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in memoriam

Ulrich Unger (1930–2006)
Just a week after his 76th birthday, Ulrich Unger, the doyen of Early China studies in Germany, passed away in Münster. Unger was born in Leipzig, the son of a painter and varnisher. Skipping one year during his studies at the König Albert Gymnasium in Leipzig, he entered the University of Leipzig in 1948, where he majored in Egyptian and Chinese, and studied several other Oriental languages such as Sumerian and Sanskrit as minors. After graduation in 1952, he continued his studies in classical sinology to receive a “Dr.phil.” in July 1956 with a dissertation on The Negatives in the Shijing (85 pp., unpublished).

He left the German Democratic Republic during the fall of the same year and first became lecturer in the Institute of Linguistics at the University of Freiburg in the Federal Republic, before switching to the Oriental Institute at the same university, where he established, more or less single handedly, the subject of sinology. Unger received his “Habilitation” in 1964 with a monumental study and translation of Western Zhou bronze inscriptions and their dating, which remains unpublished.

In 1966 Unger accepted the chair in Sinology at the University of Münster, where he spent the rest of his academic career until retirement a decade ago. In his research he steadily pursued fundamental research in the best 19th century sense of the word, i.e., with the ethos of a stunningly erudite, indefatigable philological polymath, who tried no less than to establish a comprehensive compendium (Grundriss) for sinology, much like the great handbooks available in Classical Philology. Many of the results—a nine volume grammar of Classical Chinese, a giant card file dictionary of Classical Chinese, and an encyclopedic dictionary of Chinese antiquity covering everything from philosophical terms to material culture—were partly circulated among colleagues in Germany and elsewhere, but only a fraction was ever formally published. These include, most notably:


Unger was also an extremely prolific writer of short research notes on linguistic, philological, textual, historical and archaeological problems, which were serialized in his *samizdat* circulars entitled *Hao-ku* 好古, a format reminiscent of Boodberg’s *Hutian Hanyue Fangzhu* notes, or Kennedy’s *Wennti*, but continued over a period spanning four decades and covering hundreds of beautifully executed pages. Most of these and the more formal contributions to journals are listed in the following Festschrift:


Apart from his genuine interest in virtually all ancient languages and written cultures, Unger also studied medieval Chinese poetry, and, occasionally, even read Lu Xun and some other Republican authors. He never visited China during his lifetime, but wrote in a beautiful Chinese calligraphy and pronounced his tones remarkably correctly. Unger was also a semi-professional black and white photographer, who owned one of the largest photo-archives about the city of Venice in the world, which he meticulously documented during many visits. Beyond the stiff manners of the Saxonian gentleman and a sometimes ostentatious disdain for the modern world around him, he had a very subtle sense of humor and an inspiring passion for his research and teaching subjects, which many of his former students describe with boundless admiration. He is survived by his wife and daughter.

Sinology has lost one of its greatest scholars: a true philologist, if there ever was one. 惜乎，吾見其進也，未見其止也!

Wolfgang Behr
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Abstracts

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Notes on a Case of Illicit Sex from Zhangjiashan: a Translation and Commentary

張家山《奏讞書》: 奸

This essay concerns the single case of illicit sex included in the Zouyan shu excavated at Zhangjiashan. Interest in this particular case has been high, since the case offers indisputable evidence regarding the separation of legal and moral principles in relation to domestic affairs at the time the judgment was rendered. Previous theories about the interpretation of the case have focused upon the quality and timeliness of the evidence brought to the judges for their consideration, while this essay draws attention to the probable relevance to the case of contemporary laws on residency, inheritance, and the proper ways to report crimes to higher authorities.

Edward L. Shaughnessy 夏含夷

A First Reading of the Shanghai Museum Bamboo-Strip Manuscript of the Zhou Yi

上博楚竹書《周易》初讀

This study introduces a bamboo-strip manuscript of the Zhou Yi or Zhou Changes purchased by the Shanghai Museum in 1994. The fragmentary manuscript includes 58 strips, about one-third of the received text of the Zhou Yi. Orthographic features suggest that it was copied in the southern state of Chu about 300 B.C.E. Although the manuscript includes numerous orthographic variants vis-à-vis the received text, it does show that the text was stable by this date
of copying. The most unusual feature of the manuscript is a pair of symbols written after the hexagram name and at the end of the hexagram text. Although several explanations of these symbols have been advanced, none of them appears to be convincing to date. A final question about the manuscript concerns the sequence of hexagrams in it. Since the binding straps of the manuscript had already decayed and the strips become disordered, and since each hexagram text begins on a new bamboo strip, no sequence is apparent. However, the physical circumstances of the strips, especially the points at which they are broken, may suggest that the sequence was more or less similar to that of the received Zhou Yi.

