
*T*ime in Wang Fuzhi's Philosophy of History

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*"In every era the attempt must be made anew to wrest tradition away from a conformism that is about to overpower it."*¹

Wang Fuzhi 王夫之 (1619–1692) might not thematically address the concept of time. One searches his works in philosophy of history in vain for any systematic theory of time. Nonetheless, the concept of time plays an important role in his historical thought. Wang regarded *Dao* as dynamic, and employed the term "time" in most of his works.

I view Wang as the only genuine philosopher of history in premodern Chinese philosophy. Nobody before him had examined the role played by time in historical thought. Although a premodern thinker, Wang spent his whole life *cherche le temps perdu*. His interest in the past lay in seeking a better future for Chinese culture. Indeed, Wang claimed, "If one only sticks to the past and cannot create something new daily, then even though one is still there, one is already dead."² His notion of continuity should give us pause—living in a postmodern age in which vacant rapture reigns. What was the concept of time operative in Wang's philosophy of history? It will be instructive to compare his concept of time with that of

the ancient Greek Pythagoreans. Such a comparison will highlight the *topos* of Wang's concept of time, as well as its limits.

Revitalising Chinese Culture

Wang Fuzhi felt he lived during an unbearably tragic time in Chinese history. The end of the Ming dynasty signified for him not just the end of a dynasty, but the decline of Chinese culture. The Manchu conquest of China spelt the ruin of Chinese culture. While reflecting on the decline of the Han regime, Wang began to think about reconstructing Chinese culture. His first step in this effort was to return to the classics. Habermas has written, "Within a traditional context marked by catastrophe, the substrate of written signs is the only thing that survives corruption. The text is often damaged and fragmented so that it denies any access to interpreters in succeeding generations. But, the signs last—matter survives as the trace of a spirit that has vanished."³ Wang thus wrote classical commentaries, and the classic he concentrated on was the *Yijing* 易經 (*Book of Changes*). Starting with his *Zhouyi bisu* 周易稗疏 (*Minute Annotations on Zhouyi*) when he was thirty, Wang wrote six works on the *Yijing*⁴ over a period extending some forty years. In particular, the *Zhouyi wai zhuan* 周易外傳 (*An Unofficial Commentary on Zhouyi*) signified the maturation of his philosophy. Clearly, Wang believed the *Yijing* contained resources for revitalising Chinese culture.

Yijing: Root of Time and History in Chinese Culture

Wang Fuzhi's studies of the *Yijing* were concerned with natural philosophy, not history. Yet, his notion of time in nature provided a context for grasping the role of time in history. Wang's philosophy of nature was the starting point for his historical thinking, and for him history was *entre le temps et l'éternité*; hence, his philosophy of history was closely related to his philosophy of nature: "Dao is nowhere; for granting a place to a thing, it localises itself. Dao has no substance; for completing events, it substantiates itself."⁵ Mou Zongsan 牟宗三 pointed out that, for Wang, "History was inseparable from Dao. Dao was immanent in history."⁶

Wang Fuzhi produced his *Yijing* hermeneutics in response to Song *Yixue* 宋易學, that is, *Yijing* studies conducted in the Song dynasty. For example,

