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Bridging the Gap: An Invitational Approach to Confucianism and Daoism

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Abstract

The idea of cross or multiculturalism in today's rhetorical scholarship is essential because it allows scholars to apply a critical perspective to traditional modes of rhetorical scholarship. Many contemporary scholars, such as George Kennedy, Xing Lu, Roberta Binkley and Carol Lipson have recently embraced a cross-cultural rhetorical perspective in their works. At the same time, other scholars have critiqued the traditional canon as too limiting and too reliant on notions of rationality, logic, antagonism and truth. Sonja Foss and Cindy Griffin provide one such critique of the Greco-Roman tradition by approaching the idea of rhetoric through an invitational lens that focuses on values of equality, immanent value, and self-determination, and seeks to use these values to de-center the Platonic/Aristotelian notion of rhetoric as antagonistic argument and persuasion. I want to consider the possibility that the underlying values offered by Foss and Griffin in their efforts to counter Aristotelian rhetoric productively resonate with the rhetorical visions developed in other ancient culture's rhetoric. More specifically, in this thesis I seek to explore the resonance between the values of invitational rhetoric and the rhetorical values and styles of two prominent ancient Chinese traditions: Confucianism and Daoism. I aim to show that Foss and Griffin's principles of equality, immanent value, and self-determination can be found within the ancient texts of China and serve as an unconscious reminder that the cross-cultural ideas influencing our rhetorical archives often times go unacknowledged.

Bridging the Gap: An Invitational Approach to Confucianism and Daoism

by

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M.A., Syracuse University, 2013

Master's Thesis

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Introduction

Contemporary rhetorical scholars have recently embraced a cross-cultural rhetorical perspective in their work. George Kennedy argues rhetorical scholars must “go beyond the Greco-Roman canon to examine the rhetorical nature of communication in non-Western cultures” (Kennedy 220). Alongside Kennedy, Xing Lu uses the term “multi-cultural rhetoric” to describe the phenomenon of looking beyond individual cultural lenses in order to see rhetorical traditions as “traditions”, instead of centering all traditions around one tradition (Lu 13). She emphasizes the importance of *other* rhetorical traditions by focusing on ancient cultures. In the same regard, Carol Lipson and Roberta Binkley write, “the western world has canonized Aristotelian/Platonic rhetoric as Rhetoric, with its sanctioned principles, goals and conventions. But recent scholarship increasingly recognizes the need to extend the historical understanding of rhetoric in a variety of ways” (Lipson & Binkley 1). All of these authors imply that relying on Greco-Roman standards for rhetorical training and scholarship alone is problematic and contemporary scholars should look to other cultures and traditions for rhetorical insight.

The idea of cross or multiculturalism in today’s rhetorical scholarship is essential because it allows scholars to apply a critical perspective to traditional modes of rhetorical scholarship. Even today, we still look to Greco-Roman canons for a “classical” understanding of rhetoric and utilize Aristotelian logic to validate or substantiate rhetorical claims. I argue that there is a need for contemporary rhetorical scholars to expand beyond “traditional” (Greco-Roman) modes of rhetorical understanding. If we, as scholars, limit ourselves to the perspectives and assumptions of a single rhetorical

tradition, we limit our own potential for academic growth. The best way to look beyond the limitations of a single culture's viewpoint is to question the assumptions and canons that hold the culture's communicative tradition together.

Rhetoricians and historians are not the only scholars who find the Greco-Roman tradition difficult. Other scholars have critiqued the traditional canon as too limiting and too reliant on notions of rationality, logic, antagonism and truth. Many of these challenges begin by noting the ways the Greco-Roman tradition reifies traditional masculine assumptions including the idea that persuasion involves "proving" that one side is right through the "force" of the better argument. Sonja Foss and Cindy Griffin provide one such critique of the Greco-Roman tradition by approaching the idea of rhetoric from a perspective influenced by feminist philosophy. Foss and Griffin's concept of invitational rhetoric focuses on values of equality, immanent value, and self-determination, and seeks to use these values to de-center the Platonic/Aristotelian notion of rhetoric as antagonistic argument and persuasion.

Historians such as Kennedy and Lipson have undertaken parallel projects to contemporary theorists like Foss and Griffin and this thesis seeks to intervene in the space between these parallel projects. Ultimately, I want to consider the possibility that the underlying values offered by Foss and Griffin in their efforts to counter Aristotelian rhetoric productively resonate with the rhetorical visions developed in other ancient culture's rhetoric. More specifically, in this thesis I seek to explore the resonance between the values of invitational rhetoric and the rhetorical values and styles of two prominent ancient Chinese traditions: Confucianism and Daoism. Before turning to a more detailed

discussion of these traditions and the resonances I seek to explore, it is useful to consider the concept of invitational rhetoric more carefully.

What is Invitational Rhetoric?

Aristotelian thought teaches us that rhetoric is one's ability to find the available means of persuasion in any given situation (Bizzell 181). This conceptualization of rhetoric structures the way contemporary rhetorical culture is studied and further added to. Sonja Foss and Cindy Griffin offer a different perspective that depicts rhetoric as a form that reduces the imposing nature of persuasion to its a priori form of offering an invitation. The first step of any interaction is an invitation to engage and it is not until the invitation occurs that persuasion takes root. Thus, *invitational rhetoric* (IR) serves to reduce the role of a speaker to the initial invitational for interaction so as not to oppress an audience.

Foss and Griffin introduce the idea that the classic Aristotelian definition of rhetoric as persuasion implicitly displays patriarchal bias: "interaction processes have typically been characterized essentially and primarily in terms of persuasion, influence, and power" (Foss & Griffin 2). These interaction processes are constantly occurring and are characterized by, according to Foss and Griffin, the assumption that humans are on this earth to alter their environment or to have power and influence over the interactions of others. Seeing this type of communication as oppressive, Foss and Griffin utilize feminist theory to identify invitational rhetoric as an "invitation to understanding as a means to create a relationship rooted in equality, immanent value, and self-determination" (Foss & Griffin 5). Through an invitational lens, the classic "means to an end" changes so that the "means" become the "end" and the process of inviting an audience to understand a message

becomes the speaker's only goal. This provides an audience security from the oppression of persuasive speech as well as freedom from a speaker's influence. IR is a shift in thinking that respects and appreciates all perspectives, even if it is not what the speaker desires.

Invitational rhetoric is rooted in three core feminist values: (1) equality, (2) immanent value and (3) self-determination. Equality functions similarly in IR as it does in feminism; namely, IR "is based on a commitment to the creation of relationships of equality and to the elimination of the dominance and elitism that characterize most human relationships" (Foss & Griffin 4). IR seeks to replace the competitive and patriarchal dehumanization that accompanies relationships based on dominance with a mode of communication that elicits camaraderie. The hope is to diminish the role of the ego in conversation and open up new avenues for discussion.

Take, for example, a tourist in a foreign country; when a tourist explores a city that he or she has never been to, they will most likely *ask* for directions. If the tourist is demanding in their attempt to attain information, they will typically be unsuccessful. In this case, the tourist's dominant style of speech is off-putting and no local person would go out of his or her way to help a demanding and rude individual. In this situation, asking for directions implies that the tourist needs help from another person. When someone is in need of help, the last thing they want to do is act as if they are better than the person trying to help them. At the very least, the tourist should consider the local's opinion as equal to his or her own. By diminishing one's desire to direct or control conversation, they become more welcoming and less threatening. IR wants communication to happen in this manner: a communicative relationship where each participant does not try and control the thoughts of others, but rather recognizes the equality shared between speaker and listener.

IR's second component emphasizes creating communication that recognizes the immanent value of every living being. For Foss and Griffin, the essence of immanent value "is that every being is a unique and necessary part of the pattern of the universe and thus has value" (Foss & Griffin 4). IR teaches that *value* is something that cannot be socially constructed because it is innate to each individual and no person has the power to ascribe or ramify another person's worth and value in IR. Thus, a person should accept the value of others as something that is unique to them and cannot be infringed upon, thereby eliminating any desire to engage in communicative methods that seek to manipulate the thoughts of others. According to the principle of immanent value, a person should accept different perspectives as opportunities to learn and foster personal growth.

The final principle of IR is self-determination, a principle grounded in a respect for others. Foss and Griffin write, "self-determination allows individuals to make their own decisions about how they wish to live their lives, (and) involves the recognition that audience members are the authorities of their own lives and accords respect to others' capacity and right to constitute their words as they choose" (Foss & Griffin 4). This principle goads the speaker to harness their own agency in conversation and trust that others are in control of their thoughts and actions. The principle of self-determination sees others as their own expert and thus redirects the speaker's attention back to his or her own thoughts, questions, and ideas. As a result, with a conscious appreciation for the equality, self-determination, and immanent value of another, the rhetor becomes a being that does not judge others' perspectives, but rather appreciates them.

In the end, the speaker gains more from an interaction involving IR because it invites individuals to do more than just communicate and it allows each person to

acknowledge, respect, and appreciate more than just his or her own perspective. The hope is that by accepting others' perspectives instead of trying to control them, one's own perspective will evolve and reshape from having experienced many differing views. Ryan and Natalie emphasize, "both participants must recognize that in trying to reach understanding, they have to consider what they bring to the interpretive moment and yield assumptions and misunderstandings to better understand the other person's perspective" (79). It is only when a person chooses to see others' perspectives as an opportunity to learn and understand that rhetoric transforms into an art of understanding *and* persuading.

Since Foss and Griffin unpacked IR in *Beyond Persuasion*, the ripples have spread throughout multiple areas of rhetorical scholarship. For example, feminist rhetorical theory has cited IR in many recent works; one such example is a dissertation written by Laura Field on feminist pedagogy in composition studies (2011). IR has extended into performance study as seen in a recent dissertation by Diana Tigerlily on "fractal performativity" (2009) and also into classroom pedagogical practices with last year's thesis submission at the University of Iowa State, "Embracing civility, community, and citizenship: A qualitative study of multimodal college composition classrooms". The guiding message of IR is that no limit should exist forcing one to choose between persuasion and invitation as a rhetorical style.

Framing the Issue

Foss and Griffin's invitational rhetoric is appealing because it attempts to move away from traditional modes of understanding rhetoric by establishing a system based on an initial invitation and nothing more. IR is Foss and Griffin's attempt at avoiding the pitfall

of applying dominating and oppressive modes of speech, which they often criticize in their work. Despite their careful footing, Foss and Griffin still fall victim to a binary, which they created, that divides invitational rhetoric from Aristotelian rhetoric. If one is to try and use invitational rhetoric as a critique of Aristotelian logic, then they end up in a contradiction that is being critical of Aristotle while simultaneously telling people that they should not be critical, but rather be invitational. While the message behind invitational rhetoric is encouraging, it still comes across as antagonistic and contradictory in that by making their argument, Foss and Griffin undermine their ability to make the argument. Despite its shortcomings, one must not throw the baby out with the bathwater and assume that *nothing* in IR is valuable. Such a blatant disregard would also be falling into the trap of thinking in terms of oppositions and binaries.

Foss and Griffin's three core principles reflect a conscious desire to be released from the imposing nature of rhetoric *as persuasion*. Ekaterina Haskins writes, "We do need to challenge the perception of homogeneity and historical transcendence...a potentially fruitful approach would be to consider the canonical texts alongside each other as voices in a cultural debate that is situated in time and place" (Haskins 198). Take for example a culture such as ancient China, situated roughly around the 5th-3rd century BCE, approximately the same time period as ancient Greece. I aim to show that IR's principles of equality, immanent value, and self-determination can be found within the ancient texts of China and serve as an unconscious reminder that the cross-cultural ideas influencing our rhetorical archives often times go unacknowledged.

In the following two chapters, I argue that the principles of IR resonate with ancient Daoist and Confucian texts in particular places within each text: Confucianism identifies

with the principles of equality and self-determination, while Daoism finds its similarities to the principles of equality and immanent value. Although I am selectively specifying particular places where IR values are present, I recognize that I am simultaneously deflecting all the other places where they might also surface. Many times the principles of immanent value and self-determination are present simultaneously and work to supplement each other and catalyze readers' thought process. Therefore, despite the fact that IR values can be found within both ancient traditions in many coinciding locations, I am specifying that particular values are predominately found in particular places. This is neither a hindrance toward nor a catalyst for the resonance occurring between the two traditions, but rather a way to create clarity when comparing ancient Chinese culture and contemporary Western rhetorical theory.

When looking through the lens of a foreign tradition, one must understand and use the appropriate terms associated with that culture's tradition. Despite the term 'rhetoric' not appearing in any ancient Chinese communicative tradition, there were many terms that paralleled its meaning. Therefore, when I refer to ancient Confucianism or Daoism as being rhetorical, I am considering the teachings alongside what contemporary scholarship (influenced by Greco-Roman) defines rhetoric to be, not as what the ancient Chinese cultures thought *rhetoric* was. This is a necessary distinction to make for accessing the potency of a different culture's rhetorical tradition.

It is difficult to enunciate the exact relationship shared between ancient China and IR. Although the two are comparably similar, their foundations are rooted in and influenced by topological time periods that are virtually incomparable. Therefore, to say that IR "transposes onto", "is influenced by", or even "relates to" an ancient Chinese rhetorical style

would simply be an incomplete portrayal of the precise mutuality between the two. For my purposes, I will use the concept of resonance to help bridge the gap between the two traditions. The concepts in ancient Confucianism and Daoism, despite their topographical and topological positioning, view the world at a similar frequency, as if each tradition has a similar hum and even though they cannot hear one another, the ideas of Confucian and Daoist scholars resonate with Foss and Griffin's ideal invitational method of communicating.

My intent is to juxtapose Foss and Griffin's core principles of IR with the Chinese rhetorical tradition in order to promote the idea of cross-cultural rhetoric in contemporary scholarship. I look specifically at the Confucian and Daoist texts of Confucius, Laozi, Mencius, and Chuang Tzu in order to ascertain a unique rhetorical style among the ancient Chinese schools of thought. Rather than focusing on the pedagogical pursuit of persuasion, Daoist and Confucian traditions utilized a variety of rhetorical strategies ranging from metaphors and anecdotes to paradoxes and rituals in order to guide their audience toward an 'enlightened' conclusion. Using a variety of translations, I assert that the rhetorical styles found in ancient Confucianism and Daoism resonate with contemporary Western rhetorical concepts rooted in invitational rhetoric.

Chapter 1: Confucianism

Confucius grew up and lived in a country that was divided both politically and linguistically. Feeling the effects of this cultural divide, Confucius developed an unyielding belief in *ming bian*, or distinction when naming. Confucius believed that in order to create meaning one should consider distinction and clarity above all else. He sought to minimize the relationship between words and their meanings to a clean, lucid and efficient system that allowed speakers to honestly and ethically engage their audience. From the doctrines put forth by Confucius, many others were motivated to follow his system. For example, Mencius, another notable Confucian scholar, was an intellectual who became largely responsible for Confucianism's spreading throughout China nearly a hundred years after Confucius. He traveled on foot between the different feudal kingdoms and, with a rhetorical form slightly different from Confucius, convinced kings, servants, peasants and government officials that Confucianism was the morally correct path. Though the rhetorical forms of Confucius and Mencius were staunchly different, their styles exhibited similar rhetorical devices, many of which resonate with contemporary invitational rhetoric.

In this chapter, I look at Confucius's *Analects* and the *Mencius* to identify similarities in the two author's rhetorical style. Furthermore, I argue the same principles that give shape to both Confucius and Mencius's rhetorical style resonate with contemporary scholars Sonja Foss and Cindy Griffin's invitational rhetoric. It is important to focus on the rhetorical style of ancient Confucianism because style creates meaning and meaning, according to Confucius, must be distinct in that, "you persuade a man only insofar as you can talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea, (and)

identifying your ways with his” (Oliver 4). In Confucianism, style dictates the way toward *ming bian* and thus, the rhetorical styles of Confucius and Mencius provide valuable insight on one way of approaching the formation of a communicative tradition.

