

Università Ca' Foscari Venezia

Dottorato di ricerca in Lingue, Culture e Società – indirizzo in Studi Orientali, 22° ciclo
(A. A. 2006/2007 – A.A. 2008/2009)

Gongsun Long and the *Gongsun Longzi*:
authorship and textual variation in a multilayered text

SETTORE SCIENTIFICO-DISCIPLINARE DI AFFERENZA: L-OR/21

Tesi di dottorato di Lisa Indraccolo, matricola 955351

Coordinatore del dottorato
Prof. Rosella Mamoli Zorzi

Tutore del dottorando
Prof. Tiziana Lippiello

To Andrea and Paola

“Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?”

“That depends a good deal on where you want to get to,” said the Cat.

“I don’t much care where - ” said Alice.

“Then it doesn’t matter which way you go,” said the Cat.

“ - so long as I get *somewhere*, ” Alice added as an explanation.

“Oh, you’re sure to do that, ” said the Cat, “if you only walk long enough.”

(L. Carroll, *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*, Chapter VI - Pig and Pepper)

“Was that a paradox?” asked Mr. Eskine. “I did not think so. Perhaps it was, Well, the way of paradoxes is the way of truth. To test reality we have to see it on the tight rope. When the verities become acrobats, we can judge them.”

(O. Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Chapter 3)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments	p. 7
Introduction	p. 8
1. Gongsun Long 公孫龍 : the character	
1.1. <i>Nomina sunt omina</i> : the <i>Mingjia</i> 名家 and Gongsun Long	p. 11
1.2. Gongsun Long's life: an outline	p. 21
1.3. The two Gongsun Longs in history: who's who – A brief account on Gongsun Long's name	p. 38
1.4. 「公孫龍, 趙人也」 ..or wasn't he? – Gongsun Long's place of origin	p. 43
1.5. Gongsun Long: a <i>Ru</i> , a Mohist or.. none of the two?	p. 46
1.5.1. The <i>Ru</i> hypothesis	p. 48
1.5.2. The Mohist hypothesis	p. 51
1.5.3. An alternative interpretation: Gongsun Long as <i>bianshi</i> 辯士	p. 54
2. Gongsun Longzi 公孫龍子: the text	
2.1. The <i>Gongsun Longzi</i> : text structure and the so-called “original chapters”	p. 60
2.2. <i>Gongsun Longzi</i> : Variations on a theme - <i>Daozang</i> 道藏 and <i>Shuofu</i> 說郛 editions face to face	p. 70
2.3. <i>Gongsun Longzi</i> - Other editions	p. 79
2.4. The <i>Gongsun Longzi</i> through the ages	p. 84
2.4.1. A commentary written by..Xie Xishen 謝希深?	p. 94
2.4.2. The <i>Suishu</i> 隋書 omission and the debate on the <i>Shoubai lun</i> 《守白論》	p. 95

3. The “original chapters” : *Baima Lun* 白馬論 and *Zhiwu Lun* 指物論

- 3.1. Crossing the Gate...And a white horse is no more a horse p. 102
 3.1.1. *Baima Lun*: structure and content p. 108
3.2. Translating the “original chapters”: a premise p. 123
3.3. *Baima Lun*: Translation p. 126
3.4. The paradox is not a paradox..? Final considerations on the White Horse argument p. 137
3.5. Pointing at things is no pointing: the originality of the *Zhiwu Lun* in the *Gongsun Longzi corpus* p. 139
3.6. *Zhiwu Lun*: Translation p. 146
 3.6.1. Structure and parallelism in the *Zhiwu Lun* p. 157

Conclusions p. 163

Appendix A : Additional translations

- Gongsun Longzi* : translation of *Jifu* 跡府 chapter 1 p. 169
Kongcongzi: translation of *Gongsun Long* chapter 12 (孔叢子卷第四·公孫龍第十二) p. 173

Appendix B : Rare texts

- Xie Xishen’s preface to the *Gongsun Longzi* (謝希深公孫龍子原序) p. 177
Preface to the *Shoubai Lun* (書程雲莊語錄後) p. 177