Shao Yong 邵雍 (1011–1077) had developed an icon-numerological approach to the *Yijing*. Wing-tsit Chan wrote, "Shao's fundamental concepts are three. First, there is the supreme principle governing the universe. Second, these principles can be discerned in terms of numbers. And third, the best knowledge of them is the objective, that is, viewing things from the viewpoint of things."⁷ Later, Zhu Xi 朱熹 undermined the icon-numerological approach in his exegesis of the *Yijing*. Mou Zongsan commented, "Zhu ... did not interpret the *Yijing* in terms of icon-numerology."⁸ Because of Zhu's eminence in Neo-Confucian orthodoxy, Shao's contribution was marginalised and the moral-metaphysical reading of the *Yijing* prevailed. Though Wang was critical of Shao's study of the *Yijing*, he was not satisfied with Zhu's approach either. In order to fill out Zhu's account, Wang emphasised the equal importance of numerology and philosophy in his exegesis,⁹ and thus reincorporated the mathematics of the *Yijing*. Wang argued for this balance on the basis of the roots of the *Yijing*, declaring, "The cosmos shows imagery. Accordingly, the Sage produced the *Yijing*.... The world is full of imageries ... thus, the *Yijing* aims at working out its organising principles."¹⁰ Along this line, Wang followed Shao, for whom, "universal operation, or Change, is due to spirit, which gives rise to number, number to imagery and imagery to things. The whole process works according to principle and is natural."¹¹ Wang made the further claim, "Imagery is the constant in the utmost sense.... Number is the changeable in the utmost sense."¹² Tang Mingbang 唐明邦 commented, "Wang Fuzhi understood the relationship between imagery and number as that between unchangeability and changeability of things."¹³ Clearly, for Wang, imageries were the basic units, whereas the transformations among these units were represented by calculations. Yet, he also stressed, "Although imageries are the unchanging in the radical sense, they cannot be exhausted. Although numbers are variable in the radical sense; they can form patterns."¹⁴ Change persists in the unchanging, and the unchanging persists in change. Apart from change there is no changeless, and vice versa. Moreover, the inexhaustibility of change did not exclude the rationality of development. Cosmic change was a creative process, for cosmic change would ceaselessly bring new phenomena into existence, so the cosmic process would be eternally innovative. As to the general pattern of change, one would discover that

the cosmic movement was *circular*. Historically, Wang inherited this idea from Zhang Zai 張載.¹⁵ But, Wang added that, “The numbers of Heaven and Earth represent the gathering and the diffusion [of the *Qi* 氣]. In reality, it is in equilibrium.”¹⁶ This thesis points to Leibniz’s principle of the conservation of force.¹⁷ Furthermore, Nietzsche’s assertion that, “The law of the conservation of energy demands *eternal recurrence*” well illuminates Wang’s claim that “the principle of recurrence ... is the ground for the eternity of the cosmic becoming.”¹⁸ Wang also characterised Heaven as a Great Sphere.¹⁹ Generally, Wang regarded the possibility of recurrence as essential to the *Dao*,²⁰ so he declared, “Becoming recurrently, there is no beginning nor ending for Heaven itself.”²¹ He thus made sense of the time of change in terms of the eternal recurrence of the cosmic becoming: “The Time of the *Yi* 易 (Change) is divided into sixty-four. The Variation of Time is divided into three hundred and eighty four. And, the Time of Variation is divided into four thousand and eighty-six.”²² “The Time of the *Yi*” is represented by the sixty-four hexagrams. This is the product of the self-multiplication of the eight trigrams. Furthermore, “the Variation of Time” is represented by the three hundred and eighty-four *yao*.²³ This is the product of the sixty-four hexagrams and the six constituent *yao*. The number of the Time of Variation should be four thousand and ninety-six, rather than four thousand and eighty-six. (I detected a printing error in the *Shi guangzhuan* 詩廣傳 (A General Commentary on the Book of Poems), for in the *Zhouyi waizhuan* Wang had spoken of four thousand and ninety-six.²⁴ The latter figure expressed the product of sixty-four squared. Previous scholars did not notice this error. Even Ji Wenfu 嵇文甫 quoted this passage from the *Shi guangzhuan* without modification.²⁵) How is one to make sense of these numbers? In the *Zhouyi waizhuan*, Wang wrote: “The trigrams consist of eight. They go and come among the sixty four [possibilities]. Their actions cover three hundred and eighty-four [possibilities]. They can reach four thousand and ninety-six [possibilities]. All of them have the *Taiji* 太極 (the Great Ultimate).”²⁶ Each of these figures represented a different possibility of Change. The latter were representations of Time. The possibility of the Time of Change and of the Time of Variation was given in Wang’s notion that *Dao* is dynamic. Each of these figures represented different modes of *Yi*. But, why did Wang arrive at the square of the sixty-four hexagrams?