Neither the *Mencius* nor the *Analects* are considered to be written entirely by either scholar, but are instead agreed to be compositions that come from the writings and teachings of many of Mencius and Confucius’s descendants and disciples. While it may be difficult to discern a rhetorical style from translations alone because their historical accuracy is called into question, it is important to note that the actual Chinese characters of the texts are in themselves only one way of reading the text’s intended message. Thus, it is easy to overlook the fact that each translation has its own historicity and can be beneficial in that they provide a larger, more diverse perspectives on the heuristics behind the *Analects* and the *Mencius*. Considering that both the *Analects* and the *Mencius* were written in ancient Chinese characters, the primary texts for this analysis are direct translations of ancient Chinese documents. In this chapter, I will use some of the more notable translations for both the *Mencius* and the *Analects* by Simon Leys, James Legge, D.C. Lau and Raymond Dawson. Although looking at the stylistic decisions of Confucian texts through translations may not be a direct link to the historical words of the actual scholars, they do offer an access point to a tradition that is otherwise inaccessible. Translations do make it difficult to know whether or not the voice in the translation is the same as the actual voice of the historical figure, but it is still valuable to consider the topological significance of each translation as it was written historically.

My purpose in this analysis will be to identify the resonance occurring between the ancient Confucian style and two of Foss and Griffin's principles for invitational rhetoric: equality and self-determination. Even though Confucius and Mencius differed in their rhetorical form (Mencius's dialogues were anecdotal and analytical whereas Confucius's were more instructional), we can still find the same invitational values in the greater Confucian rhetorical style. The final section concludes with a summary of the two scholar's rhetorical style and a further reifying of the resonance occurring between Foss and Griffin's principles of equality and self-determination and the two Confucian texts.

Historical Context

Confucianism gained popularity during the Warring States period of China (480-422 BCE), when China underwent its first major unification (Fung 17). It was a time where power and influence were spread pervasively throughout many different feudal kingdoms, each of which had their own art of warfare, language and system for agriculture (Fung 17). As a result, many different dialects developed in these kingdoms making communication amongst Chinese people very difficult and ambiguous, even if they lived in a similar place topographically. It was not until the unification of China that Confucianism was mandated as the philosophical and moral system for institutionalized education. Once implemented, Confucianism addressed the issue of ambiguity in the Chinese language by mandating uniformity and focusing on crafting clarity in meaning and stability in an individual's ethical structuring.

Confucius lived during the transition between the Zhou dynasty and the Spring-Autumn period in China (751-479 BCE), which was a time wrought with political disorder

and uncertainty (Watson 179). According to the *Historical Records*, Confucius was poor in his youth, until he entered the government of Lu where by the time he was fifty, he had reached high official rank. As a result of political intrigue, however, he was soon forced to resign his post and go into exile. For the next thirteen years he traveled from one state to another looking for an opportunity to actualize his ideal for political and social reform. He, however, was unsuccessful and finally, as an old man, returned to Lu where he died three years later in 479 BCE (Fung 38). When Confucius died, it is recorded that his last words were regret that “none among the rulers then living possessed the sagacity requisite to a proper appreciation of his ethical philosophy and teachings” (Dawson v).

At the age of 52, Confucius was appointed chief magistrate of the city of Chung-tu, where he was later appointed minister of crime by the Duke of Lu because of his prominence in Chung-tu (Dawson xviii). It was there that Confucius bore witness to the moral decay of the Zhou government, which, in turn, motivated him to use his aristocratic background to reconstruct an orderly society that abided by the prescribed moral principles and cultural norms of Confucian doctrine. Even before composing the six classical texts of Confucianism, Confucius was credited as the first man in China to make teaching his profession, and thus popularize culture and education (Fung 40-1).

Another scholar, most notably remembered for his additions to the Confucian tradition, was Mencius. Robert Oliver writes of Mencius, “Among all the Confucian rhetoricians, Mencius was notable for his penetrating understanding of the subjectivity of the human mind...He declared “The Way of Truth is a great road. It is not difficult to know it. The evil is only that men will not seek it out” (Oliver 5). Whereas Confucius was a humble

man who did not enjoy speaking about issues of the divine, Mencius was noted for his boldness and declared that righteous virtuosity was the principle component in a rhetorical tradition; he writes, "In the world there are three things which command universal respect and honor. These are nobility, age and virtue. At court, nobility is most important; in the village, age is most important; in exercising influence over the people, these two cannot match virtue" (Oliver 5). It is my opinion that Mencius's brazen character was a result of the political time he lived in. Confucius being the first to produce Confucian doctrine was only concerned with creating an ethical system revolving around *ren* (benevolence) and *ming bian* and did not feel the burden of having to defend it. Mencius, however, came well after Confucian principles had been solidified and lived in a time where competing schools of thought were on the rise. Consequently, it is common for Mencius's character to be portrayed in a way that is solely focused on righteousness and virtue. While this is not necessarily inaccurate, it cannot be taken as a detailed description of Mencius. It is important to understand that Mencius's politically charged motivation to compete with other up and coming traditions on Confucianism's behalf naturally produced a more rational, argumentative and righteous character for Mencius. This must be kept in mind when making qualitative comparisons about *why* Confucius's rhetorical form is different from Mencius.

Mencius was the Confucian scholar most responsible for the spread of Confucianism throughout China. Originally named Meng Ke, Mencius was born to an aristocratic family in decline, which ended him up in poverty. This life factor contributed to why Mencius, like Confucius, became an educator instead of a politician. As a scholar, Mencius became linked to Confucius through his studies as a disciple of Tzu-ssu, who in turn was Confucius's

grandson (Fung 68). For a while, Mencius lived the life of a scholar at the Chi-hsia center of learning where most of the scholars living there were, according to the *Historical Records*, “ranked as great officers and were honored and courted by having large houses built for them on the main road. This was to show to all the pensioned guests of the feudal lords that it was the state of Ch’i that could attract the most eminent scholars of the world” (Fung 68).

Much of Mencius’s life was spent growing up in the Warring States period of China when “cultural values were articulated and divisive power struggles had come to an end...It was a period of tension between moral choice and utilitarian gains, of debates over philosophical thoughts and political formulas for the reconstruction of society” (Lu 170). This period in China’s history, characterized by strong divisive ideas, forced Mencius to constantly justify and defend Confucianism against up-and-coming competitive schools such as Legalism, Mohism and Daoism. As a result, Mencius spent his lifetime traveling to different states promoting Confucian doctrine, arguing with his contemporaries, and offering advice to kings.

Confucius and Mencius are considered to be two of the most influential Confucian scholars that lived, with Mencius coming nearly 90 years after Confucius. Though the two men’s philosophies and rhetorical forms differed, they both held *ming bian* to be the most important aspect of their teachings; “that is, things in actual fact should be made to accord with the implications attached to them by names” (Fung 41). The *Mencius* and Confucius’s *Analects* are two prominent texts in Confucianism that are exemplars of its rhetorical style. Whereas classic Western canons prescribe rhetoric as a form of persuasion, the ancient

Chinese tradition values subtlety in speech and goads its audience to discover their own conclusions about Chinese philosophy and morality.

It is important to note that ancient Confucianism did not start off as a highly esteemed system. In fact, it was only one of several competing schools of thought during the Spring-Autumn period (722-468 BCE) and the Warring States period of China (403-221 BCE) (Watson 179). It was not until Emperor Han Wu (156-87 BCE) institutionalized Confucianism as the official state teaching for philosophy and cultural ideology that it gained dominance (Fung 205). However, in the 1960's and 1970's, Confucianism came under attack by Western-educated Chinese scholars, which ultimately influenced Mao Zedong to ostracize it as a state ideology. As a result, Confucian texts were no longer taught to schoolchildren in Mainland China. Even though Confucian principles are still studied today, the question of accuracy and legitimacy has become an increasing concern due to the erosion of authentic Confucian scholars (Lu 154).

Philosophical Overview

Confucianism is particularly relevant to rhetoric due to its affinity for creating 'perfect' speech. It is important to note that my use of 'rhetoric' in relation to the Confucian system is not an attempt to prescribe Greek influences on the ancient Chinese tradition. I am rather using the term as a point of relation to help the reader make the connection between what 'rhetoric' is typically understood to be and how it functions in ancient Confucianism. Confucius believed that despite its idealistic and altogether unattainable nature, perfecting speech was a goal worth striving for. For Confucius, proper naming was the key to proper speech and separated Confucianism from the other ancient Chinese

traditions. Whereas, “Confucius emphasized the rectification of names and demonstrated an interest in the moral and aesthetic use of language...Mencius held a critical view of types of immoral speech, focusing on the affective aspect of argumentation” (Lu 155). In other words, Confucius was more focused on *ming bian*, while Mencius specialized in refining good human nature.

Both Confucius and Mencius focused on the morality of human nature in their ideology. Confucius emphasized three general principles that subsequently became fundamental building blocks for many other schools of thought in ancient China: (1) *ren*-benevolence, (2) *li*- moral rights and rituals, (3) *zhong yong*- the Middle Way. Though many other Chinese schools of thought share these concepts in their philosophical views, Confucianism was the first to institutionalize them.

In Confucianism, *ren* represents the primordial goal of human nature and was what Confucius considered to be the closest thing to ‘perfect virtue’. *Ren* has a variety of definitions (in the *Analects* it was defined 87 times) that include: moral excellence, benevolence, human heartedness, good judgment and gentility (Legge, Leys, Fung, Lau). For Confucius, *ren* was the accomplishment of a scholar whose values lie in the acquisition of knowledge and self-improvement. *Ren* is the base material essence of all humans and accounts for why “a father acts according to the way a father should act who loves his son; a son acts according to the way a son should act who loves his father...The man who really loves others is one able to perform his duties in society” (Fung 42). The result of proper *ren* is the attainment of not just proper virtue, but all kinds of virtue, which can be seen as a form of ‘perfect virtue’. For this reason, the hierarchical nature of the Confucian system

categorized its subjects according to their “moral sensibility, psychological state, and ability to relate to authority”; the morally superior ones were called *junzi* (gentlemen class) and the lower ones were *xiaoren* (base people) (Lu 158). Confucian followers strived to attain the ethical values of *ren* and, as a result, fueled Confucianism’s appeal among Chinese scholars and citizens.

Confucianism’s second principle was *li*, or propriety and decorum. Confucius believed that a morally righteous man would do what was expected of him using methods approved by the Confucian system. For Confucius, persuasion was achievable if people realized that “one is not egocentrically trying to impress upon them his own idiosyncrasies of belief and manner, but is genteelly speaking and acting according to established social values and methods, (so that) they willingly accept his views as being essentially like their own” (Oliver 4). Though Confucius was a man of high ideals, his practice was one of pragmatism and hard work. For Confucius, a theory is not good unless it can be applied to the real world. If a person wants to achieve *ren*, then the proper execution of *li* would be the means to do so. *Li* represents more than a set of rules to follow, it represents a way of life that leads to the realization of *ren*.

The final principle of Confucianism emphasizes the pursuit of balance, or the middle way (*zhong yong*). *Zhong yong* is the embodiment of justice, fairness and stability in the ancient Confucian system. It represents balance and harmony in the world and, according to Confucius, is the most difficult to attain; he says, “The Middle Way is the highest moral virtue and it has been lacking among the common people for quite a long time” (Lau 6.29.66). Confucius writes in the *Analects*, “In his dealings with the world the gentleman is not

invariably for or against anything. He is on the side of what is moral (appropriateness)” (Lau 4.10.73). A scholar who accepts *zhong yong* does not have a want for one way or the other. The person who possesses this trait “is generous without costing him anything, works others hard without their complaining, has desires without being greedy, is casual without being arrogant, and is awe-inspiring without appearing fierce” (Lau 20.2.159). For Confucius, a life of kindness, ritual propriety and balance defined the philosophy of a *junzi* and helped mold Confucianism’s rhetorical style.

When comparing the two scholars, Mencius and Confucius’s perspectives were not that different. Mencius, more than anything, served to enhance the preexisting Confucian principles. Taking into consideration both Mencius and Confucius’s topological position in the development of Confucianism, they should be thought of as dependent on and catalyzed by each other for the purpose of creating a more complete Confucian ideology. In his teachings, “Confucius condemned those glib individuals who spoke with eloquent and flowery words lacking in moral substance; (while) on the other hand, he stressed the need for a proper balance between *zhi* (simplicity) and *wen* (style)” (Lu 165). Consequently, Confucius’s rhetorical style shows a variety of methods for conveying proper and balanced meaning. To more clearly express this point, I would like to look at a quote from Confucius where he is asked about the nature of *ren*: “A craftsman who wishes to practice his craft well must first sharpen his tools. You should, therefore, seek the patronage of the most distinguished counselors and make friends with the most benevolent gentlemen” (Lau 15.10.133). In this quote, Confucius’s rhetorical style utilized the metaphor of the craftsman as a vehicle for teaching his disciples how to correctly follow the path of *ren*.

Mencius, like Confucius, rooted his philosophy (and thus his rhetoric) in the conceptualization of *ren*. Therefore, his writings emphasize appeals to the moral side of human nature, which is very frequently supported by the use of metaphors and analogies. Unlike Confucius however, Mencius attached a notion of the divine to *ren* and thus, much of his 'rhetoric' focused on its proper cultivation and the correct use of speech. This most likely served as a way to gain many followers throughout his travels, which eventually allowed Mencius to become a key figure in the development of Confucianism.

One of Mencius's most notable expansions to Confucius's teachings was incorporating a sense of divine power to *ren*. He argued that *ren* was the foundation on which *li* (rites), *zhi* (wisdom) and *yi* (righteousness) were built. Mencius's fervent belief in the Mandate of Heaven (*tian ming*) allowed him to logically connect *ren* to divine power by implying that "humans are spiritual beings capable of making moral choices"; he believed that humans are capable of rectifying themselves and choosing the moral path as an act of will (Lu 171-2). For Mencius, the key to rectification was the human heart; he says, "benevolence is the heart of humans and righteousness is their path" (*Mencius* 6a.11.267). *Ren* is cultivated within the human heart and thus, any act of *ren* is an act of the heart.

For Mencius, wisdom and benevolence are intangibly linked and demand that one embrace the role of human emotions in rational thinking and value it as a skill tempered through *li*. By properly attending to one's emotions, a Confucian follower can maintain their good morality and improve their *ren*. Mencius referred to this type of attainment as the Great Morale, whereby a man of Great Morale identifies himself with the universe and cultivates an understanding of *dao* that "pervades all between Heaven and Earth" (Fung 78).

Confucianism places a heavy emphasis on understanding the *dao* so that one can elevate their mind to a level in accordance with the proper cultivation of *ren*. Mencius would later label that same elevation of the mind ‘righteousness’ in order to motivate Confucian followers toward the “accumulation of righteousness; that is, the constant doing of what one ought to do in the universe as a ‘citizen of the universe’” (Fung 78). Though the two scholar’s go about discussing Confucian principles with different rhetorical forms, both adhere to the overarching principles of Confucianism and its essential goal: *ming bian*.

