *qi* in *Li*.

All in all, my critical reservations should not lead to any depreciation of this volume. On the contrary, they rather demonstrate its rich potentiality in provoking thought. In bringing Western scholarship on Zhu’s philosophy and Buddhism into an advanced scale, it will greatly benefit future studies on related topics.

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