Dualism and Monism of Change

Under the influence of Zhang Zai, Wang held to the principle of duality. According to Zhang, “The *Taiji* is one thing but has two aspects.”²⁷ As Zhang’s disciple, Wang admitted the universality of the principle of duality. But, while Zhang’s idea of duality was spatial and structural, Wang’s understanding of duality was temporal and dynamic. Consequently, he felt moved to square the sixty-four hexagrams in light of the principle of duality. Still, since the *Taiji* was always One, Wang claimed that, “Time points to the eternity of Heaven”,²⁸ and that the sequence of the cosmic becoming could be best represented by numbers. Herein lay the origin of the concept of the Time of Change. In this context, Wang claimed, “One who intends to project necessity onto nature has to turn to numbers for help.”²⁹

Clearly, Wang was conscious of the existence of a dimension of eternity. As the realm of necessity, this dimension was “*supra*-historical”. Wang stated, “In reality, if one understood the essence of the historical, of life and death, of being and nonbeing, then one would agree that there is no difference between the early and the late!”³⁰ Certainly, given Wang’s thesis that “There is no difference between the early and the late in the case of Heaven,” one might wonder whether he would, ultimately, have eliminated the possibility of time.³¹ Given the eternity of the *Taiji*, how was “the time of nature” possible? However, Wang also regarded the *Taiji* as a dynamic process, saying, “When there is event, there is time.”³² Consequently, “The distinctions between the present and the past, the beginning and the end, form the framework by which people can give a temporal order to their cognition.”³³ In this sense, “The distinction between the early and the late constitutes rather the ground for human cognition.”³⁴ Apart from events there is no *Dao*; hence, apart from the time of events there is no Time of Change.

Pythagorean Reflections

Klaus Held points out that, in exploring “the primordial dimension of time”, the Pythagoreans started with the concept of relation. In particular, in developing the thesis that “Time is the ‘number of the movement

according to Earlier and the Later', the Pythagoreans saw 'Two-in-One' as a 'primordial relationship'.³⁵ What was "Two-in-One" as a primordial relation? Held states, "The Two 'stand in a relationship', means: they do not exist besides each other without any relationship, but belong together. So, they form such a unity, in which the Two, though related to each other, never override the other. A relationship is a unity. The many, in our case, the two, at the same time hold together with each other. Such a unity of the two can be expressed in German by the term 'ein Paar' ('a pair'). The corresponding also works by the expression 'a dozen' for a set of twelve elements. This kind of concept can be found in other languages too."³⁶ In Wang's philosophy of time, one finds a counterpart of Held's thesis. Wang introduced the thesis of the unity of the two, "the two different things united into one,"³⁷ declaring that, "The movement of going and coming ranges among the twelve states."³⁸ Generally, "Despite the myriad ways of change in the world, all of them are subsumed in the two extremes. The two extremes originate in their accord."³⁹ The two extremes of course were yin and yang,⁴⁰ the interplay of which constituted the basic nexus of Change. Accordingly, Wang understood the interplay between yin and yang to be grounding the possibility of time. As Held points out, in Pythagoreanism "there is in fact a nontemporal meaning of 'the earlier and the later' from which at the same time the temporal meaning results."⁴¹ Wang's yin and yang can be seen as a counterpart of such a nontemporal meaning of "the earlier" and "the later" in Pythagoreanism. While for the Pythagorean, "The Two-ness of the mutual reference, the earlier and the late ... is the beginning of the numerability of the movement," for Wang, without the interplay between yin and yang, it would be impossible for any number to represent cosmic becoming.⁴² This similarity helps us to understand Wang's thesis that, "There is no difference between the early and the late in the case of Heaven. The distinction between the early and the late constitutes rather the ground for human cognition."⁴³ Wang's intended meaning can be expressed, "Time is, deeply observed, as the Pythagorean primordial relationship 'Two-in-One', a determination of the In-Between, where soul and movement encounter each other."⁴⁴ Hence, Wang wrote, "The past is the correlate of my recognition. The future is the correlate of my consideration. The present is the correlate of