Confucius: The *Analects*

Simon Leys says, “The *Analects* is the only place where we can actually encounter the real, living Confucius” (Leys *xix*). Therefore, the best method of deducing a rhetorical style from the *man* Confucius is to look closely at his *Analects*. In this section, I will focus on Confucius’s use of style in the *Analects* to show the similarities between it and two of IR’s core principles: equality and self-determination. I will further break down the rhetorical style of Confucius’s *Analects* into three different rhetorical devices: (1) the use of juxtaposition to explain key concepts, (2) indirectness and ambiguity as a persuasive tactic, and (3) ritualization as a method of persuasion. The *Analects* frequently uses these three rhetorical devices in conjunction with each other and often, they are only effective because of the relationship they share. For the sake of simplicity, I will systematically move through each point as they have been listed, while pointing out instances of their nuanced and codependent relationships as they surface.

Confucius used the juxtaposition of ideas to explain key Confucian concepts in his *Analects*. He frequently placed opposite terms in direct contrast to one another so that a

moral and righteous path would be clearly visible. For example, “The Master said: A perfect man, I cannot hope to meet. I would be content if only I could meet a principled man. When nothing pretends to be something, emptiness pretends to be fullness, and penury pretends to be affluence, it is hard to have principles” (Leys 7.26.32). In this, Confucius juxtapositions value-terms to show that although perfection is unattainable, the principles that Confucianism associates with perfection can be achieved by distinguishing them from their abstractions (example: penury is the abstraction of affluence; recklessness is the perversion of courage).

An example of Confucius’s use of juxtaposition at work is, “The Master said: A gentleman (*junzi*) seeks harmony, but not conformity. A vulgar man (*xiaoren*) seeks conformity, but not harmony” (Leys 13.23 64). Here there are two juxtapositions: the first is between the *junzi* and the *xiaoren* and the second is between harmony and conformity. A *junzi* is supposed to seek harmony, while not following blindly, by expressing opinions and coming to mutual understandings; whereas a *xiaoren* is cowardly in the face of injustice and cannot achieve harmony because he is motivated only by self-interests (Lu 167). Confucius’s statement about the *junzi* and the *xiaoren*, however, could not have occurred without the preceding question, “Zigong asked: How does one deserve to be called a gentleman?” (Leys 13.20 63) This question allowed Confucius to engage with Zigong in a pedagogical way *because* he was asked a question. The fact that Confucius was asked a question in the first place justified his lengthy response. It is important to note that the *Analects* occur entirely in dialogue form because juxtaposition, as a rhetorical device, is best achieved with a dialectical style. In this way, the *Analects* functions juxtaposition to itself by placing Confucius the master and *junzi* in opposition to Zigong the disciple and

xiaoren. Through dialogue, Confucius illustrates the juxtaposition of moral and ethical concepts in order to achieve persuasion, while simultaneously crafting his disciple's *ren* through *li*.

Dialectical juxtaposition is a rhetorical style seen in many different culture's communicative methods and is not solely isolated to ancient China. In ancient Greece for instance, Plato's *Gorgias* portrays the character Socrates arguing with a few different Sophists over the value of rhetoric as a field of study and as a profession. He debates the subject matter of rhetoric's *ineffectiveness* with Gorgias and his student Polus, which culminates in a discussion between Socrates and Callicles (Bizzell 91,97-98). Although Socrates succeeded in showing the ineffectiveness of rhetoric, he did so in a way that used rhetoric to denounce rhetoric. Plato places rhetoric and dialectics in juxtaposition within a text that is itself a dialectical juxtaposition between Socrates and his opponents. Plato's *Gorgias* used dialectics to discuss the relationship between rhetoric and dialectic as a reversal strategy meant to put readers into a state of unawareness. It draws their attention away from the actual usage of rhetoric by verbally condemning it; it uses rhetoric to denounce rhetoric and it rhetorically persuades its audience that rhetoric is not persuasive. In a sense, by discussing rhetoric through dialectical juxtaposition, the character Socrates makes it difficult for an audience to focus on the instances of rhetoric's effectiveness because it is hidden within its own juxtaposition.

Juxtaposition, as a rhetorical strategy in the *Analects*, is interesting because despite the master-student dichotomy, it encourages followers to participate in conversation with their masters as well as encourages masters to appreciate the value of their disciple's

thoughts. Foss and Griffin label this type of care as the principle of equality: “one that is based on a commitment to the creation of relationships of equality and to the elimination of the dominance and elitism that characterize most human relationships” (Foss & Griffin 4). Confucius illustrates the connection between juxtaposition and equality by engaging with one of his disciples; “Zigong asked, which is the better: Zizhang or Zixia? The Master said: Zizhang overshoots and Zixia falls short. Zigong said: Then Zizhang must be the better? The Master said: both miss the mark” (Leys 11.16 51). The principle of equality functions on two levels in this example: the first being the actual conversation as a stylistic deployment in the *Analects*; the second being the equal worth of both Zizhang and Zixia as individuals. This exchange is a reflection of the Confucian principle *zhong yong* in that it critiques the nature of both Confucian students, labeling neither as superior. Even if one student was better than the other (i.e. Zizhang overshooting), the principle of *zhong yong* would not make that distinction.

Considering that this entire interaction takes place within the *Analects*, the nature of this conversation makes it easy to forget that the *conversation itself* is Confucius’s rhetorical style at work. The use of a dialogue unconsciously teaches readers to value the worth of all perspectives equally because it forces the reader to read the opinions of individuals other than the master. Confucius teaches the reader a valuable lesson in *zhong yong*, while still maintaining respect for the students participating in conversation. Confucius’s use of dialectical juxtaposition is an exercise in equality meant to invite readers to understand the underlying Confucian principle in their own way (which is based off their interpretation of Confucius’s interactions with his disciples).

Another of Confucius's rhetorical strategies was to implement ambiguity and indirectness (often times alongside the use of juxtaposition) to catalyze the reader's creative thought process. Confucius's use of indirect argumentation serves to guide his audience in a direction that, depending on his skillful deployment, brings the audience to the same conclusion as Confucius without him having to provide it. An example of this in the *Analects* is when Confucius says, "I wish to speak no more' The disciples were perplexed: 'But, Master, if you do not speak, how would little ones like us still be able to hand down any teachings?' Confucius replied: 'Does Heaven speak? Yet the four seasons follow their course and the hundred creatures continue to be born. Does Heaven speak?'" (Leys xxxi-ii) Confucius indirectly implies that the natural way (*dao*) will progress without Confucius's teachings, but he does so without ever fully answer the question presented. It is as if Confucius is trying to put the emphasis on what he is *not* saying.

The ambiguity in Confucius's *Analects* constantly provokes the reader to take several moments to reconsider what exactly Confucius is saying. This gives the reader a chance to rely on his or her own opinion as a source of legitimacy instead of being inundated with others' thoughts and opinions. Foss and Griffin define the IR principle of self-determination as allowing "individuals to make their own decisions about how they wish to live their lives, (it) involves the recognition that audience members are the authorities of their own lives and accords respect to others' capacity and right to constitute their words as they choose" (Foss & Griffin 4). Confucius catalyzes one's ability to act on their thoughts *because* he never fully explains himself.

When others are seen as experts who are making competent decisions about their lives, “efforts by a rhetor to change those decisions are seen as a violation of the expertise they have developed” (Foss & Griffin 4). Relying on an authority figure for information or instruction is no different than sitting in front of a television set absorbing the exterior influences of whatever mind-numbing program is currently playing; it allows for no stimuli that foster creative or subjective thought. The principle of self-determination is what makes a person turn the TV set off and redirect their attention back to their own thoughts and actions. By not forcing information on a person, the principle of self-determination encourages individuals to take hold of their own mind to allay the fear of losing one’s voice to the noise of the exterior world and the pressure of others’ thoughts.

The application of IR’s principle of self-determination in Confucianism creates a side effect: an appreciation of silence as a rhetorical strategy. In IR, for one to access a self-determined mindset, one must be free of the constant pressure and influence of others’ thoughts. Silence allows speakers to activate their self-determination by providing them with valuable void-space in conversation; space that is marked by a lack of verbal communication. Foss and Griffin use the works of Gendlin, Morton and Johnson to promote the idea of silence through their terms: *absolute listening*, *hearing to speech* and *hearing into being*; “In such rhetoric, listeners do not interrupt, comfort, or insert anything of their own as others tell of their experiences...Our advice, reactions, encouragements, reassurances, and well-intentioned comments actually prevent people from feeling understood...(by) speaking to listeners who do not insert themselves into the talk, individuals come to discover their own perspectives” (Foss & Griffin 11). These authors stress that the process of *absolute listening* requires silence in order to come to fruition.

Elias Canetti points out that the *Analects* makes significant use of the unsaid and articulates that the supreme virtue of humanity is marked in those that do not speak (Leys xxx). In a translation by James Legge, "Someone said (to the Master), 'Yung is truly virtuous, but he is not ready with his tongue.' The Master said, 'what is the good of being ready with the tongue? They who encounter men with smartness of speech for the most part procure themselves hatred. I know not whether he be truly virtuous, but why should he show readiness of the tongue?'" (Legge 5.4.1-2 174) In this exchange, Legge highlights Confucius's puzzlement over why the spoken word is so readily accepted as useful or as a mark of intelligence. In another translation of the same passage it says, "The Master said: What is the use of eloquence? An agile tongue creates many enemies" (Leys 5.5 19). In both translations, Confucius hints that what is good (*ren*) and what is eloquent are not necessarily correlated. He indirectly implies that one who is skillful with the tongue will "procure hatred", or will "create many enemies". Furthermore, one who makes enemies so easily cannot be on the path of *ren* because it betrays the prerequisite of benevolence toward humanity. For Confucius, "Clever talk and affected manners are seldom signs of goodness" (Leys 1.3 3). Confucius teaches his students, in an ambiguous manner, that eloquence can only arise as a result of having strayed from *dao*, for to be in accordance with the *dao* is to not focus on desires such as being eloquent or using flattering speech. From this example, one can see both Confucius's indirect style and his use of juxtaposition between "readiness of the tongue" and the proper cultivation of *ren*. As a result, silence becomes a valuable tool for the Confucian scholar because it adheres to *ming bian* by denouncing verbosity and focusing the reader's attention on what is unsaid and implied.

The third rhetorical device in the *Analects* is the use of ritualization as a means to persuade. Ritualizing as a rhetorical strategy is effective because it influences individuals on an everyday basis. It is not, however, an oppressive or external everyday influence, but rather a self-imposed and self-created one. IR would label this a 'self-determined' process of ritualization. For one scholar, "The (*Analects*) is primarily concerned about various means for ritualizing individuals in order to bring them into alignment with symbolic acts that reflect the true spirit of the Way" (You 432). For Confucius, rituals are necessary because they catalyze the reader's self-determination in their process of cultivating *ren*.

Ritualization has an embedded connotation implying that it is a dead process: one that requires no active thought, but rather mindless repetition. While in many cases this can be true, Confucius uses rituals in an alive and inventive way. His insertion of rituals functions as a challenge for readers to see if they are capable of applying themselves to something. In this example Confucius says, "The man of distinction is solid and straightforward, and loves righteousness. He examines people's words, and looks at their countenances. He is anxious to humble himself to others. Such a man will be distinguished in the country" (Legge 12.20.5 259). Although he provides the reader with the formula for improving oneself, it is left up to the individual to choose whether or not to adopt it. Even though there is only one proper way to cultivate *ren* and enact *li* (through the teachings of Confucius), there is still an inventive process that results from prescribing ritualized living. Confucius says, "A superior man may be made to go to the well, but he cannot be made to go down into it" (Legge 6.24 193). The choice is left up to the reader about what to do with a proposed ritual and it is the choice that makes the process of ritualization come alive for Confucius.

The choice Confucius gives to readers is catalyzed by IR's principle of self-determination. For example, in the very first line of the *Analects*, "The Master said: Is it not pleasant to learn with a constant perseverance and application?" (Legge 1.1 137) Why would Confucius begin his *Analects* with a challenge to the reader (a challenge IR would label as the principle self-determination) if not to provoke their thought process from the very start? It is Confucius's hope that the reader will take the challenge and apply it ritualistically to all of Confucius's teachings in the *Analects*. As a result, the reader comes up with his or her own interpretation of the Confucian principles. The ritualization that occurs throughout the *Analects*, in all its forms, is a self-imposed and self-created ritualistic process invoked by Confucius's appeal to both *ren* and *li*; in order to cultivate *ren*, one must subjectively create an understanding of Confucius's ambiguous style of teaching.

One of the most commonly seen ritualistic appeals in Confucius's *Analects* is an appeal to filial piety. In Leys's translation, "The Master said: To learn something and then to put it into practice at the right time; is this not a joy?" Confucius continues with, "A gentleman (*junzi*) works at the root. Once the root is secured, the Way unfolds. To respect parents and elders is the root of humanity" (Leys 1.2 3). From the very beginning, Confucius emphasized the role of constant perseverance, especially in regard to filial piety. A proper *junzi* self-imposes a ritualistic mind frame that always puts his family before his name. Furthermore, Confucius stressed that in order to complete the ritualization process, what is learned must be accompanied by either practice or application; in order for a ritual to *be* a ritual, it must manifest through some form of *doing* (i.e. using an appeal to one's family as a universal platform for refining the heuristics of proper ritualization).

For Confucius, a ritualized mind is one that hopes to improve *ren* and is habitually concerned about its relationships. In IR, the principle of equality functions as a way to strip down dominant methods of speech and elitism in human relationships so that subjects will place others before themselves in conversation. They say, “efforts to gain dominance and...power over others cannot be used to develop relationships of equality, so (IR) seeks to replace alienation, competition and dehumanization that characterize relationships of domination with intimacy, mutuality and camaraderie” (Foss & Griffin 4). In a sense, Foss and Griffin are prescribing a system of ethical behavior for structuring all human relationships. Just as Confucius stressed the need to cultivate proper *ren*, IR wants people to consistently apply a selfless perspective to improve the quality and openness of conversation. The desire to improve one’s *ren* and maintain positive personal relationships entices readers to actively want to apply the Confucian ethical system ritualistically.

Confucius relied on the process of ritualization because being a good and virtuous person was the primary concern of a *junzi*; “only through restoring the Way will the social rites prosper; only after the rites prevail will the disintegrated society come together again” (You 432). Instead of emphasizing fear or governmental might, Confucius elevated *li* as a rhetorical methodology to achieve peace and create *junzis*. Prioritizing *li*, however, cannot exist without emphasizing a process of ritualization. Confucius rhetorically implemented rituals into his teachings because they appealed to an individual’s character and ethical system.

Confucius also frequently used rituals as a way to prescribe moral behavior. For example, “Tsze-chang asked Confucius about perfect virtue. Confucius said, “To be able to

practice five things everywhere under heaven constitutes perfect virtue.” He begged to ask what they were, and was told, “Gravity, generosity of soul, sincerity, earnestness, and kindness” (Legge 17.6 320). This five-pronged prescription for virtue perfectly displays the connection between a person’s desire to improve their ethical heuristics and a methodology that ritualistically applies those ethics for personal improvement; “appropriate ritual acts function as heuristics to help an individual grow his good personality and guide him to practice what is ethically desirable in the society” (You 434). Confucius was able to make such distinct and concrete statements about morality because of his position as the ‘master’. Although other Chinese scholars used appeals to morality in their texts, the *Analects* is unique because no other Confucian scholar had the specific conditions that allowed Confucius to claim himself the master and face no opposition. Once the Warring States period blossomed, multiple schools of thought emerged on the political scene and thus, many “prophets” were reduced to arguing in public debates and forums because that is how society was progressing. The implications of Confucius’s teaching are highly unique and valuable because they represent a position that has long since become inaccessible.