Appendix C : *Gongsun Longzi* Chinese text (*Shuofu/Daozang* variants)

- Baima Lun* 白馬論 p. 179

<i>Zhiwu Lun</i> 指物論	p. 182
<i>Jianbai Lun</i> 堅白論	p. 182
<i>Tongbian Lun</i> 通變論	p. 183
<i>Mingshi Lun</i> 名實論	p. 185
Bibliography	p. 186
Abstract	p. 233

Acknowledgements

First of all I want to thank my advisor, Prof. Tiziana Lippiello, for sharing with me all these years of hard work since I was an undergraduate student; moreover, Prof. Maurizio Scarpari, Prof. Attilio Andreini and Prof. Riccardo Fracasso were always supportive and ready to give me good advice.

I would also like to mention all the people that helped me and supported me during my stay in the Netherlands: Prof. Barend J. ter Haar, Dr. Paul van Els, Prof. Karel L. van der Leeuw, Prof. Burchard J. Mansvelt Beck, and all the guys of the *wenyan* reading group. A special thanks goes also to Prof. Rudolf Wagner for his warm welcome and useful suggestions during my stay at Heidelberg University.

Last but not least, here come “the near and the dear ones”. I want to thank my mother for being there for me anytime I needed her, supporting me and accepting me as I am, and Andrea for his irreplaceable support, tender loving care and patience. Finally, a warm embrace goes to all the friends that shared my path: Chiara, Berenika, Gaia, Giulia, Karolina, Kiru, Marcello, Marta, Mirko, Paolo, Patrizia, Rafał.

INTRODUCTION

The present work is organized in three interrelated parts, each analysing a different aspect of the *Gongsun Longzi* - or better say the *Gongsun Longzi* under different aspects. The first chapter is dedicated to the literary and pseudo-historical figure of Gongsun Long, dissolving a few doubts aroused on a possible case of homonymy, and providing an hypothetical reconstruction of the main events of his life as it is traded down by the tradition. The limits implicit in such an enterprise are obvious, since it is clear enough there is no proof Gongsun Long himself ever existed, but our intent is far from the purpose of achieving historical truth, so that a literary sketch based on almost fictional narratives will suits our needs: in fact, our goal here is trying to dispel the aura of superficiality and triviality that settled on his character – and consequently on all the arguments and debates associated with him - due to the harsh criticism his and our contemporaries both contributed to address to him. We will discover that Gongsun Long was not merely a court entertainer - an aspect which was utterly marginal in his active life – as he was primarily an expert politician and a shrewd diplomat, positively using his refined rhetorical skills in governmental practice. This is an important step in the necessary reevaluation of the *Gongsun Longzi* and requalification of its fame: if the character whose name is associated with the text and who became famous for discussing some of the topics which are included in it is using the materials which were at the basis of the composition of the *Gongsun Longzi* in diplomacy, politics or teaching, this will necessary lead to a different consideration of the paradoxes not as merely cases of *divertissement* for their own sake, but as proper argumentative techniques.

The second chapter is dedicated to the structure of the *Gongsun Longzi*, with a detailed comparison of textual variants occurring between the two most ancient editions available to us, the *Daozang* edition and the *Shuofu* edition. As it will be shown, though the *Daozang* edition is usually acknowledged as the best one, still this is not completely true as a few controversial passages are undoubtedly better understood in the light also of the valuable contribution provided by accurate comparison with the variants included in the *Shuofu* edition. In this part the overall structure of the text is described, showing

its essentially composite nature; such considerations help to debunk the myth of textual unity as far as our text is concerned: in fact, it is improper to talk of *a* text when dealing with the *Gongsun Longzi*, which is rather to be considered a later edition of a collection of individual texts with a proper history, that most probably underwent corruption and a process of later rearrangement. A particular attention is paid to the distinction made between “original chapters” (*Baima Lun* and *Zhiwu Lun*), which will be object of further more detailed study in chapter 3, and “corrupted chapters” (*Jifu*, *Jianbai Lun*, *Tongbian Lun*, *Mingshi Lun*); a brief description of the philosophical content and main topics treated in the latter is provided, in order to give the reader all the essential points of reference required for a better understanding also of the topics object of discussion in chapter three. The chapter ends with a rebuttal of the possibility that the *Gongsun Longzi* might have been misnamed as *Shoubai Lun* and that these two compositions could be one and the same text.