my thinking."⁴⁵ (Wang's "recognition", "consideration" and "thinking" would appear to parallel St. Augustine's "memoria", "expectio" and "intentio".⁴⁶ The difference is that, for Wang, time was not merely "subjective".) Time was grounded in the *primordial relationship of Two-in-One*, which consisted in the interplay between yin and yang; thus, time represented the order of cosmic Change. Still, for Wang it was necessary for mankind to participate in the cosmic becoming.⁴⁷ Both the Pythagoreans and Wang held that time is the meeting place for our mind and the cosmic movement. For both of them, "The origin of time lies where life and movement meet each other."⁴⁸ At this juncture, Wang could speak of the "Mind of Heaven and Earth". He stated, "For the Mind of Heaven and Earth, there is no moment in which it does not move, and there is no moment in which it does not reverse."⁴⁹ Furthermore, as the Pythagoreans see "movement as the nonidentity of the eternal change", Wang introduced the thesis that Change is a daily innovation,⁵⁰ announcing that, "The virtue of Heaven and Earth is the unchanging. So, cosmic becoming is a daily innovation."⁵¹ Significantly, the Pythagoreans thought the word "Now" pointed to "a gathering unity of a certain movement".⁵² Wang too grasped the primacy of the present, declaring that, "From the standpoint of the *logos*, the beginning of the cosmos is today, and the end of the cosmos is also today."⁵³ "The whole development is centred on today."⁵⁴

Despite his similarities with the Pythagoreans, Wang did not go far enough in relating his theory of the time of nature to astronomy, in which case he might have avoided his misguided reaction to Matteo Ricci.⁵⁵ So, though Wang could claim along with the Pythagoreans that the Time of Change was mathematically representable, his conception of mathematics was still too primitive. Furthermore, while the Pythagoreans emphasised the priority of number, Wang Fuzhi insisted on the primacy of time.

The above comparison shows that Wang reached "the primordial dimension of time in the Pythagorean sense". Time in this sense points to a sphere of *supra*-historicity. Nevertheless, the admittance of the sphere of *supra*-historicity did not force Wang to neglect the sphere of historicity. Rather, he continued to stress the inseparability between Heaven and man, noting that the eternal *Dao* manifested itself only by entering into the historical dimension. In particular, Wang stressed that, "The movement

of *Dao* aims at time.... That which grounds time is Change.... In terms of time, *Dao* becomes manifold."⁵⁶ Once again, the pairing of *supra*-historical nature and the historical human world was a logical consequence of the ontology of the *Taiji*. In compliance with the principle of duality, the sphere of *supra*-historicity must have a corresponding sphere of historicity. Accordingly, in addition to the time of nature, there must be historical time. So, Wang did not agree with Shao Yong's exclusively icon-numerological approach. Wang criticised, "Shao Yong's doctrine is mainly focused on the numerology of nature, but overlooks the transitions in human affairs."⁵⁷ For Wang, "If one wants to observe nature by following facticity, one should turn to imagery. If one expects to project necessity upon nature, one should turn to numbers."⁵⁸ Still, he recognised that, "When man tries to investigate nature with the help of numbers, he is already involved in an event."⁵⁹ That is to say, it takes human effort to grasp the *logos* of Heaven: "Imagery is revealed in the top-down manner, whereas number is given in the direction of bottom-up."⁶⁰ Importantly, Wang stressed that, "When there are [human] events, the problem of time comes forth. And, when there is time, there is the process of graduation."⁶¹ Accordingly, Wang had to shift emphasis to the time of history, for the emergence of Now signified the rise of time in the historical sense.