Confucius’s use of dialectical juxtaposition, indirectness and ambiguity, and ritualization in the *Analects* implies that readers should grasp their own potential and embrace Confucian principles by applying them to their own methodology. IR’s principles of equality and self-determination attempt to eliminate dominance in speech and value listening as a way of respecting others’ ideas while, simultaneously, providing a platform for the free and open expression of ideas.

Mencius: *Mencius*

Mencius, coming nearly a hundred years after Confucius, was fascinated by Confucius's teachings and rhetorical style. He built off the influences of Confucius's teachings to craft his own unique form that helped spread Confucianism throughout Mainland China. Xing Lu writes, "If Confucius's place in Chinese history is comparable to that of Socrates in the West, the position of Mencius is often likened to that of Plato" (169). In a similar way to Plato's dialogues, Mencius approached matters very objectively in his dialogues and typically relied on syllogistic argumentation to explain his points. This was done mostly out of necessity, for if Mencius was not clear and concise with his rhetorical style, those who he was trying to recruit would most likely follow a different tradition. In this section, I will break down the *Mencius's* rhetorical style into three different rhetorical devices: (1) the dialectical juxtaposition of ideas with an emphasis on *bian* (argumentation) and rationality, (2) the use of metaphor and analogy to achieve ambiguity, and (3) an appeal to righteousness invoked by moral speech. Furthermore, I will focus on two of IR's core principles, equality and self-determination, in order to show the similarities between them and the Confucian style.

The *Mencius* utilizes dialectical juxtaposition in order to appeal to readers through rationality and a focus on *bian*. In the *Mencius*, Mencius is depicted as constantly traveling and spreading the Confucian philosophy through his dialectical encounters with a variety of people including scholars, commoners and kings. As a result, Mencius often adopted the role of the 'advisor' and made many of his points via rational argumentation that clearly

and logically explained himself to the many different types of people he encountered.

Consider this exchange:

1. The King said, 'I wish to quietly receive your instructions.'
2. Mencius replied, 'Is there any difference between killing a man with a stick and with a sword?' The King said, 'There is no difference!'
3. Is there any difference doing it with a sword and with a style of government?' 'There is no difference', was the reply.
4. Mencius then said, 'In your kitchen there is fat meat; in your stables there are fat horses. But your people have the look of hunger, and on the wilds there are those who have died of famine. This is leading on beasts to devour men' (*M* 1.3 4).

In this exchange, Mencius established juxtaposition on three separate accounts: the first between the sword and the stick as a method of killing, the second between the sword and government as a form of killing, and the third between the hungry people of the land and the gluttonous lifestyle of the king and his court. These juxtapositions simplify the distinction between what is right and wrong to a matter of 'this' or 'that'.

Mencius's dialogue with the king uses juxtaposition to set up a dichotomous thought experiment on the morality of killing. There is an embedded binary in this example that places the difference between killing a man with one's own hands and killing a man via governmental negligence in juxtaposition. The king's response implies that killing should not be subjectively discerned, rather killing can only be what it is: an act of barbarism that discerns rabid beasts from rational men. It is a king's job to clearly see the dividing lines

between what is right and what is wrong, what is acceptable and what is not. Knowing that the king would reply in such a way, Mencius's use of juxtaposition revealed his true instruction, which was that living in luxury as royalty while one's people die of hunger is no different than systematically slaughtering each citizen one by one. As a result, Mencius compared the king and his royal subjects to beasts who devour men.

Not having the luxury of embodying the role of the 'master' like Confucius, Mencius's position as an 'advisor' required a careful attention to the way he formulated thoughts. Therefore, in order to give the king good advice *and* not anger him to the point of having him executed, Mencius applied rational arguments in his dialogue with the king to clearly lay out the path of righteousness in an irrefutable way. Mencius's rational discourse serves twofold: first it, in a syllogistic way, lays out step-by-step why neglecting the hunger of the people is morally reprehensible; second, it allows the king to understand, in a non-threatening manner, that he is disregarding the value of his people by neglecting their hunger. This is an appeal to IR's principle of equality because it allows Mencius to draw a distinct line between moral and immoral behavior by highlighting the need for a king to value and respect his people's condition as equal to his own. Knowing that Mencius was right, the king could not rightfully execute him and thus, welcomed his council despite his bold use of language.

Foss and Griffin established the principle of equality so that it would apply to all types of human relationships. Equality, however, can only be achieved by eliminating the elitist and dominant types of speech within those relationships. Mencius, through his use of juxtaposition and rational *bian*, appealed to the principle of equality on behalf of the poor

and hungry people. The use of juxtaposition and rational *bian*, coupled with Mencius's brazen character and belief in righteousness, gives the *Mencius* an inviting and critically discerning rhetorical style. Mencius's style effectively enabled the king to see both the logic behind his poor decision-making as well as the lack of respect he had for the value of his people. Furthermore, whereas Confucius's *Analects* expressed the principle of equality through wise teachings and sayings, the *Mencius*'s dialectical style expresses it through stories that incorporate syllogistic dialogues meant to increase the affective charge on readers toward the characters in the story. In other words, Mencius's style was more focused on its appeal to potential followers, whereas Confucius was solely concerned with articulating his doctrine.

As a second rhetorical device, Mencius frequently used metaphors and analogies in order to shroud his message in ambiguity; therein forcing the reader to subjectively interpret his meaning. In the previous example, Mencius implied that the king's lavish lifestyle was like training beasts to devour humans; where the beasts represent those who indulge in luxury and devour humans by leaving them out to starve. Many times in the *Mencius*, metaphors and analogies are like jigsaw puzzles when it comes to understanding meaning. They must be carefully be pieced together so that the bigger picture can come into view. Here is an example, "If a man had a finger that was crooked, even if it was neither painful nor a handicap in his work, he would travel across the kingdom if he heard of a doctor who could straighten it" (Legge 880). Through the use of analogy, Mencius implies that man's obsession with perfection blinds him to the greater importance of 'things'. He continues by drawing the conclusion, "If a man's finger is not like those of other people, he realizes dissatisfaction; but if his mind does not operate like the minds of other people, he

does not feel dissatisfied.” In this, Mencius established juxtaposition between the way other people think and the way one should think in order to persuade the reader not to be distracted by small insignificant things, like a crooked finger.

The crooked finger analogy implies that the reader should subjectively create a worldview that does not rely on others’ opinions to assign value or worth. IR’s principle of self-determination wants individuals to trust that others are in control of their own thoughts so that they can focus entirely on developing their own opinion. It is a principle grounded in trusting others to conduct their thoughts in a responsible manner. In the *Mencius*, obsessing over a crooked finger is like worrying about the concerns of others; one can travel the world in search of a doctor or analyze every possibility for what another person might be thinking, but it is better to just accept the lack of control and focus one’s attention internally. Mencius glorifies the self-determined mind because it has a greater perspective on the relative importance of things and operates differently than a *xiaoren*’s mind.

Consider this exchange between Mencius and a fellow philosopher:

1. The Philosopher Kao said, “Man’s nature is like water whirling round in a corner. Open a passage for it to the east, and it will flow to the east; open a passage for it to the west, and it will flow to the west. Man’s nature is indifferent to good and evil, just as the water is indifferent to the east and the west.
2. Mencius replied, “Water indeed will flow indifferently to the east or west, but will it flow indifferently up or down? The tendency of man’s nature to do 'good' is like the tendency of water to flow downwards.

3. “Now by striking water and causing it to leap up, you may make it go over your forehead, and, by damming and leading it you may force it up a hill; but are such movements according to the nature of water? When men are made to do what is not good, their nature is dealt with in this way” (*M* 21.1b-3 127).

This dialogue beautifully portrays Mencius’s rhetorical style at work. Its dialectical juxtaposing of the two philosophers’ competing theories on the movement of water implies that when a person is forced to do wrong, it is like attempting to build a dam that makes water travel uphill. In the end, Mencius is the one who offers a metaphor that exemplifies the true nature of water: the natural downward flow of water is man’s natural tendency to do ‘good’. The water metaphor provides an interesting commentary on human nature, one that is rooted in a fundamental appreciation for the human race. Mencius astutely points out to the philosopher Kao that water only flows east and west because it is already being prevented from flowing in its true direction, downward. Whether it be a dam, a waterway construction, or even the earth itself, something must stand in the way of water to prevent it from flowing downward. Mencius used this metaphor to indirectly address the unadulterated nature of humanity.

Mencius’s underlying message in the above analogy is that doing ‘good’ is the purest natural instinct of humans. One of IR’s basic assumptions is that individuals should view communication exchanges as existing within an “environment where growth and change can occur, but where changing others is neither the ultimate goal nor the criterion for success in the interaction...when rhetors use invitational rhetoric their goal is to enter into a dialogue in order to share perspectives and positions, to see the complexity of an issue

about which neither party agrees, and to increase understanding.” (J.E. Bone et al. 436).

Essentially, IR seeks to improve the state of human communication. They continue, “The interaction, or relationship between those involved in the exchange, is rooted in reciprocity and respect.”

Lozano-Reich and Cloud point out that Bone, Griffin, and Scholz “extend theorizing on invitational rhetoric by articulating a link between invitational rhetoric and civility. Hence, they contend invitational rhetoric, as a civilizing strategy, is a means to create ethical exchanges in difficult situations” (Lozano-Reich & Cloud 220). In a sense, the principle function of IR is to create ‘good’ and ethical interpersonal relationships. What is ‘good’, however, is not a simple prescription. Much like the case with IR, the definition of ‘good’ in the *Mencius* cannot be summed up in one clean sentence; rather, it is the culmination of all the different ways that *ren* manifests and how it is applied (*li*).

The water metaphor in the preceding example is representative of what is ‘good’: it may be amorphous and travel freely in any direction, but it only has one true way. Water was Mencius’s way of ambiguously endorsing the entire Confucian system and all its principles. It eludes that the Confucian system is rooted in a fundamental appreciation for every individual and the potential they hold. This also holds true for Foss and Griffin’s IR. Furthermore, it provides readers with the confidence needed to develop their own Confucian heuristics without relying on the influence of others.

The last rhetorical device in the *Mencius* is an appeal to righteousness through moral speech. One of the major areas where the *Mencius* differs from the *Analects* is its emphasis on *li* and one’s ability to achieve the highest virtue. Whereas Confucius was said

to be a humble man who mainly focused on the refinement of *ren*, Mencius was noted for his courageous and virtuous personality that was always concerned with righteousness and the elevation of *ren*. This divide is further enunciated by the political context in which each man lived. In one translation Mencius says, “I want to rectify the human hearts, eliminate heresies, oppose extreme actions, and put down biased views” (M 3b.9 141-142). In a different translation Mencius says, “A gentleman (*junzi*) should never give up practicing righteousness, whether he is successful or is destitute” (M 7a.9 305). Mencius’s focus on righteousness guided his rhetorical style via appeals to morality and sincerity. The drive to attain righteousness invariably leads Confucian scholars to respect and value the opinions and thoughts of others because a true *junzi* is concerned with maintaining positive and benevolent human relationships.

Some of Mencius’s most apparent examples of moral speech are embedded in his discussions on human nature. For Mencius, evil is a human characteristic that does not exist objectively in the natural world and can only grow if a person stops cultivating their natural goodness (*ren*). Mencius wrote, “given the right nourishment there is nothing that will not grow, and deprived of it there is nothing that will not wither away” (Lau 6a.8.165). The meaning behind this is that no man is innately evil; rather, they have merely neglected their cultivation of *ren*. For Mencius, humans are capable of rectifying themselves and choosing the moral path as an act of will (Lu 172). Mencius believed that humans require the ability to take agency in their own lives as an act of self-determination. I argue that Mencius’s appeal to righteousness is actually an endorsement of IR’s principle of self-determination because it goads readers into searching for a self-determined righteousness crafted by proper *ren* and *li*.

In order to walk a moral and righteousness path, Mencius emphasized the power of and need for taking agent-oriented action. His rhetorical strategy was to center all of speech on the cultivation of *ren* and to practice morally 'good' acts. IR offers the principle of self-determination as a way to take complete and unimpeded action on one's own thoughts in order to improve the quality of ethical exchanges in human relationships. Mencius said, "He who outrages the benevolence proper to his nature, is called a robber; he who outrages righteousness, is called a ruffian. The robber and ruffian we call a mere fellow" (M 4.3b 21). In this quote, *ren* and *li* are comparable to the images of the robber and the ruffian (with the 'mere fellow' indirectly alluding to the *xiaoren*). These characters have reprehensible natures and are not on the path of higher morality; thus, a Confucian follower should take the examples of the robber and ruffian as a lesson in *li* that motivates one to move away from the *xiaoren* and toward the *junzi* to achieve righteousness. It only becomes possible for an individual to move away from the path of the robber and ruffian, however, if they take action and learn from Mencius's example.

Mencius's purpose for creating the distinction between a *xiaoren* and a *junzi* was to emphasize that a base person is the foundation from which all people begin. In order to improve one's status as a person, he or she must constantly refine, practice, and apply their *ren*. In this way, self-determination becomes a prerequisite for a *junzi* because the status of 'junzi' can only be reached if one takes hold of their agency. Through action, one can control the way they live their life and actively apply a ritualized lifestyle that cultivates *ren* and improves ethical exchanges within human relationships.

Mencius offers another interesting example of how one should view righteousness: “Chess Ch’iu is the best chess-player in all the kingdom. Suppose that he is teaching two men to play. The one gives to the subject his whole mind and bends to it all his will, doing nothing but listening to Chess Ch’iu. The other, although he seems to be listening, has his whole mind running on a swan which he thinks is approaching, and wishes to bend his bow, adjust the string to the arrow, and shoot it.” In this passage, Mencius uses chess as a vehicle to discuss the nature of cultivating *ren* and following a righteous path. He continues, “Although he is learning along with the other, (Chess Ch’iu) does not come up to him. Why? Because his intelligence is not equal? Not so.” (M 22.2a 134) Mencius ends his chess example with a rhetorical question in order to imply that although both students are of equal intelligence, one is considered more valuable than the other.

In Mencius’s above example, he implies that both students are of equal ability, but the first is more valuable as a student because he shows a constant determination and unrelenting focus on mastering the game. The second student is just as talented, but lacks the proper mental discipline to be Chess Ch’iu’s apprentice. The first student serves as a metaphor for a *junzi*, while the second student represents a *xiaoren*. If the game of chess functions as a metaphor for cultivating *ren*, then the one who abides by IR’s principle of self-determination is considered the better student. By actively tuning out exterior influences (i.e. archery or the swan outside the window), a student can fully attend to his improvement in chess and can walk the path toward becoming a *junzi*.

Mencius faced a natural resistance from the people he would teach because of the availability of differing and competing traditions, thus he could not simply dictate moral

and righteous behavior like Confucius; rather, he had to express it in appealing ways that emphasized agent-oriented action. Here is an example of Mencius's desire for complete devotion to righteousness, "Mencius said: I like fish, and I also like bear's paws. If I cannot have the two together, I will let the fish go, and take the bear's paws. So, I like life, and I also like righteousness. If I cannot keep the two together, I will let life go, and choose righteousness" (*M* 22.1b 134). This example displays Mencius's logical and rational style by placing the bear's paws and righteousness juxtaposition to one another in order to make value-claims about both righteousness and life. Mencius implies that if you desire to attain righteousness, you must have complete devotion to it, even above your own life. IR's principle of self-determination is characterized by complete devotion to a present task or goal and is a prerequisite for developing ethical ways to communicate. IR's strives to eliminate oppression and patriarchal domination in communication in a way that prescribes following a righteous path (where the invitational style is the path of righteousness).