Finally, chapter three is dedicated to the so-called “original chapters”, the *Baima Lun* and the *Zhiwu Lun*, which are both considered as independent and individual units, part of a broader collection. After the paradoxes at the origin of these argumentations are discussed and illustrated with appropriate quotations, the two chapters are taken into consideration under a formal point of view, giving account of dialectical tropes and rhetorical techniques applied in the expositions of the topics at issue, with a particular stress on the relationship established with formal structure and construction of the argument in particular in the case of the *Zhiwu Lun*, due to the peculiarity that will be analysed below. I have proceeded to a careful interpretation and detailed explanation of the philosophical meaning of the contents of these two chapters, proposing a new personal view in interpreting the highly controversial terminology the *Gongsun Longzi* makes use of, trying to identify useful key terms and disentangle those essential conceptual knots that must be thoroughly understood in order to make sense of the whole texts. Finally, an accurate commented translation keeping in consideration textual variants analysed in chapter two follows.

Aim of the present study is to provide fresh insights and possibly open the way for new interpretative approaches useful in the understanding of the *Gongsun Longzi*, also keeping in mind the precious contributions given by recent scholarship and the epochal change our understanding of classical Chinese word underwent after the

startling archaeological discoveries in these last few years disclosed a brand new path to be taken, forcing us to face some challenging issues such as the question of authorship, of textual unity and stability, the interrelationship between the written and the oral, which have become central issue in the dialogue with ancient Chinese texts and cannot be ignored or overlooked while approaching a scientifically rigorous interpretative task.

CHAPTER 1

Gongsun Long 公孫龍 : the character

1.1 *Nomina sunt omina*: the *Mingjia* 名家 and Gongsun Long

Gongsun Long is a *bianzhe* 辯者 (diversely translated as expert in argumentation, debater, persuader) or *bianshi* 辯士 (a *shi* expert in dissertation)¹ who lived in the Warring States period, in a span of time comprised between ca 320-250 B.C.², been born - or at least have been living long – in the State of Zhao. Apparently, he had also disciples – as far as an episode³ in the *Huainanzi Daoyingxun* 淮南子·道應訓 tells – but only one is cited by name, Qi Muzi 綦母子⁴, briefly mentioned also by Liu Xiang in his *Bie Lu*⁵ while recalling the fatal meeting between his Master and Zou Yan, which caused Gongsun Long to be demoted.

Only later Gongsun Long has been classified as a member of the *Mingjia* 名家; this quite constraining label, commonly translated as “School of Names”, aims at the identification of a group of people skilled in argumentation and sharing a peculiar common interest in “names”, being part of the widespread broader phenomenon of the flourishing of politico-philosophical debates during the Warring States period (475-221

¹These terms – and my personal preference for their use when talking about Gongsun Long - will be discussed in detail at pp. XXX.

²According to Hu Shi 胡适, the date of birth should swing between 325 and 315 B.C., and the date of decease should be about 250 B.C. (See Hu Shi, 1963, p. 110; 1968, p. 90 or *id.*, 1997, p. 169); according to Hu Qu Yuan 胡曲园 and Chen Jin Kun 陈进坤 dates would be (314-249 B.C.) (See Hu and Chen, 1987, p. 4), Pang Pu 龐樸 suggest (325-250 B.C.) (Pang Pu, 1979, p.1) and Yang Junguang 楊俊光 proposes (320-250 B.C.) (Yang Junguang, 1991, p. 129); for Qian Mu 錢穆 the lifespan of Gongsun Long would have lasted between 60 and 70 years, basing his assumptions mainly on the *Zhanguo ce* 戰國策; following his reasoning, we would have (320-245 B.C.). For a more detailed attempt of reconstruction of the precise dates see Qian Mu, 1934, pp. 40-44.

³The anecdote with original text is quoted at page 30.

⁴Liu Xiang 劉向, 1965, *juan* 38/5b, p. 338.