Time of Change and Time of History

One has to grasp Wang Fuzhi's concept of the Time of Change in order to understand the role of time in his historical thinking—not merely a historical time in the ordinary sense, but also in the spheres of *supra*-historicity and of historicity. Herein lay the most distinctive feature of Wang's concept of time. Since cosmic Change was a creative process, historical man was obliged to follow his cultural tradition and keep it flourishing. In accordance with the eternal cosmic becoming, a person should contribute to the survival of things in the world and particularly to enrich his own cultural tradition. For Wang, by looking to the prologue for the present, we can assist the present in bringing forth new manifestations in the future. The present was never an isolated point; there was always interplay among the past, the present and the future. So, despite his thesis

of the primacy of the present, Wang was aware that, without the past and the future, the present would be impossible. For this reason, he criticised the Buddhist doctrine of time. He wrote, "Something exists before, like the origin of the flow. This is called 'the past'. [But the Buddhist fails to realise that] it is still there. Something is about to come, like the destiny of the flow. This is called 'the future'. But, the Buddhist fails to realise that it is definitely coming. What is actually in presence is called 'the present'. [The Buddhist] calls it *ksana* (and compares it to the moment in cutting a string). But, [the Buddhist] fails to realise that the grasp of the past and the future belongs to the present. The present is not reducible to the *ksana*."⁶²

Critique of Buddhism

Wang Fuzhi posed the following challenge to the Buddhist doctrine of time: "If the past is entirely gone, whence does the present arise? If the future is not anticipated, where does the present go?"⁶³ Only when we realise that the past, the present and the future constitute an inseparable whole are we able to dismiss such a puzzle. Accordingly, while Buddhism and Wang both insist on the thesis of the primacy of the present, there is an essential difference between them: on the one hand, the Buddhist present was separated from the past and the future, on the other hand, Wang's present was inseparable from the past and the future. Moreover, since the Buddhist reduced the present to the *ksana*, he eliminated the present. For Wang, this doctrine implied that all three phases would be erased. Consequently, Wang rejected the Buddhist doctrine of time.

Wang Fuzhi's characterisation of the Buddhist doctrine of time is not unproblematic. In fact, the Old Yogacara School and Huayan 華嚴 developed doctrines of time similar to Wang's own.⁶⁴ To be fair, one might say that Wang's characterisation only applies to the Madhyamika concept of time. But, here we are mainly interested in the essential characteristics of Wang's conception of time. In sum, we must keep in mind the following thesis in Wang's doctrine of time: "The present must succeed the past. The two contain each other. Only when one volitionally memorises it would the past be kept. Otherwise, it would be lost."⁶⁵ In this sense, time constituted the ground for the possibility of historical continuity. However, one finds that for Wang—despite the temporal succession between the

present and the past—the historical continuity was vulnerable. This vulnerability of the tradition forced Wang to emphasise the importance of volitional memory and the action of keeping the continuity in an innovative manner. He reminded us that historical man had to observe the maxim, “What is to be done must continue the preceding. What is now being done has to take into consideration the later coming.”⁶⁶ This was Wang’s temporal interpretation of the *Yijing* thesis that, “To continue is virtue.”⁶⁷

Wang also criticised the state of Mindlessness (*acitta*), regarded by Buddhists as the enlightened stage of praxis, on temporal grounds: such a state lacked memory of the past or consideration of the future. Wang realised that for any creative continuation, “the occasion must be in the three phases of the past, the present and the future.”⁶⁸ However, this did not imply that one could act arbitrarily at any time. On the contrary, Wang stressed the importance of timing: if one were to take action at the wrong time, the result could be catastrophic. At this juncture, even if the original intention of the agent were good, it would not matter. In this way, the emphasis on timing was another essential characteristic of Wang’s concept of time.⁶⁹