The many stylistic similarities in both the *Mencius* and Confucius's *Analects* create a harmonic understanding of these Confucian scholars' rhetorical style. Likewise, the differences in rhetorical forms between the two highlights the unique context of each man's historical positioning and elude to the existence of a increasingly complex and broader ancient Chinese rhetorical tradition. The harmony between the two texts readily displays the resonance between them and IR's principles of equality and self-determination. The use of dialectical juxtaposition, syllogistic argumentation, metaphors and analogies, and ritualization and righteousness as persuasive tactics are all meant to force readers to focus their attention internally and evolve through osmosis into a self-discerning and inventive

subject. In contemporary rhetorical theory, the *Mencius* and the *Analects*' rhetorical style would best fit into Foss and Griffin's invitational model, which values the principles of equality and self-determination.

Conclusion

Looking at ancient texts such as the *Analects* and the *Mencius* alongside contemporary invitational rhetoric serves a twofold purpose: (1) it bridges a gap between current texts available through a traditional Greco-Roman archive and the lesser known and near inaccessible traditions of ancient cultures; (2) it offers productive rhetorical insight without focusing on traditional/masculine concepts such as antagonism, forceful persuasion and syllogistic argumentation. The resonance occurring between the two traditions catalyzes the evolution of contemporary rhetorical knowledge to focus more generally on "traditions", instead of a single tradition rooted in a set of core traditional values.

Confucius and Mencius's stylistically resembled each other through their use of indirectness, the dialectical juxtaposition of ideas, and implementing metaphors and analogies as a means to persuade. They, however, displayed their style through unique and different rhetorical forms, of which the culprit in many cases was the unique political setting each man experienced. Confucius tended to instruct his disciples from a 'master' position and therefore, the rhetorical strategies he used paralleled the master-student dichotomy. Confucius's constant ritualizing of his student's lives and habits is evidence of his unique rhetorical form. In his dialogues, Confucius provides philosophical insights that can be misconstrued as being scolding or reprimanding. Consequently, this often leaves his

students feeling low or insufficient, which is exactly what Confucius hoped for so that they would want to ritualize their lives to fit the mold of a *junzi*. Mencius, on the other hand, is usually depicted in his dialogues as being a council or advisor to someone in a higher position than him. Therefore, the ‘master’ voice of Confucius gets replaced with the ‘advisor,’ which tends to focus on anecdotal and analytical modes of persuasion. Mencius combined rational argumentation with colorful stories to speak on the nature of *ren* and righteousness. Both men displayed similar styles of persuasion through dialectics and indirectness, but because of the way they lived their lives, their rhetorical forms are considerably different.

By simply diving into the inner workings of texts such as the *Analects* and the *Mencius*, scholars of rhetoric gain insight on concepts that are frequently overlooked, but share common values with the contemporary works that are trying to de-center traditional notions of rhetoric. Furthermore, the commonalities between the two texts suggest that they build on a larger and more developed Chinese rhetorical tradition composed of other Chinese schools of thought, which in turn offer their own rhetorical insights. Foss and Griffin’s concepts of equality and self-determination illuminate the rhetorical vision of Confucianism’s style and value system, while simultaneously providing validation for IR’s move to de-center the Platonic/Aristotelian notion of rhetoric as antagonistic argumentation and persuasion.

The next chapter will build on the harmonic resonance between Confucius and Mencius to show that more connections exist between the different ancient Chinese traditions. Namely, chapter 2 moves into ancient Daoism and the works of its two major

scholars: Laozi and Chuang Tzu. From the works of these two men, Foss and Griffin's concepts will again show the resonance occurring between contemporary rhetorical scholarship and ancient Chinese rhetorical traditions.

Chapter 2: Daoism

Daoism, unlike Confucianism, is not a structured system that educates via a core curriculum. It rather revolves around the compiled writings and conversations of two specific philosophers: Laozi and Chuang Tzu. While Laozi used mystic language and paradoxical speech to emphasize *wu-wei* (non-action), Chuang Tzu used satirical, nonsensical and sometimes humorous anecdotes to display his notion of *dao* (Lu 240). These two scholars used colorful narratives and perplexing paradoxes to guide their reader toward understanding the *dao*. Whereas Confucian scholars attempted to construct systems of legitimacy meant to improve efficiency and reduce ambiguity in communication, Daoist scholars worked to unravel paradoxes and offer language-games that deconstruct one's idea of what 'the way' means. The disjointedness between Laozi and Chuang Tzu's way of thinking contributes to Daoism's paradoxical nature. Although Daoism is diametrically opposed to Confucianism, they both embrace invitational concepts through a style that invites audiences to come to their own conclusions about anecdotes, paradoxes, historical reconstructions and questions of philosophy and morality.

The *Daodejing* and the *Chuang Tzu*, like the *Analects* and the *Mencius*, were originally written in classical Chinese characters, making the original primary texts impossible to decipher unless one is fully versed in the classical Chinese written system. Therefore, the primary documents for this chapter are direct translations of those ancient Chinese texts. In this chapter, I use the translations of Burton Watson, Chad Hansen, and D.C. Lau for both the *Daodejing* and the *Chuang Tzu*. Although translations make it difficult to know whether

or not the voice in the translation is the same as the actual voice of the historical figure, it is still valuable to consider the topological significance of each translation.

Having translations for texts that are already shrouded in mystery enhances the various meanings behind each different translation. Unlike Confucian scholars who wrote in dialogues and relied heavily on dialectical strategies, the many different anecdotes and paradoxes of Daoist scholars function as platforms for readers to dive deeper into the meaning they create for themselves. Each of the translations in this chapter represents a unique perspective coming from an individual that has already interpreted what the text has to offer and is translating it in his or her own way. Having the translations of Watson, Hansen, and Lau will provide a broader perspective for readers to access the many different ways both the *Daodejing* and the *Chuang Tzu* can be read.

This chapter provides a brief orientation to the historical context of ancient Daoism and its major philosophical tenets. My purpose in this analysis is first, to identify the stylistic similarities present in the *Daodejing* and the *Chuang Tzu* and then to look at how they compare with Foss and Griffin's IR principles of equality and immanent value. Finally, I conclude with a summary of the two scholar's stylistic differences and how they resonate with contemporary invitational principles of equality and immanent value.

Historical Context

Daoism, as a term, may refer to the entire ancient Chinese school of thought, but in truth it is composed of two men's works. Chronologically, Laozi, being a contemporary of Confucius, came before Chuang Tzu (a contemporary of Mencius) and is thus considered to

be the founder of Daoism. Whereas the goal for Confucian followers was to improve upon and apply their *ren* in order to become *junzis*, Daoists were focused on attaining sage-hood by freeing themselves from attachments to social constructs and developing their own understanding of how to appreciate and follow *dao*. As a result, neither Laozi nor Chuang Tzu endorsed any specific method for improving oneself. Because Daoism has “*dao*” in its appellation, it often gets misconstrued as being the first and foremost place to find thinkers who were intent on aligning their actions with the *dao*. This, however, is incorrect considering that both Confucius and Mencius constantly referenced the *dao* in their teachings. Since Confucianism chronologically preceded Daoism, whenever Laozi and Chuang Tzu referred to the *dao* they were doing so in reference to a preceding understanding of what *dao* meant among the differing schools of thought in ancient China.

There is altogether very little known about Laozi and his true nature. Many texts describe Laozi as a legendary figure that could be referring to a variety of different influential figures around 500 BCE, similar to King Arthur in Western folklore. One account describes Laozi as an archivist named Li Er (also known as Lao Dan) who was from the state of Chu and worked for the Eastern Zhou dynasty. According to the legend, after living in Zhou for many years and witnessing the dynasty’s decline, Laozi became disillusioned with society and politics and wrote the *Daodejing* upon request from a Zhou official before leaving and becoming a hermit (Si-Ma 314).

While this depiction of Laozi’s existence is not necessarily false, its accuracy is doubtful. According to Hansen, “the traditional biographical information about Laozi is largely either fanciful (he lived to be 160 to 200 years old), historically dubious (he taught

Confucius), or contradictory (his hometown, official posts, age)” (Hansen 210). In all likelihood, there were probably a variety of contributors to the *Daodejing* that were all lumped under the name ‘Laozi’. One thing that can be said with certainty, however, is that there is a difference between Laozi the man, and *Laozi* the book. Many believe the two existed in different time periods. The *Laozi*, or *Daodejing*, was most likely written in its entirety after Laozi himself existed because the text consistently refers to namelessness (which implies naming has already been discovered) and thus cannot have been composed before or contemporary to that of Confucius (Fung 94). Therefore, it is more than likely the case that most of Laozi’s *Daodejing* has no actual connection to Laozi the historical individual.

Chuan Chou, better known as Chuang Tzu (also Zhuangzi), was the second major Daoist scholar who lived around approximately 369-286 BCE (Fung 104). Lu describes Chuang Tzu as having witnessed “social chaos and moral decline resulting from the endless wars and pursuit of political power characteristic of the Warring States period. He also lived in a climate of vigorous philosophical debates over issues of morality, politics, and epistemology” (Lu 238). Chuang Tzu may not be as mythic or legendary as Laozi, but much of his personal life is still shrouded in mystery. What little is known about him is adapted from his writings, which ironically are said to amount to over a hundred thousand words.

Similar to Laozi’s writings, the *Chuang Tzu* as a text is most likely a compilation of works by Chuang Tzu’s students and followers. The book itself is, “a collection of various Daoist writings, some of which represent Daoism in its first phase of development, some in its second and some in its third” (Fung 104). Considering Chuang Tzu came only at the end of

Daoism's growth, the *Chuang Tzu's* systematic development could only come to fruition through the expansions made by Chuang Tzu's followers. Therefore, much like the *Daodejing*, Chuang Tzu's contribution to Daoism must be attributed to the work *Chuang Tzu* and not necessarily to the historical figure.

Chuang Tzu characteristically despised any form of politics or social constructions because it limited a person's true freedom. One famous fable about Chuang Tzu depicts him responding to the King of Chu's messenger after having been asked to be the minister of the state: "I have heard that there is a sacred tortoise in Chu that has been dead for three thousand years. The king keeps it wrapped in cloth and boxed, and stores it in the ancestral temple. Now would this tortoise rather be dead and have its bones left behind and honored? Or would it rather be alive and dragging its tail in the mud?" Chuang Tzu ended his metaphor by telling the king's official that he would rather drag his tail in the mud than work for the king (Watson 17.187-88). Chuang Tzu, like Laozi, lived a life outside of society, but unlike Laozi he was not a hermit, but a traveler who immersed himself in nature. He enjoyed the prospect of sitting by a river stream at the base of a mountain or in the middle of a forest to find inspiration. For example, the first chapter of the *Chuang Tzu* is titled "Free and Easy Wandering", which reflects his unshackled and free roaming historical personality.

It was Chuang Tzu's prerogative to describe the indescribable, to take Laozi's concepts of mysticism and contradictions and further shroud them in obscurity by placing them in fantastical narratives. Seeing as how Chuang Tzu was a traveler and faced the same political climate as Mencius, his narrative style is most likely a means of appealing listeners

who had been exposed to many competing thoughts. Typically, Chuang Tzu's philosophical dialogues left out a conclusion in place of a double rhetorical question, "Then is there really an X? Or is there no X?" (Hansen 266) This type of question provokes the reader to come up with their own conclusion, thus embracing their own subjectivity and freeing themselves conceptually from the constraints of socially constructed ways of thinking. Chuang Tzu's style was unique among all of Chinese philosophy for its use of philosophical fantasies. Hansen writes, "This style injects insecurity into interpreters. Yet it attracts us like philosophical honey. His combination of brilliance and elusive statements frustrates, delights, and challenges those who want to interpret him" (Hansen 265). His stories (many of which, for example, involve thieves, craftsmen, monsters, animals and Confucians or converted Confucians) provide a set of premises for the reader to get behind, but then quickly abandon that position and leave the reader wondering whether Daoism is a platform for enlightenment, or a target for ridicule. Both Chuang Tzu and Laozi resisted the Confucian influences of their time by stylistically confusing their followers, therein forcing them to invent pure ideas that were not tainted by rigid systems of thought.

Philosophical Overview

Daoism's conceptualization of the universe is best expressed as, "the notion of *dao* (the way), approached through *de* (virtue) and manifested in *wu-wei* (non action)" (Lu 229). Unlike Confucius who emphasized an individual's active cultivation of *ren*, Daoist scholars encouraged individuals to follow the *dao* through a lifestyle of *wu-wei*, or action through inaction. Daoists regarded such efforts to cultivate *ren* as the root cause of moral decay and social disorder. Laozi, for example, argued that the principles of benevolence and rectitude

should be abandoned, since the more people talked about such principles, the more corruption and hypocrisy would emerge. Laozi writes in the *Daodejing*, “The better known the laws and edicts, the more thieves and robbers there are” (Lau 58.84-5). By imposing a method of non-action, Chuang Tzu believed humans would act in accordance with the natural development of things (or simply the *dao*) and thus could not be constrained by the artificiality of social constructs.

Though each text’s rhetorical style differed, they both emphasized following the Way through a method of non-action, or *wu-wei*. Kincaid writes, “When someone advises a young man or woman to act naturally and quit trying so hard to win someone’s affections, they are advocating *wu-wei*, the principle of non-action” (Kincaid 337). Another example of non-action is meditation; a process of allowing one’s thoughts to roam in and out of the mind unimpeded, as if a large gate has been opened allowing water to flow freely in all directions. This is *not* acting on one’s desire to think or to not think. *Wu-wei* is a process of stillness that allows the actions of the exterior world to pass by without interruption.

Laozi and Chuang Tzu’s writings each depicted *wu-wei* differently, but they were always in relation to the *dao*. Laozi did not condone, for example, the use of excessive or elegant speech because it went against the principle of *wu-wei*. He said, “truthful words are not beautiful; beautiful words are not truthful. Good words are not persuasive; persuasive words are not good. He who knows has no wide learning; he who has wide learning does not know” (Lau 81.117). Chuang Tzu shared a similar skepticism of language, but he was more focused on the relationship between language and meaning. In his own words, “Men of the world who value the Way all turn to books. But books are nothing more than words.

Words have value; what is of value in words is meaning. Meaning has something it is pursuing, but the thing that is pursuing cannot be put into words” (Watson 13.152). In a sense, both men recognize that the true nature of *dao* is something that cannot be described through constructs (i.e. language); the *dao* simply is. ‘*Dao*’ is nothing more than a filler word used to help identify what is void of meaning. The label itself provides no real definition for what *dao* is, other than serving as a beacon to identify the existence of something that cannot be identified.

Both Laozi and Chuang Tzu’s texts came after the influence of Confucianism and thus, could not have been conceptualized without Confucianism serving as a point of resistance. As a result, the Daoist understanding of *dao* is more like an answer to a question. It is an attempt to transcend Confucianism’s *ming bian*. Laozi writes in Chapter 1 of the *Daodejing*, “Ways can be guided; they are not fixed ways. Names can be named; they are not fixed names. ‘Absence’ names the cosmic horizon, ‘presence’ names the mother of 10,000 natural kinds...Conceiving of them as being one, call that ‘fathomless’. Calling it ‘fathomless’ is still not to fathom it” (Hansen 38). Or in Chapter 32: “Ways fix on a nameless uncarved block. Although small, none in the social world can make it serve. As you start to institutionalize, there are names. As soon as there are names, generally, you really should know to stop” (Hansen 103). Both of these chapters attempt to describe something that is indescribable for the purpose of showing the reader that *dao* actually is indescribable.

In Chapter 32, Laozi uses the depiction of a smooth uncarved rock to represent the *dao*. As soon as language intervenes, it is like carving one line onto the uncarved block. Once carved, the block can never again go back to its natural uncarved state. Any attempt to

describe what both Daoist scholars refer to as the 'Eternal *Dao*' is simply an appellation of the concept being described. The Eternal *Dao* "is unnamable; at the same time it is that which all namables come to be" (Fung 95).