⁵The source is quoted also by the *Shiji Pingyuanjun liezhuan* 史記平原君列傳ch. 76 (Sima Qian, 1963, p. 2370, note 2).

B.C.). The term *Mingjia* never shows up before the Han Dynasty, and was first coined by Sima Tan 司馬談 (165-110 B.C.) in his so-called *Liu jia zhi yaozhi* 六家之要指⁶(*Shiji* ch.130)⁷, where its specific focus is identified exactly in “names” (*zhuanjue yu ming* 專決於名). The term has been used ever since to classify works of the so-called Logicians⁸ in the Dynastic Histories* bibliographical catalogues and other similar bibliographical records.

For a long time, the *mingjia* has been underestimated and dismissed as a “school” of people with no deeper insights nor a steady morality, but merely interested in logical paradoxes and linguistic jokes *per se*, to the point that Gongsun Long has been recently defined a kind of “intellectual prankster”⁹. As it will be further discussed, this way of thinking is absolutely too restrictive and prejudiced, as there is a much profound inner substrate on which these apparently purely academic puzzles rely, being far away from a pure form of *divertissement* for its own sake.

In my opinion, this rather hostile negative approach derives at least in part from an incomplete, muddled or partial knowledge of the sociological background of Gongsun Long’s thought, as we can detect it and reconstruct it through the scattered episodes collected in many examples in the Masters’ literature; for many of the scholars who ventured into translation and textual analysis of the *Gongsun Longzi* didn’t know much¹⁰ – or thought it wouldn’t be necessary to go into depth, or even know anything at

⁶A list of six “schools” of thought (*Yin-yang* 陰陽, *Ru* 儒, *Mo* 墨, *Ming* 名, *Fa* 法, *Daode* 道德) identified by Sima Tan, each followed by a short description, included in *Shiji Taishigong zi xu* 太史公自序 ch. 130 (See Sima Qian, 1963, pp. 3288-3293).

⁷Sima Tan’s view would be politically oriented, as the final goal of the synthesis of all the diverse approaches represented by the six “trend” he identifies - and that reflect the reality of the politico-philosophical debate still taking place all around him – should be to reach an encompassing superior knowledge and unifying vision to be applied practically in governmental practice. See Smith 2003, according to whom for Sima Tan the word *jia* would be “a style of practice [...] defined by their political application” (p. 148).

⁸The names associated with the *Mingjia* mentioned in the *Hanshu Yiwenzhi* are altogether seven : Deng Xi 鄧析, Yiwen 尹文, Gongsun Long 公孫龍, Cheng Gongsheng 成公生, Huizi (Hui Shi) 惠子(惠施), Huang Gong 黃公 and Mao Gong 毛公; the *Zhuangzi Tianxia* 莊子天下 ch. 33 adds Huan Tuan 桓團 (*Zhuangzi jijie* 莊子集解, 1948, p. 298).

*All quotations from Dynastic Histories are taken from the *Siku Quanshu* 四庫全書 online version, <http://skqs.leidenuniv.nl/>.

⁹Fraser, 2005, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/school-names/>.

¹⁰ Cheng Chung-ying criticizes also those who hold their opinions having a superficial or partial knowledge of the whole *Gongsun Longzi*: “we need to have a full view of Gongsun Long in light of his existing writings and we can not simply draw conclusions on one or two chapters from the five essays attributed to him.” (Cheng Chung-ying, 1997, p. 139).

all – about Gongsun Long’s career as diplomat, as individual original thinker and as debater.

The predictable result is, most of these attempt of translation lack in accuracy and are guilty of ingenuity and presumption; they apply utmostly elaborated post-modern speculative approaches, indebted to formal-logic or propositional calculus¹¹, which were for sure far beyond any presumable original intention the author(s) of these texts might had conceived¹², wished to convey or even imagined to express in Chinese antiquity, arriving at the point of a neverending auto-referential vicious circle of one-way streets.

This is the reason why an entire paragraph of the present study will be dedicated to an as much as possible accurate reconstruction of Gongsun Long’s life, to go back to basics and see the text through different eyes¹³ and understand it “*more sinico*”¹⁴, an attempt to show on an informed basis what can be – and what absolutely cannot be – postulated without any forcing about the philosophical thought that finds its expression in the collection of texts collated, gathered together and transmitted to us as a sole *corpus*, known as *Gongsun Longzi*¹⁵.