本文對上海博物館所藏戰國楚竹書《周易》寫本作初步介紹。這一寫本殘缺，所存部份包括58件，等於傳授《周易》的三分之一。從文字用法可知寫本作於戰國時代的楚國，時代為公元前300年前後。與傳授《周易》對比，寫本儘管含有不少異文，但是可以證明到此時《周易》的性質已經固定。除了卦劃、卦名和卦爻辭以外，寫本在各卦卦名後和上六上九爻辭後都附有一種符號，是寫本最重要的特點。對這些符號已有幾種解釋，不過本文以為這些解釋還缺乏說服力。本文另外討論寫本的卦序問題。因為寫本的編繩腐敗、竹簡分散，而每一卦都始於新的竹簡簡首，所以原來的卦序不清楚。然而，本文對竹簡的物質條件，特別是其殘缺的地方，做進一步考察，指出寫本的卦序和《周易》傳本的卦序大概基本上一致。

Gopal Sukhu 蘇古柏

Yao, Shun, and Prefiguration: The Origins and Ideology of the Han Imperial Genealogy

堯舜與徵兆: 漢王室譜系的起源與意識形態

With the weakening of the Zhou royal line many began to wonder if someone qualified to replace it might not be found in another lineage. The myth of the sage king Yao ceding his kingdom to Shun, an unrelated commoner, helped to make licit the yearning for such a figure, and at times argued for meritocracy, an ideal some thinkers counterposed against the sanctity of hereditary monarchy. After the fall of the Qin that ideal and the myth remained closely associated through most of the Former Han dynasty.

Sometime in the latter half of that period, however, certain scholarly circles connected with the imperial house began to develop the doctrine that the Han Lius were in fact descended from Yao, a doctrine which
became orthodoxy with the rise of Wang Mang. After the establishment of the Later Han dynasty, Guangwudi (r. 25–57) attempted to force this doctrine and a prophetic literature supporting it, called chenwei (usually translated apocrypha), on the newly rehabilitated Imperial Academy. Some of these texts were created by applying to the Spring and Autumn Annals a hermeneutic mode that many Western scholars still hold does not occur in the history of Confucian scholarship: typological allegory—in this case to show that the rise of the founder of the Han was prefigured in the Annals. Meanwhile, ideologues excluded from the academy, but favored by the emperors, were putting the image of Yao to an unprecedented use—to support an ideology wherein the right to rule was unquestionably tied to heredity regardless of merit.

This article discusses some of the political developments and the exegetical interventions that helped produce these new uses of the Yao/Shun myth.

Griet Vankeerberghen 方麗特女士

Choosing Balance: Weighing (quan 權) as a Metaphor for Action in Early Chinese Texts

尋找平衡: 先秦和秦漢文獻中作為行為隱喻的“權”

Texts from the Zhou and Han periods regularly use the term quan “to weigh” when describing or prescribing human action. This essay seeks
to determine precisely which concrete acts of weighing underlie the metaphorical application of the term to human action. A survey of the available textual and archaeological evidence shows that even before the Eastern Han, when steelyards became the most common weighing device, the act of weighing might have been executed and conceptualized in multiple ways. A similar conclusion is drawn from a survey of pictorial and literary references to metaphorical weighing in non-Chinese traditions. More precisely, I suggest three distinct possibilities: matching the object to be weighed with a known standard, determining which of two objects weighs heaviest, and, lastly, seeking the point at which the balance beam will gain or recover balance.

Early Chinese texts provide examples of all three (quan A, B, and C). Quan B became prominent especially during the 3rd century B.C.E., when persuaders discussed how every choice had negative as well as positive consequences. Quan A and C are attested in texts usually dated to the 4th century B.C.E. or before. In this essay I argue that it is quan C that became the dominant metaphor in moral-political discourse, and that it had two competing interpretations: it could refer either to the multiple ways in which a sage adapts his actions to the circumstances, or to a temporary lifting of moral standards during an emergency. Whereas scholars in the Han and Qing dynasties generally accepted that moral rules were not absolute, Song scholars were scandalized by the notion that deviations from the rule were part and parcel of moral action.

漢代及其以前的文獻通常用“權”來描述和規定人的行為。本文旨在分析究竟哪些具體的稱量行為構成了關於人類行動的隱喻。考古和文字方面的材料表明，即使在杆秤成為通用工具的東漢以前，稱量的行為就已經以多種方式被採用，並且被概念化了。對其他文化傳統的圖像和文學資料的研究也揭示了相似的結論。更確切地說，我認為稱量具有三種不同的可能性: (1) 參照一個已知的標準稱量; (2) 比較兩個不同物體的重量; (3) 尋找一個制衡點讓秤杆保持平衡。

在中國早期的文獻中，這三種可能性都得到了體現。其中第二種方式在公元前三世紀尤為突出，當時的說客在討論如何進行決策時，借這種方式說明每個選擇帶來的正面和負面的影響。而第一種和第三種方式通常在公元前四世紀或者早些的文獻中出現。我認為第三種方式在道德和政治話語中構成了一種主導性隱喻，並且有兩種相互抗衡的詮釋: 聖賢既可以根據具體情況採取變通的行為，也可以在緊急情況下暫時取消某種道德標準。儘管漢代和清代的學者普遍認為道德原則並不是絕對的，但是對於宋代學者來說，他們無法認同背離原則有時時為了保證道德操守這樣的觀念。