Chuang Tzu depicted the *dao* in a similar fashion, but his style was more skeptical of language altogether. He saw that the world as limited by the names it used to identify things and was in desperate need of a way to look beyond the names (in particularly the naming of the Confucian system as well as the systems contemporary to him). Chuang Tzu believed that actively separating the name of a thing from the thing itself was a form of elevating one's mind, thereby freeing the object from its attachment to its name as well as freeing Chuang Tzu from his attachment to the object's name. By identifying names, Chuang Tzu could see the world as it really was and could achieve happiness. Chuang Tzu believed a sage was a person who was perfectly happy "because he transcends the ordinary distinction between the self and the world...He is one with the *Dao*...The *Dao* is nameless and so the sage who is one with the *Dao* is also nameless" (Fung 110). Chuang Tzu saw perfection and happiness as two different expressions of the same thing. Consequently the attainment of perfect virtue is a key component in Daoism's philosophy and as a result, *dao* is rarely referenced without being in relation to *de* (virtue).

Laozi wrote the *Daodejing* to emphasize the mutual connection between *dao* and *de*. For him, "while *dao* refers to the invisible, untouchable, and unspeakable law of nature, *de* refers to the fulfillment of the *dao* through wise speech and proper action" (Lu 230). The relationship between *dao* and *de* is reminiscent of the relationship between the Confucian concepts *ren* and *li*, but instead of *de* serving as a rhetorical vehicle for *dao* as *li* does for

ren, the relationship is much less constricted. Laozi writes, “A man of the highest virtue does not keep to virtue and that is why he has virtue” (Lau 38.57). For Laozi, virtue was something that could only be self-discovered. Attempting to diligently follow a prescribed virtue would be what Laozi called ‘acting on constructs’ and not in accordance with *dao* and *wu-wei*.

Chuang Tzu had a similar outlook on *de* that freed readers from the constraints of what virtue *should* look like. Chuang Tzu perceived human limitations as inescapable because of their attachment to language and symbols. Thus, one should strive to achieve *de* by looking beyond the constraints of language. It was his belief that a virtuous man “rests without thought, moves without plan. He has no use for right and wrong, beautiful and ugly” (Lau 12.137). Chuang Tzu was not so much worried about moral and ethical constraints, because they are similarly constrained by symbols and language. A truly virtuous man, or a *zhen ren*, is one who lives and exists within the constructed world, but whose mind is in a state of nonattachment. It is a free-mindedness that “deconstructs one’s previous conceptual framework, creating a new way of seeing the world and living one’s life in its place” (Lu 243). Chuang Tzu’s narrative style of deconstructing names works together with Laozi’s mystic path of self-discovery to illuminate *dao* and *de*’s co-dependent relationship.

Laozi: *Daodejing*

The *Daodejing* is divided into two sections: the *Dao Jing* (ch. 1-37) and the *De Jing* (ch. 38-81). Whereas *dao* refers to the invisible, untouchable, and unspeakable laws of nature (more simply defined as the “way”), *de* refers to the fulfillment of the *dao* through

wise speech and proper action (virtue or virtuosity) (Lu 230). Consequently, the first section deals with issues of subjectivity, paradoxical relations and the overall nature of the *dao* and the second section deals with the political and proper enactment of governance. In the *Daodejing* there are three major rhetorical devices in use: (1) a strategy of reversal that gives negative meaning to positive words and phrases and vice versa; (2) the use of paradoxical words and phrases; (3) the use of *wu ming* (namelessness). Each of these devices shares a resonating relationship with the IR principles of equality and immanent value.

The *Daodejing* frequently uses a strategy of reversal to flip the reader's thought process in order to display the continuously transitioning and oppositional nature of the universe. Laozi takes positive attributes and places them on negative things to emphasize that nothing in the *dao* exists in an extreme. It says in Chapter 71 *Paradox and Practicality*, "Knowing not to know is recommended. Not knowing to know is a defect. In general, simply deem defects to be defects. Then, one can be non-defective. Sages are not defective when they deem defects 'defects'" (H 183). This chapter gets at the heart of reversal language. Namely, a sage's mind must be in a constant flux between giving up "that" and taking "this". Upon acquiring "this" it immediately becomes "that" and thus must again be traded for "this".

The relative importance of "this" or "that" shows the reader that nothing that is completely right or completely wrong; if it was, it would not be in accordance with the *dao*. In this chapter, "taking up this" is a way of refreshing one's mind in order to cleanse it of all the influences it has been exposed to since it was last refreshed. Foss and Griffin's IR

established the principle of equality to eliminate dominating and oppressive influences within conversation. It is an attempt to equalize all members in a conversation so that they view each other in a nonthreatening and safe way. By creating equality, one can view a situation, environment, or conversation objectively and not worry about influences outside of one's own thought process. For Laozi, the process of discarding "that" for "this" is his way of consistently equalizing the reader's mind. The only true virtuosity in the *Daodejing* is one that is focused on the 'this', on what is new and free of oppression or influence, on the here and the now.

In Chapter 71, Laozi reverses the reader's conception of what is considered defective with what is non-defective. He ensnares readers in his game of reversals and drives them into a state of aporia that discards their mind as a "that" so that the new confused mind becomes the refreshed "this". Laozi takes away the dominating influence of the social world by stripping it of its labels to bring readers into a world free of social constructions and oppressive influences. Laozi's strategy of reversal points to the need for opposites to work together so that they do not inadvertently introduce exterior influences.

Laozi beautifully uses a strategy of reversal in chapter 20 *Unlearning Learning*:

'Masterly' and 'clumsy', how much mutually separates them? The human crowd all have a surplus, yet I alone seem at a loss. Mine is indeed the mind of a stupid human. Ordinary humans are lustrous; I alone am dull. Ordinary humans are critically discerning; I alone am obfusate...I alone am different from other humans (H 20.78).

In this chapter, Laozi reverses the reader's conception of 'good' and 'bad'. Attributes such as "critically discerning" and "lustrous" that are normally considered positive are being

expressed as negative attributes. This type of reversal is an attempt to show that two opposites (i.e.: lustrous-dull, masterly-clumsy) have such a small degree of separation that they should be thought of on similar terms. At the same time, Laozi recognizes his own position as being contradictory; by simply speaking as a 'master', Laozi places a certain amount of authoritative influence on readers. This is a characteristic that was seen in Confucius's *Analects*, but instead of embodying the role, Laozi circumvents the contradiction by showing that he himself is a dull and ordinary human who is often at a loss. He applies the principle of equality by taking away the oppressive influence from his role as the master. For the Daoist sage, one's true value is in their ability to strive to be unique and self-discovering, which is an attribute that Foss and Griffin likewise endorse. In this chapter, Laozi grants individuals the privilege to say, "I alone am..." Knowing this, a sage uses reversal as a rhetorical methodology to see beyond the limitations of dualistic thinking and embrace a uniquely subjective perspective that equally values other people and their ideas. Laozi's strategy of reversal catalyzes a sage's path toward self-discovery in the *Daodejing*.

As a second rhetorical device, Laozi uses paradoxical thought formations in the *Daodejing* to highlight the non-dichotomous nature of the *dao*. In a way that resonates with Foss and Griffin, Laozi desires to be inclusive and inviting of all possibilities. Oppositional and binary thoughts only serve to limit the potential of a subject's free will. An inclusive way of thinking eliminates the possibility of contradictions and paradoxes because there is never an either/or choice scenario involved. Laozi stresses that perfection is subjective and represents those who do not seek it. Therefore, he uses paradoxes to provoke readers who believe perfection is attainable or who think in terms of binaries. Laozi writes, "Great

perfection seems chipped; Great fullness seems empty; Great straightness seems bent; Great skill seems awkward; Great eloquence seems tongue-tied” (Lau 45.67). All of these terms play on an audience’s mode of thinking and fundamentally challenge the assumptions that hold up social structures like morality and ethics. From these paradoxes, a creative tension arises in the reader that breaks down conventional linguistic and rhetorical categories and thrusts them directly into the *dao*. As a result, the typical rhetorical strategy of situating dialectics as the counterpart of rhetoric gets sidelined for a version of dialectics based on a “profound understanding of the reality of change and changelessness that goes beyond mere logical categories” (Lu 237).

Laozi’s biggest obstacle in the *Daodejing* is being able to guide readers into a mind frame that looks beyond dualistic thinking. Foss and Griffin define the principle of immanent value as a way of recognizing that “every being is a unique and necessary part of the pattern of the universe and thus has value” (Foss & Griffin 4). They focus on creating communication that is always aware of each contributor’s immanent value so that one can avoid moments of oppression and unnecessary influence. Instead of thinking in oppositional terms that reduce others to their contributions, IR looks for the singular agent, the immanent value, of every living being. For Laozi, finding the value of things that have socially been deemed unfit, ugly or insufficient is not easy for the average person. Therefore, in order to express the notion of singularity and value in the *Daodejing*, Laozi utilizes paradoxical metaphors, analogies and narratives to express the Daoist interpretation of the universe as being inclusive instead of oppositional.

It says in Chapter 42 *Dao, Numbers, Reality and Teaching* “Ways generate ‘one’. ‘One’ generates ‘two’. ‘Two’ generates ‘three’. ‘Three’ generates 10,000 natural kinds. 10,000 natural kinds endure *yin* and embrace *yang*” (H 125.42). In this chapter, Laozi shows how all ‘ways’ generate 10,000 natural kinds (10,000 is a common number used in the *Daodejing* to symbolize a grouping together of all things) and that all things share a mutually inclusive relationship with both *yin* and *yang*. The two are balanced opposites in that they are always considered to be one entity: the *yin-yang*. The *yin-yang* symbol is often thought of as a dualistic construction that represents a balancing of two opposing forces, but a more complete and inclusive understanding of the *yin-yang* sees it as a singular entity with an immanent value that is a balanced existence of two forces, which absent the other become incomplete. The paradoxes found within the *Daodejing* are inclusive in that the only way to fully understand them is to recognize the immanent value in both opposing perspectives and consider them both simultaneously possible. Just as the *yin-yang* represents two opposing forces combined into a greater whole, Laozi’s paradoxes make the reader aware of the immanent value in both sides of whatever metaphor or analogy he has given in order to bring the reader into an accepting and inclusive mindset that sees the immanent value of all possibilities.

In Chapter 41 *Laughing at Dao* it says, “The greatest purity is like filth. Expansive virtuosity seems insufficient. Creating virtuosity is like stealing. Solid authenticity is like sliminess. The greatest square has no corners. The greatest artifact is never formed. The greatest note rarely sounds. The greatest sign lacks a shape. Ways hide the absence of names” (H 41.122). Laozi epitomized the negative and weak as perfect or boundless while things that were strong and positive he tended to restrict. A parallel can be drawn here

between Laozi's desire to resist what is high and embrace what is low with Confucius's overarching pursuit of what is virtuous and righteous. The rhetorical style of reversals in the *Daodejing* offer a glimpse at the ways that Daoism sought to differentiate itself from Confucian doctrine while simultaneously appearing unique and not somehow in relation to Confucianism. In this chapter, Laozi uses a reversal to highlight the underappreciated so that the negative aspects of humanity become the reader's idealized focal point and establish an antithetical balancing act where language becomes a pun of itself.

Laozi paradoxically implies in chapter 41 that the highest form of purity is actually filth and that one must steal in order to achieve the greatest virtue. The use of nonsensical language in this chapter functions as a way to reprogram the reader's mind so that he or she becomes more aware of the negative and lowly things in life that most would overlook. Characteristics such as sliminess and actions such as stealing are not thought of as valuable because they are lacking in something (i.e. morality, usefulness etc.). Foss and Griffin, however, would characterize a dismissal of these attributes as oppressive and without proper consideration of the principle of immanent value. There is a resonance occurring between this IR principle and Laozi's paradoxical focus on the low and useless. Both seek to achieve a certain open-mindedness in readers that breaks free of modes of thinking that limit the human mind.

The use of paradoxes in the *Daodejing* creates balance and equality between positive and negative attributes so that readers will learn to be inclusive and appreciative of the positive *and* the negative. Laozi says in Chapter 41 *Laughing at Dao*, that "the greatest note rarely sounds (and) creating virtuosity is like stealing" in order to bring out the immanent

value of things that are rarely noticed or underappreciated. The *Daodejing* resonates with IR's principle of immanent value through its insertion of metaphorical and anecdotal paradoxes. It teaches readers to value what they rarely get a chance to and to be accepting instead of oppositional.

In the *Daodejing*, the role of choice is essential because it shows readers that they are the ones who choose to place no value in filthy, ordinary or dull things. They are choosing to only appreciate the lustrous and beautiful things. It is Laozi's prerogative to take away readers' preconceptions of what is valuable and what is not in favor of adopting a more singular and inclusive perspective. In Laozi's words, "Something and Nothing produce each other; The difficult and the easy complement each other; The long and the short off-set each other; The high and the low incline towards each other; Note and sound harmonize with each other; Before and after follow each other" (Lau 2.5). These paradoxes force the reader to unite opposites by situating them as inclusive and non-problematic. For a person to form a smooth flowing and organic thought process, they must recognize and appreciate the immanent value of every thought and idea in order to eliminate the mental speed bumps of thinking in terms of resistance and opposition (i.e. becoming one with the *dao*).

The third rhetorical device in Laozi's *Daodejing* utilizes namelessness, *wu ming*. It is a common misconception that Daoism shuns speech acts by promoting inaction. Laozi says in Chapter 64 *Planning Ahead*, "sages do not act on constructs, hence they do not wreck things. They do not cling and so do not lose things" (H 64.169). Daoism, when understood in its totality, does not condemn speech, but rather points out its limitations and suggests a

corrective (Lu 225). Instead of viewing the world through the socially constructed labels within it, Laozi promotes *wu ming*, or namelessness, to deconstruct constructs and distinguish what is real from what is fabricated. *Wu ming* also serves as a signifier of Laozi's repudiation for the naming in Confucianism. It reminds the reader that many Daoist concepts are themselves a reaction to questions that have already been asked.

For Foss and Griffin, an object's immanent value is a part of it that cannot be stripped away; it is its essential nature absent any extraneous labels. In the *Daodejing*, *wu ming* functions as a way to strip words and ideas of their extraneous meaning so that there is no ambiguity between an object and the way a person understands that object. For Laozi, we must know the world without stepping outside our doors, "we must see natural ways without looking out the window. The farther one goes, the less one knows. Using this: sages take form without acting on constructs" (H 47.133). In order for a sage to act, he must strip the label off his actions and by doing so, take hold of a deeper level of agency that is only accessible in the moment and is absent of secular influences; it is *wu ming*, nameless.

Wu ming strips labels down in order to recognize an object's immanent value. By simply saying, "this over here" or "that over there," one has constructed a normative claim that assumes a person knows what is meant by 'here' or 'there'. *Wu ming* clarifies the general assumptions made in language to help open up an individual's mind to the ambiguity around them. Once accepted, the individual can focus on the construct at hand, on the present, and shed the inherent risk of "clinging" to constructs. The farther one travels away from their own inner agency, the more they enable their own impotence in taking agent-oriented action.

In chapter 15 *Original Intent*, Laozi writes, “Those in ancient times who mastered being scholars were mystifyingly subtle and inscrutably penetrating. So deep they cannot be comprehended. Generally, precisely because they cannot be comprehended...whoever secures this way doesn’t desire filling. Generally, precisely because unfilled, hence they can shroud established forms” (H 15. 67). Laozi uses a reversal in this chapter in order to promote *wu ming*. The knowledge that all thoughts are socially constructed and that they are impossible to escape brings the sage to a state of inaction, or *wu-wei*. A confrontation with *wu ming* means that all that is left from the once label-stricken object or idea is its immanent value, one that can only be appreciated in the moment. Recognizing that moment is to act on *the construct*, as opposed to passively acting *on constructs*.