Good Timing

According to Wang Fuzhi, “one who knows when is the right time can live a life of daily innovation without giving up custom.”⁷⁰ Generally, “When the time is yet to come, one has to wait for the right time. When the time is gone, one should act according to what is given at the time. If one acts at the right time, one can simply enjoy the time.”⁷¹ Specifically, even though political reform and revolution are a kind of necessity in historical development, they must be taken at the right time. That is why a radical ideology, like that of permanent revolution, is catastrophic—for it pays no attention to the difference in time. Though Wang agreed that, “it is only in terms of time that one can understand the nature of Change,” he added that all actions had to be taken with alertness to timing.⁷² And, he pointed out, “Those who can catch the occasion of Heaven are able to dwell peacefully without damaging things, and things would not hurt them in return.”⁷³ Consequently, for human action to be successful, the agents

must know the time of nature. When one acts with proper timing, one’s success will be in view. Only under such circumstances is historical continuity possible. In sum, Wang’s doctrine of timing is captured in the slogan, “When timing is not yet there, do not move.”⁷⁴

Wang Fuzhi regarded history as the concretisation of time, noting that history is more on the side of events and time is on the side of the *Li* (*logos*). The *Yijing* was the first Chinese text to recognise the importance of time, while the *Zizhitongjian* 資治通鑑 (*Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Governance*) was an important work dealing with history. Hence, Wang started with the writing of a commentary on the *Yijing*, and one of his two works in the philosophy of history concerned the *Zizhitongjian*. For Wang, apart from the *Li* there was no event; and vice versa; apart from time there was no history; and vice versa. So, he emphasised timing in his commentaries on the *Yijing*. At the same time, in stressing the role of timing and objective conditions in historical thinking, Wang explored the *Li* implicit in the events. For Wang, the continuity of a cultural tradition, even the survival of a people, required that they understand the time of nature and the timing of action. Blind actions could lead to catastrophic results. Therefore, in the *Du Tongjian lun* 讀通鑑論 (*Commentaries on Zizhitongjian*), Wang declared, “The teachings of the *Yijing* concern the most fundamental matters. The point is to emphasise the necessity of approaching the right time.... One might approach the right time by advancing. When time is available but one is already tired, one is not approaching the right time. One might also approach the right time by retreating. If time is past but one still insists on working on it, one is not approaching the right time.”⁷⁵

Concluding Reflections

At the outset, we raised the question, “What was the role played by time in Wang Fuzhi’s historical thinking?” Now we can develop a two-part answer. First, the interplay among the three time phases, that is, past, present and future, provides a context in which the continuity of history is possible. Second, when one “reviews a historical event, one should not focus just on the moral motivation of the participants, but also on the timing and objective conditions that brought forth such an event, in order

to reveal the necessity of the *Li* (*logos*)”—aptly pointed out by Tang Junyi 唐君毅.⁷⁶ In other words, “In understanding the *raison d’être* of a historical event and its historical value, it is necessary to approach it from the standpoint of global history, so that one can understand under what kind of timing and objective conditions it should have occurred, and what kind of value it should enjoy in the context of global history.”⁷⁷ With his doctrine of time, Wang Fuzhi could secure the autonomy of the historical judgment *vis-a-vis* the moral judgement, and argue for the primacy of timing and objective conditions over individual motivation in the understanding of any historical event. For Wang, time was not just one factor in historical thinking; it conditioned the possibility of historical thinking. Accordingly, the purpose of historical thinking was not, for him, moralistic. Rather, as Tang Junyi pointed out, “It can understand the whole situation of the time, in order to evaluate the consequences of the success or failure of an event. The point is to check whether it was proper in timing and action.”⁷⁸ Finally, for Wang, even in history, nothing was set in stone and permanent. There was no universal law governing the development of history. The idea of an unconditional pattern of historical development was for him an impossible dream. This was not to deny the rationality of historical development; it was to insist that the rationality must result from the examination of historical events. In other words, apart from the historical events themselves, there would be no rationality. Historical development was not subject to any atemporal deterministic law. Generally, Wang’s concept of the Time of Change signified that reality was always in the making.