Chapter 32 *Simplicity, Names and Institutions* articulates the values of IR’s principle of immanent value and *wu ming*, “Ways fix on a nameless uncarved block. Although small, none in the social world can make it serve...As you start to institutionalize, there are names. As soon as there are names, generally, you really should know to stop. If you know to stop, you can avoid danger” (H 32.103). For Laozi, giving appellations to things is tantamount to building normative structures; they are valuable to the creator, but when the human crowd assimilates names and institutions, dogmatic thoughts arise and bring danger with them. The danger Laozi speaks of is equivalent to Foss and Griffin’s concern that true worth will be overlooked because it is something that cannot be “earned, acquired or proven”; they continue, “Concomitant with a recognition of the immanent value of another individual is the eschewal of forms of communication that seek to change that individual’s unique perspective to that held by the rhetor” (Foss & Griffin 4). When a rhetor infuses another’s

value with their conceptions it is like carving a scratch on an uncarved block. A sage should desire to be as clean as an uncarved block.

For Laozi, it is social constructs that prevent people from understanding the *dao*. He asks about social constructs, “is it not like a bellow’s pipe? Emptying, it doesn’t warp. Moving, it produces more. Much discourse, counting to the limit, best to stay near the middle” (H 5.46). Laozi proposes that a sage should stay close to the middle (the center of their beliefs), for counting the borders and limits of all the discourse and labels in the exterior world does not abide by *wu ming*. Laozi says, “Think of the role of ways in the social world as like brooks and ravines flowing into rivers and oceans” (H 32.103). If all of the water is the same, why spend time counting all the small rivers when you can just count the ocean? In the end, one ends up in the exact same place, so the path with the least resistance is the one a sage should follow.

Wu ming allows readers to absorb ideas without the burden of retaining or memorizing. Laozi carefully deployed a strategy of reversal in the *Daodejing*, which emphasized *wu ming* and utilized paradoxical thought patterns, to express the Daoist understanding of the relationship between *dao* and *de*. His method of reversing basic assumptions through different rhetorical devices was a way to force readers to reset their minds in order to make sense out of Laozi’s writings. Namelessness, as a rhetorical strategy, is easy to understand because it requires no prior knowledge and once understood, it is easy to apply to other things. Invitational rhetoric establishes a person’s immanent value as something that cannot be overlooked. *Wu ming* and the principle of

immanent value work hand in hand because they both invite the reader to recognize a central element and to further disregard any extraneous labels and meaning.

In Laozi's *Daodejing*, he utilized reversals, paradoxes and the concept of *wu ming* as persuasive rhetorical devices gently shoving readers into the flow and confusion of the *dao*. In his writings, Laozi indirectly inserts notions of *wu-wei* to help readers recognize the lack of resistance in Daoism's teachings. Foss and Griffin's principles of equality and immanent value resonate with Laozi's stylistic use of rhetorical devices because of a mutual desire to have individual's grasp their own inner agency. IR wants people to not rely on nor worry about the thoughts of others so that they might value other opinions and beliefs as equal to their own. This ultimately allows for the development of free and non-dichotomous modes of thinking.

Chuang Tzu: The *Chuang Tzu*

Unlike Laozi's *Daodejing*, which had designated chapters and sections strategically ordered to address Daoism's core concepts, the *Chuang Tzu* is mostly a compilation of Chuang Tzu's writings that thematically address Daoist concepts such as *wu-wei*, *dao* and *de*. Due to Chuang Tzu's narrative style however, these concepts tend to be deeply embedded in his writing and provoke the reader to enthrall him or herself in a story in order to fully understand them. Chuang Tzu was interested in "the emancipation of the individual mind from conventionally accepted ideas and practices" (Lu 241). The *Chuang Tzu* teaches that words used to convey meaning in language are extraneous and something that one should be wary of. The irony in this is that in Chuang Tzu's lifetime, "his work

amounted to approximately a hundred thousand words, many of them in the form of fables and parables. He was also well known for his descriptive and eloquent style of writing” (Lu 239). This is not a fault in the *Chuang Tzu*, but rather a way to signify that all humans who use language will undoubtedly speak in a contradictory manner and thus, the natural paradox should be embraced. In the *Chuang Tzu* there are three major rhetorical devices in use: (1) narratives and reconstructed anecdotes; (2) an underlying skepticism of language; (3) a glorification of the low and ugly. These three rhetorical devices serve as the means to see the resonating ripples occurring between IR’s two principles of equality and immanent value and the *Chuang Tzu*.

Chuang Tzu’s most apparent rhetorical strategy was to use stories, fables and reconstructed anecdotes to place readers inside what is referred to as ‘the mind of the sage’. Disclosing the mind of the sage was one of the predominant rhetorical themes in the *Chuang Tzu* and was enriched through narrative. It says in the *Chuang Tzu*, “there must be a True Man before there can be true knowledge” (W 77). A ‘True Man’ in the *Chuang Tzu* is one who rejects efforts to cultivate virtue or knowledge and instead acquires ‘sage-hood’ through a process of self-reflexivity and self-discovery (Kirkwood 8). The only way to truly understand a sage’s mind is to view the world as the sage would see it, through his or her own eyes. Chuang Tzu being a traveling man during the Warring States period of China most likely utilized this strategy as a means to attract the many different people who were in search of knowledge during that time. In a way similar to Mencius, Chuang Tzu appears to have been more concerned with the portrayal of his message than Laozi.

Like Laozi, Chuang Tzu recognizes the absurdity in being a master who promotes the low and emphasizes the discounted. To account for this, Chuang Tzu attempts to equalize the reader's mind with the sage's mind by providing narratives as a way for readers to access the world through a sage's perspective. IR's principle of equality wants to create equality in relationships by taking away the barriers (titles, rank, labels etc.) that create tension or oppression. For example, in the *Chuang Tzu* Hui Tzu said to Chuang Tzu, "I have a big tree called a *shu*. Its trunk is too gnarled and bumpy to apply a measuring line to, its branches, too bent and twisty to match up to a compass or square. You could stand it by the road and no carpenter would look at it twice" (W 29). This story begins with Chuang Tzu engaging in dialogue with a man who is searching for the value in something that appears to have no value. Chuang Tzu responds with:

"Maybe you've never seen a wildcat or a weasel. It crouches down and hides, watching for something to come along. It leaps and races east and west, not hesitating to go high or low---until it falls into the trap and dies in the net. Then again there's the yak, big as a cloud covering the sky. It certainly knows how to be big, though it doesn't know how to catch rats. Now you have this big tree and you're distressed because it's useless. Why don't you plant it in Not-Even-Anything Village, or the field of Broad-and-Boundless, relax and do nothing by its side or lie down for a free and easy sleep under it? Axes will never shorten its life, nothing can even harm it. If there's no use for it, how can it come to grief or pain?" (W 1.30)

In his response, Chuang Tzu implies that the mind of the sage is similar to a yak in that it only cares for freedom and relaxation; it does not care about catching the scurrying rats

nor does it know how to. At the same time, Chuang Tzu is depicted as a representation of a sage's mind because he is able to point out things in the world, like the yak and the gnarled tree, that represent how a sage's mind operates. In this passage the ability to recognize the sage's mind simultaneously pulls the reader into a sage's way of thinking and equalizes the relationship between Chuang Tzu the master/enlightened storyteller and the ignorant listener.

Another, more famous example of narrative in the *Chuang Tzu* is a story where Chuang Tzu dreamt he was a butterfly. In the dream, he was happy with himself and fluttered around as he pleased, unaware of his actual existence as Chuang Tzu. When Chuang Tzu awoke however, he was unmistakably himself, but "he didn't know if he was Chuang Tzu who had dreamt he was a butterfly, or a butterfly dreaming he was Chuang Tzu" (W 2.49). This story illustrates the relativity of human perception through the sage's mind and creates two equal relationships. Chuang Tzu goes beyond simply telling the reader that the line between reality and fantasy is blurred (Chuang Tzu refers to this process as the *transformation of things*) by vividly depicting a first person realization of life's ambiguity from a sage's point of view (Lu 248). Chuang Tzu creates a relative equality and balance between how the reader should view the real world from the fantastical one by harmonizing them with Chuang Tzu's perspective.

In the *Chuang Tzu*, narratives also take the form of reconstructed anecdotes, where often times historical figures are placed into exaggerated and imagined stories in their historical and cultural context to reconstruct a narrative for greater rhetorical effect (Lu 254). For example, Chuang Tzu tells a story about how Confucius saw a man standing atop a

famous waterfall in China, where shortly after viewing the man, Confucius saw him dive into the waters, which he assumed was meant as a means to end his life. "But after the man had gone a couple hundred paces, he came out of the water and began strolling along the base of the embankment, his hair streaming down, singing a song." Confucius looked at the man stunned and asked how this was possible, to which the man replied: "I have no way. I began with what I was used to, grew up with my nature, and let things come to completion with fate. I go under the swirls and come out with the eddies, following along the way the water goes and never thinking about myself. That's how I stay afloat" (W 126).

Chuang Tzu introduces the reader to Confucius at the start of the story to put the sage's mind on display in a way that forms a relationship based on equality between the reader and Chuang Tzu. Similarly, Confucius's fascination with how the man survived the fall signifies that the actions of the man who jumped are likewise the actions of a sage. Therefore, in this story Chuang Tzu shows the reader that the sage's mind is not only an attainable thing, but is likewise applicable for, "to behold a character's state of mind is to experience it oneself, if only for a moment" (Kirkwood 16). In IR, Foss and Griffin established the principle of equality as a means to create relationships of equality absent oppression and persuasive influence. Chuang Tzu (a sage) depicts Confucius (another sage) as being surprised and astounded by the actions of an ordinary man. The ordinary man, however, is an implied depiction of the reader and Confucius's recognition of the man's ability is Chuang Tzu's way of opening up the reader's mind and elevating him or her to the same level as a sage.

Chuang Tzu gives the reader a way to experience what it means to “go under the swirls and come out with the eddies.” Offering one’s mind to another is an attempt to establish an equal relationship that is not based on influence or domination. The *Chuang Tzu*’s narrative style exudes a creative and fictitious atmosphere that allows readers to access the inner workings of a sage’s mind and see what proper accordance with *dao* and *de* looks like. Chuang Tzu, by offering readers a glimpse into a sage’s mind, establishes an underlying concept that resonates with IR’s principle of equality.

As a second rhetorical strategy, Chuang Tzu stylistically introduces a lingering skepticism of language present in every instance of language use. He frequently depicts *yan* (language) and *dao* in relation to one another in the *Chuang Tzu* (in chapter 2, the word *dao* is used thirteen times, in which eleven of those times it was paralleled with a similar claim about *yan*); this connection is important because in the *Chuang Tzu*, *yan* is considered an obstacle and means of access to the *dao*, which, in turn, redefines the function of *yan* (Lu 244). Similar to the cyclical nature of *yin-yang*, the oscillating nature of *yan* and *dao* make it very difficult for either *yan* or *dao* to escape from the other’s influence. The intertwining of *yan* and *dao* developed Chuang Tzu’s skepticism of *yan* forcing him to question why it must be intangibly linked to *dao*. His skepticism can most likely be partially linked to the need to promote Daoism against competing schools of thought such as Mohism, Legalism and Confucianism. Chuang Tzu embraced the Daoist system as antithetical to the way other schools conceptualized language. Chuang Tzu, in a way that stands out from any other ancient tradition, attached his skepticism of language to Daoism much like Mencius introduced a divine sense to the Confucian principle *ren*.

In the *Chuang Tzu*, language's ability to create distinction functions as a dichotomizing element. It forces a natural skepticism in the reader that asks whether or not language can properly function as a tool for cultivating knowledge and wisdom. This skepticism is displayed in the *Chuang Tzu* when it says, "there is left, there is right, there are theories, there are debates, there are divisions, there are discriminations, there are emulations, and there are contentions" (W 2.44). The use of "contentions" shows the reader that when language is used to point out dichotomized opposites, the different and uncompromising perceptions of reality can cause likewise uncompromising mind frames. This state of uncompromising thought is what Chuang Tzu believed "led to conflicts and struggle such as wars and personal attacks at the social and individual levels" (Lu 244). Similar to the *Daodejing*, the *Chuang Tzu* is skeptical of socially constructed systems of ethics and virtue *because* of their reliance on language.

Chuang Tzu's skepticism of language (as a rhetorical device) can be divided into two separate concepts: *wu yan* (no language) and *wang yan* (forget language), which are used to "free oneself from the captivity of language, accentuate one's attention to ideas, and allow things to develop by their own nature" (Lu 245). The first, *wu yan*, emphasizes silence in the *Chuang Tzu*, "You may speak all your life long and you will never have said anything" (W 27.304). Chuang Tzu implies that there is a difference between *speaking* and *speaking with purpose*. IR's principle of immanent value looks for the true worth in everything and never sees a person or object as lacking value. Therefore, by valuing *wu yan*, Chuang Tzu is both valuing the immanent value of not speaking as well as increasing the relevant worth of speaking whenever speech is needed.

From a historical standpoint, it is likely that the *Chuang Tzu's* conceptualization of *wu yan* was a borrowed idea considering that Confucius likewise valued *wu yan* as a rhetorical device. In Confucius's *Analects* he says to a disciple, "Does Heaven speak? Yet the four seasons follow their course and the hundred creatures continue to be born. Does Heaven speak?" (Lays xxxi-ii) In IR, the immanent value of something is easily overlooked; therefore, one must be careful to consider the worth of every being as something that is always present and cannot be taken away. The *Chuang Tzu* depicts *wu yan* in a similar manner: "Eloquence is not as good as silence. The Way cannot be heard; to listen for it is not as good as plugging up your ears" (W 22.240). Both Confucius and Chuang Tzu's words put the emphasis on what is *not* being said (*wu yan*) in order to value the inner worth, the immanent value, of the *dao*.

The second concept of skepticism, *wang yan* (forget language), does not mean to abandon language in its entirety, "but rather to be free of its limitations so as to perceive the world of unlimited possibilities" (Lu 246). *Wang yan* is depicted in this *Chuang Tzu* narrative:

The fish trap exists because of the fish; once you've gotten the fish, you can forget the trap. The rabbit snare exists because of the rabbit; once you've gotten the rabbit, you can forget the snare. Words exist because of meaning; once you've gotten the meaning, you can forget the words" (W 26.302).

In this passage, Chuang Tzu portrays *yan* as a carefully wrapped package where the words themselves represent the wrapping paper, but what is truly valuable is what lies underneath the paper. Chuang Tzu's skepticism shows the reader that unless one sheds the

wrapping paper from the package, it is impossible to tell what truly lies behind the veil of *yan*. From Chuang Tzu's lingering skepticism, *yan* becomes a tool used to effectively obscure meaning in the *Chuang Tzu* with distractions like appealing presentations and careful packaged words while simultaneously denouncing itself through the use of *wu yan* and *wang yan*. This contradiction makes language seem arbitrary to the reader, which consequently should make the reader more sensitive to the existence of an underlying worth, or an immanent value, beyond what language alone can achieve.

Chuang Tzu glorifies the low and the ugly as a third rhetorical strategy in the *Chuang Tzu*. He gives readers a perspective that sees beauty as ugliness and physical deformity as completeness through the use of reversals. For Chuang Tzu, a Daoist who fully understands the relationship between *dao* and *de* dwells on an individual's inner beauty and wisdom, rather than making judgments on the basis of outward appearance (Lu 256). For Foss and Griffin, the principle of immanent value is a way of taking every person, even those who appear invaluable, and seeing their true inner worth in order to avoid dominant or oppressive modes of communication. It is an endorsement of actively looking for the value in others, which often times can appear ugly, dispensable, or undesirable.

The *Chuang Tzu's* glorification of the low cogently aligns with IR's principle of immanent value in the following dialogue between Chuang Tzu and a crippled man: "The Master and I have been friends for nineteen years and he's never once let on that he's aware I'm missing a foot." To which Chuang Tzu replied, "if virtue is preeminent, the body will be forgotten. But when men do not forget what can be forgotten, but forget what cannot be forgotten---that may be called true forgetting" (W 5.75). In this story, the ability to

see and never forget indicates that the crippled man's master understands *dao* because he looks beyond physical deformity and assesses the crippled man's true worth, his immanent value.

In another example illustrating the same point, an innkeeper who had two concubines, one beautiful and the other ugly, treated the ugly one as a proper lady, while the beautiful one was treated as a servant. When asked the reason, a young boy of the inn replied, "The beautiful one is only too aware of her beauty, and so we don't think of her as beautiful. The ugly one is only too aware of her ugliness, and so we don't think of her as ugly" (Lu 256 & W 20.220). Chuang Tzu portrays the innkeeper as a representation of a sage because, while his methods may seem cruel to the beautiful concubine and unfair to the ugly one, his true intention is to expand both of his concubine's minds. *Yin-yang*, for example, is hyphenated in order to express that the two concepts exist as one; that everything is always in relation to itself and has two sides. The innkeeper recognizes that both of his concubines can only see half of themselves, the beautiful one only knows that she is beautiful and the ugly one only knows that she is ugly. Using a reversal, the *Chuang Tzu* portrays the innkeeper as a sage who wants his concubines to realize that they are both beautiful and ugly.

Chuang Tzu's reversal strategy took what was seen as ugly and made it beautiful; it took what was seen as low and made it high and it took what was seen as useless and made it useful. In the following example Chuang Tzu glorifies the useless by saying, "Fool, fool--- don't spoil my walking! I walk a crooked way---don't step on my feet. The mountain trees do themselves harm; the grease in the torch burns itself up. The cinnamon can be eaten and

so it gets cut down; the lacquer tree can be used and so it gets hacked apart. All men know use of the useful, but nobody knows the use of the useless!" (W 4.63) In this passage, the *Chuang Tzu* glorifies the low and the ugly in order to indirectly invite readers to understand it's meaning in a different way; one that sees the useful as useless and values the useless as useful. In a way comparable to Laozi's *Daodejing*, the *Chuang Tzu* plunges its readers into a state of aporia and self-doubt with the hope that readers will look inward for answers to their confusion. In a sense, they must acknowledge their own immanent value before attempting to assign value claims such as "useful" or "useless".

In order to understand Chuang Tzu's contradictions, readers must accept that ideals such as 'good' and 'bad' or 'right' and 'wrong' are just half of a broader, more inclusive perspective. If everything is simultaneously good and bad, right and wrong, useful and useless, then people will not choose to value one specific idea over another. One's immanent value becomes plainly visible because there is no desire to favor one side over another. The *Chuang Tzu*, in a way that resonates with Foss and Griffin's principle of immanent value, reverses readers' idea of what is beautiful and what is ugly so that any and every possibility is seen as unique and valuable.

Chuang Tzu brilliantly utilized a rhetorical style that provoked his readers to discover for themselves what true virtue was. He combined his natural skepticism of language with the use of metaphors and anecdotes to portray language reversals that glorified the low and ugly and established puzzling contradictions and thought experiments. All of these were rhetorical tactics meant to show readers the inherent ambiguity in language so that they might look inward for answers to their own questions in

a time when creating new ideas was both encouraged and competitive. Foss and Griffin, in their efforts to equalize human relationships and recognize the value of every living being, display a harmonic resonance with the rhetorical values found in the *Chuang Tzu*. In order to uncover such a method, an individual must shift their reliance on external influences toward a direction that cultivates subjective and unique ideas. Both IR and the *Chuang Tzu* guide their readers down a path that accentuates one's agency in the present moment.

Conclusion

The *Daodejing* and the *Chuang Tzu* showcase stylistic commonalities such as paradoxical word use, metaphorical narratives, and strategies of reversal to help readers discover their own unique perspective on *dao* and *de*. The *Daodejing* focused on employing a nameless strategy (*wu ming*) that used paradoxes and reversals in order to prevent readers from taking action while under the influence of social constructs. The *Chuang Tzu*, on the other hand, stressed that readers should be wary of language because of its divisive nature. Chuang Tzu accomplished this by using colorful portrayals of historically reconstructed anecdotes and narratives to emphasize the power of silence (*wu yan*-no language) and detachment (*wang yan*-forget language) from language.

As individual texts, both the *Daodejing* and the *Chuang Tzu* represent a unique construction that offers productive values for contemporary rhetorical scholarship. When the texts are juxtaposed, however, a more complete and cohesive image comes into view that topologically situates Laozi and Chuang Tzu as a part of a larger ancient Chinese rhetorical tradition; a tradition composed of "traditions". Together, the two traditions reify

ancient Chinese philosophical concepts by providing stylistic similarities that resonate with Foss and Griffin's contemporary invitational principles of equality and immanent value.

Laozi and Chuang Tzu goad readers to discover their own worth and voice by discarding external influences and social constructs to allow for a free flowing and subjective mind that emphasizes non-resistance and detachment. Foss and Griffin want their readers to see all individuals as valuable and equal. An invitational scholar trusts that others are capable of governing themselves in a proper manner so that he or she may cultivate their own rhetorical perspective that does not try to "win" an argument. The bridge between IR and Daoism suggests that whenever traditional notions of rhetoric are de-centered in favor of *other* traditions, new spaces open up for rhetorical invention and discovery. The *Daodejing* and the *Chuang Tzu* effectively introduce rhetorical concepts that are not based on antagonism, force, and direct argumentation and persuasion. Instead, Daoist scholars apply strategies of indirectness, reversals, juxtaposition and metaphorical anecdotes to address core philosophical principles. The rhetorical forms of both Laozi and Chuang Tzu give way to a distinct ancient Chinese rhetorical style, one that resonates with contemporary feminist philosophers such as Foss and Griffin and offers a new platform from which to further jump into new levels of rhetorical insight.

The final section of this thesis entertains the implications of a project, like this one, that attempts to de-center the "traditional" Greco-Roman cannon in favor of a cross-cultural perspective. It will also address the "problem" with a system that promotes inclusiveness, but specifically excludes Aristotelian rhetoric and other traditional forms that emphasize rhetoric as persuasion.

Implications

This thesis compares the communicative traditions of ancient Confucianism and Daoism to Sonja Foss and Cindy Griffin's invitational rhetoric in an attempt to identify similarities between non-Western traditions and contemporary rhetorical scholarship. In the preceding chapters, I looked at the rhetorical styles of Mencius, Chuang Tzu, Laozi and Confucius, in which I recognized a variety of persuasive tactics ranging from the use of dialectical juxtaposition, strategies of reversal and metaphorical anecdotes, to an inherent skepticism of language that glorifies the ugly as beautiful and the useless as useful. The goal for both Confucian and Daoist scholars was to break down a person's fundamental understanding of the world and reshape it based on a certain set of ancient Chinese principles: for Confucius and Mencius these would be the philosophical notions of *ren*, *li*, and *zhong yong*; for Laozi and Chuang Tzu these would be the concepts of *dao*, *de*, and *wu-wei*. These principles guided followers into living ritualized lives based on either a righteous and moral Confucian path, or a Daoist path that has no path. The connections shared between Confucianism and Daoism suggest there exists a deeper chasm of rhetorical connections and implications to be uncovered in ancient non-Western traditions, many of which resemble the theories and values of contemporary scholarship. The work done in this thesis intervenes at the precise juncture between works done on ancient non-Western traditions (i.e. Kennedy, Lu and Lipson) and the works of contemporary theorists like Foss and Griffin.

In my research I uncovered a resonance between the ancient Confucian and Daoist traditions and the principles of invitational rhetoric as put forth by Sonja Foss and Cindy

Griffin. Their invitational values resonate in a harmonic way with Confucianism and Daoism's attempt to break down social constructs through notions of *wu-wei* (non action), inner agency, and detachment from outside influences and labels. Both traditions established sets of principles that were intermingled with each scholar's philosophical perspective and many of these principles were similar to Foss and Griffin because they deemphasized the role of "force" and sought to expand conversation beyond argumentation and persuasion. In this final section, I want to step outside this project and think about what it really means to find a resonance between ancient non-Western rhetorical traditions and the kinds of critiques that contemporary scholars have of the "classical" tradition. I want to emphasize that these implications are not specific to Confucius, Mencius, Laozi or Chuang Tzu, but are rather focused on what the implications are of doing this type of project as a whole.

Three major implications resulted from the work done in this thesis, the first of which addresses how this project attempts to de-center Aristotelian rhetoric by utilizing texts that are both outside the Greco-Roman tradition and resistant to traditional Aristotelian conceptions of rhetoric. The foundation of the research done in the two preceding chapters is based on rhetorical concepts that are unrelated to the Aristotelian idea of rhetoric as persuasion and argumentation. For example, Confucius used indirectness and ambiguity as a rhetorical device to help his readers cultivate a proper understanding of Confucian principles such as *ren* and *li*. As a result, Confucius's indirect style cultivated "silence" as a rhetorical trope. Neither silence nor indirectness rhetorically function in a way that aligns with the logical, analytical and rational ideals of Aristotle. Laozi and Chuang Tzu, on the other hand, used paradoxes and fables in order to

catalyze their readers' own inventive process and subsequent discovery of meaning on a subjective level void of external influences. From a Daoist perspective, when one turns inward for answers the idea that any one argument is correct over another through the "force" of argumentation is absurd. Although both traditions harmonize with contemporary scholars such as Foss and Griffin, neither of the two use "traditional" notions of rhetoric that imply rational, logical or argumentative styles of persuasion. The space in which this thesis resides does not need a scaffolding based on Aristotelian or traditional Greco-Roman rhetoric because it constructs its own foundation using the influences of traditions without excluding any particular one.

Foss and Griffin have often been critiqued that IR falls victim to itself because of its opposition to patriarchal and oppressive forms of speech; by critiquing Aristotle, Foss and Griffin are further centering him. In this thesis, I aim to open up a broader dialogue for contemporary rhetorical traditions by de-centering Aristotelian rhetoric and focusing on "traditions" instead of a classical tradition. This is by no means an exclusion of Aristotelian and "traditional" rhetorical concepts, but rather a way of widening the range for which we can understand what the greater idea of "rhetoric" is.

It is quite difficult, however, to fully escape dichotomous modes of thinking, which Foss and Griffin have often been critiqued for. As a result, the second implication of this project deals with IR's failure to embrace its own core concept of being invitational. Foss and Griffin, in forwarding their idea of invitational rhetoric, do so in a polemic way that offers the reader one of two options: either embrace patriarchal and oppressive traditional rhetorical concepts, or denounce Aristotelian rhetoric in favor of an invitational style. What

ends up happening is that Foss and Griffin's entire argument gets situated on a binary that once again emphasizes traditional rhetorical ideas because of its efforts to resist them. My purpose in this thesis is to embrace the idea of invitational rhetoric on a fundamental level that does not draw lines of opposition between rhetorical traditions, but rather allows both traditional and nonwestern scholars to enter into conversations that otherwise could not occur.

From a cross-cultural rhetorical perspective, contemporary scholars can discuss the resonating and harmonic similarities between, for example, Plato and Aristotle's use of dialectics in relation to ancient Chinese scholars' use of dialectical juxtaposition. At the same time, scholars who push against Aristotelian notions of rhetoric can find productive similarities with ancient nonwestern traditions, such as IR's three core principles that resonate with many of the rhetorical values found in both ancient Confucianism and Daoism. Furthermore, rhetorical devices such as metaphors and analogies, strategies of reversal, implied rituals, and appeals to morality can take on broader and more inclusive meaning by comparing the different ways each is used in different traditions. This thesis aims to embrace IR's core principles in order to look at conversation and rhetorical theory in a way absent oppositional and polemic modes of thinking.

My final implication deals with the nature of invitational rhetoric as a catch-22 of persuasion. Ryan and Natalle beautifully articulate this conundrum by situating IR as a form of philosophical hermeneutics; "(when) an interpreter tries to make sense of a text by constantly reassessing pre-conceived meanings in light of new ones gained in the process of trying to read to understand" (Ryan & Natalle 78). Foss and Griffin's resistance to the idea of

persuasion establishes a set of hermeneutics based on invitational concepts that, by doing so, grants rhetors the ability to heuristically apply IR as a persuasive tactic. Any further attempt at adjusting IR in an effort to de-center persuasion merely recycles the process of providing new and revised means of persuasion. Once a rhetor realizes that IR is merely a tool to be used, then they can transcend the invitation-persuasion game of philosophical cat and mouse and develop a fundamentally inclusive understanding of rhetoric. IR can never fully be based on persuasion or invitation because it has no purpose beyond what a rhetor uses it for.

In summation, this thesis addresses the need for cross-cultural connections to be made in contemporary scholarship and offers examples of how such work can be done. This work, however, remains incomplete in order to allow room for expanding even further beyond the ideas put forth here. Cross-cultural scholarship does not simply provide answers, but rather provokes new and interesting questions. These questions fuel the necessary curiosity for academic exploration and provide a way to take the fundamental principle of inclusive thinking and apply it to nonwestern traditions, which then can be taken and reapplied to Western scholarship. My final thoughts suggest that the next step for a project such as this would be to examine the ways that IR's three principles come back and affect contemporary feminist theory. In what ways do the discoveries made in Daoist and Confucian texts come back and contribute to feminist values and principles?

Discussions on immanent value, self-determination and equality within certain feminist circles can be enriched by the work that I am doing in that many of their shared values are reinforced and, in some cases, take on new meaning. For example, the

relationship of equality and dialectical juxtaposition, found particularly in the Confucian texts, displays the ineffable connection between dialectical conversation and feminist values that seek to equalize relationships by eliminating the dominance and oppression that typically characterizes them. This reinforces the idea that all conversations are initially rooted in values of equality. Furthermore, the principle of immanent value can be strengthened when juxtaposed with Daoist scholars' use of reversals that help draw out and make visible the value in things deemed 'useless', ugly', or 'lowly'. Understanding that there are two sides to every relationship, a positive and a negative, a *yin* and a *yang*, helps readers conceptualize what exactly feminist scholars mean when they refer to something's immanent value. Both of these examples help show that the 'cross' in cross-cultural scholarship is not a one-way street, but instead travels back and forth, enriching both sides simultaneously through the shared values that intermingle in projects such as these.

All four of the scholars I studied embraced (to a certain degree) the concept that an individual must look inward before relying on anything else. Contemporary scholarship has grown so large, that many valuable and unique rhetorical insights found in cultures and traditions other than ancient Greece or Rome are overlooked because we, as scholars, often fail to see the forest through the trees. If we rely too much on one way of thinking about rhetoric, then we are deflecting all the other ways it can be conceived. By turning to ancient and nonwestern traditions, many rhetorical concepts are reified in the "traditional" canon because of the way they were used elsewhere. Contemporary scholars should see "Rhetoric" as being a tapestry composed of many different traditions, all of which have points of intersection and juxtaposition that can offer new ways of looking at the larger idea of rhetorical scholarship.

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Biography

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