For Wang Fuzhi, time involved at once *supra*-historical and historical time; it also displayed a top-down movement from the *supra*-historical to the historical. At first, the imagery was manifested in nature. Having seen the imagery, man tried to represent it in terms of numbers. This effort gave rise to the calendar as well as the laws of nature. Number and imagery both had to be acknowledged—if just for the sake of survival. More basically, they served as revelations of the *Li*. And, since cosmic Change was a creative process, mankind had to live in the manner of daily innovation. Thus, the Time of Change made historical continuity possible, and Wang’s concept of continuity was more than just the idea of “keep on going”.⁷⁹

Yet, while maintaining that the historical process was a daily innovation, Wang showed appreciation of “the revolutionary moment in the course of history”.⁸⁰

Wang Fuzhi was not a historian, yet he produced two major works in the philosophy of history: the *Du Tongjian lun* and the *Song lun* 宋論 (*On the Song Dynasty*). What was his purpose in writing these volumes? As Walter Benjamin wrote in his *Theses on the Philosophy of History*, “Nothing that has ever happened should be regarded as lost for history.”⁸¹ Wang Fuzhi during a precarious moment for Chinese culture also believed that, “the past carries with it a temporal index by which it is referred to redemption.”⁸² This is the sentiment that, “Historiography is important, for the reason that it narrates the past for the sake of the future.”⁸³ The question of redemption (*Rettung*) underlay Wang’s life work, whose “dialectical” approach also reminds us of Benjamin’s assertion that, “The dialectician can’t see history as anything other than a constellation of dangers that he is always ready to ward off as he follows its development in his thinking.”⁸⁴ For the sake of redeeming his cultural tradition, Wang needed to go back to the primordial relationship “Two-in-One” as the primordial force of reactivation, and at the same time to consider the problem of the right timing in action. As a consequence, time was, not only the dynamic of historical continuity, but also its condition of realisation.

Notes

1. Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), 255. (Hereafter: *Illuminations*)
2. Wang Fuzhi 王夫之, *Chuanshan quanshu* 船山全書 (*Complete Works by Wang Chuanshan*) (Changsha: Yuelu Shuju 1988), vol. 12, 434. (Hereafter: CS)
3. Jurgen Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, trans. Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987), 165.
4. The other five include: *Zhouyi kaoyi* 周易考異, *Zhouyi waizhuan* 周易外傳, *Zhouyi daxiangjie* 周易大象解, *Zhouyi neizhuan* 周易內傳, *Zhouyi neizhuan fail* 周易內傳發例.
5. Wang Fuzhi, *Du Tongjian lun* 讀通鑑論 (*Commentaries on Zizhitongjian*) (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1975), 1115.
6. Mou Zongsan 牟宗三, *Shengming de xuewen* 生命的學問 (*The Knowledge of Life*) (Taipei: Sanmin Shuju, 1970), 179.

7. Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), 481.
8. Mou Zongsan, *Zhouyi de ziran zhexue yu daode hanyi* 周易的自然哲學與道德函義 (*The Natural Philosophy of the Book of Changes and its Moral Implications*) (Taipei: Xuesheng, 1988), 118.
9. Cf. Shao Hanming 邵漢明, *Chuanshan yixue yanjiu* 船山易學研究 (*Studies on the Yijing by Wang Chuanshan*) (Beijing: Huaxia Chubanshe, 1987).
10. CS, vol. 1, 1039.
11. Chan, op. cit., 481; here we replace "form" by "imagery".
12. CS, vol. 1, 994.
13. Tang Mingbang 唐明邦, "Wang Fuzhi on the Unchanging and Change", in *Wang Fuzhi bianzhengfa sixiang yinlun* 王夫之辯證法思想引論 (*On the Dialectics of Wang Fuzhi*), ed. Shao Tsitfu 蕭蓬父 (Hubei: Renmin Chubanshe, 1984), 181.
14. CS, vol. 1, 994.
15. CS, vol. 12, 49ff.
16. Ibid., 434.
17. Cf. Chan Wing-cheuk, "Leibniz and the Chinese Philosophy of Nature", in *Das Neueste über China*, ed. Li Wenchao and Hans Poser (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 2000), 221.
18. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, trans. Walter Kaufmann and J. L. Hollingdale (New York: Vintage Books, 1967), 547; CS, vol. 12, 440.
19. CS, vol. 1, 658.
20. Ibid., 229.
21. CS, vol. 12, 306.
22. CS, vol. 3, 452.
23. CS, vol. 1, 562.
24. Ibid., 999; 1024.
25. Ji Wenfu 嵇文甫, *Wang Chuanshan xueshu luncong* 王船山學術論叢 (*Critical Essays on the Scholarship of Wang Chuanshan*) (Beijing: Sanlin Shudian, 1962), 104.
26. CS, Vol. 1, p. 1024.
27. Zhang Zai 張載, *Zhang Zai ji* 張載集 (*An Anthology by Zhang Zai*) (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1975), 48.
28. CS, vol. 3, 452.
29. CS, vol. 1, 1079.
30. Ibid., 1078.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid., 1079.

33. Ibid., 1078.
34. Ibid.
35. Klaus Held, "Zeit als Zahl", *Zeiterfahrung und Peronalität* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1992), 21.
36. Ibid., 19.
37. CS, vol. 1, 1027.
38. Ibid., p. 1110.
39. CS, vol. 13, 18.
40. CS, vol. 1, 1027; see also: CS, vol. 12, 411.
41. Held, op. cit., 17.
42. Ibid., 20.
43. CS, vol. 1, 1078.
44. Held, op. cit., 22.
45. CS, vol. 12, 404.
46. Cf. Saint Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. William Watts (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1912).
47. Cf. CS, vol. 1, 985.
48. Held, op. cit., 22.
49. CS, vol. 1, 229.
50. Held, op. cit., 22.
51. CS, vol. 12, 434.
52. Held, op. cit., 20.
53. CS, vol. 1, 992.
54. Ibid., 1005. See also: Shao, op. cit., 83.
55. Cf. CS, vol. 12, 459ff.
56. CS, vol. 1, 1112.
57. CS, vol. 12, 436.
58. CS, vol. 1, 1079.
59. Ibid.
60. Ibid.
61. Ibid.
62. Wang Fuzhi, *Shangshu yinyi* 尚書引義 (*Critiques on Documents Classics*) (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1962), 132. (Hereafter: *Shangshu yinyi*) See also Shao, op. cit., 84.
63. Ibid.
64. A treatment of this problem must be reserved for a future work.
65. *Shangshu yinyi*, 134.
66. Ibid., 132.
67. Ibid.

68. Ibid., 134.
69. Some scholars, for example, Ji Wenfu, noted the significance of "timing"; none, however, has linked it to the problem of historical continuity.
70. CS, vol. 3, 452.
71. Ibid.
72. CS, vol. 12, 136.
73. *Du Tongjian lun*, 50.
74. *Du Tongjian lun*, 71; see also Chi, *op. cit.*, 150.
75. *Du Tongjian lun*, 179.
76. Tang Junyi, *Zhongguo zhexue yuanlun: Yuanjiao pian* 中國哲學原論：原教篇 (*Discussion of Chinese Philosophy: Fundamentals*) (Hong Kong: Xinya Yanjiusuo, 1975), 656.
77. Ibid.
78. Ibid., 657.
79. Walter Benjamin, "N [Theoretics of Knowledge, Theory of Progress]," in *Benjamin, Philosophy, History, Aesthetics*, ed. Gary Smith (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 64. (Hereafter: *N*)
80. Ibid.
81. *Illuminations*, 254.
82. Ibid.
83. *Du Tongjian lun*, 156.
84. *N*, 59.