Now going back to the origins of the *Mingjia* appellation as literary and philosophical category, after Sima Tan’s first attempt of classification, we find Ban Gu

¹¹This logico-mathematical approach is employed for instance by Chmielewski, Chikoski, Fung Yiu-ming, Lai Whalen, Lucas, Rieman, Reding among others; an interesting survey on some of these attempts can be found in Volkov, 1992, pp. 23-24, note 7. According to the Chinese scholar Zhou Changzhong 周昌忠, Gongsun Long’s thought would be anyway a logic one, but still very basic, a kind of *proto-logic*, lacking the further decisive step leading to the elaboration of a properly structured philosophical system; according to him, Gongsun Long wasn’t able to develop a true formal logic as he couldn’t rely on an acquired solid knowledge in the field of natural sciences, which at his time were still at a very starting point (on the contrary, for instance, of what happened in ancient Greece), nor he engaged in a systematic study of grammar, which strengthens formality and regularity of a logic system, transforming logic into a logico-formal system based on inference: 「公孙龙[...]尽管进行了逻辑的研究,却没有创造出[...]形式逻辑」(See Zhou Changzhong, 1991, pp. 80, 95-98; quotation to be found at page 95).

¹²I personally find Bo Mou’s attitude quite outrageous and inappropriate, as exemplified by the statement that “the primary purpose [...] is to enhance our understanding of a thinker’s ideas and their due implications of philosophical significance via relevant effective conceptual and explanatory resources, whether or not those resources were actually used by the thinker himself/herself. [...] To elaborate and understand the thinker’s ideas does not amount to figuring out exactly what explicit ideas she actually thought of[.]” (Mou, 2007, p. 467).

¹³Essentially, our aim is to do what Boltz calls “understand the texts *more sinico*” (*Id.*, 1985, p. 313). On this topic, and the avoidance of the use of contemporary logic superstructures see also Lucas, 2005, p. 350.

¹⁴Boltz, 1985, p. 313.

¹⁵“The work known since the 7th century as the *Kung-sun L’ung-tzū* was compiled at some time between the 4th and the 6th centuries [...]” (Graham, 1986a, p. 163), while single chapters or clusters of chapters were already existing as individual texts with a proper history and evolution before their final settlement and assemblage in the *Gongsun Longzi*.

班固 (32-92 AD)'s: in his *Hanshu* 漢書 bibliographical catalogue, the Han historian provides an even more marked normative attempt of systematization of the diverse trends of thought that developed during the Warring States period into literary and cultural categories, defined by clear-cut boundaries. Ban Gu identifies nine different philosophical streams (*jiu liu* 九流), and engages himself in an factitious and rather improbable attempt to let any of them derive from some ancient Zhou bureau or official department; in the specific case, the *mingjia* stems apparently from the entourage of protocol officers working for the Office of Rites (「名家者流, 蓋出於禮官」)¹⁶, as previously stated also by Liu Xiang 劉向 (79-8 B.C.) in his *Bie lu* 別錄: 「名家者流出於禮官」¹⁷.

Strange as it may seem, this apparently bizarre *a posteriori* reconstruction, even if figment of a later process of homologation and systematization¹⁸, nonetheless happens not to be totally ungrounded: in fact, the *mingjia* experts' true intentions have been considered akin to – if not even sometimes coinciding with – the Confucian¹⁹ ideal of *zhengming* 正名.²⁰

The focus of the Dialecticians' discourse is forced to shift to a more ethic level: Ban Gu tries his very best to make a Confucian out of Gongsun Long and his peers, stating that the true hidden aim of their speculations would actually be devoted to the realization of a superior goal, nothing less than the Confucian rectification of names; this is clear sign of the Han tendency to moralize and reallocate any individual

¹⁶“The tradition of the *Mingjia* probably derives from the Office of Rites. In antiquity titles (*ming*) and ranks were not the same, and the rites also differed in their regulations. Confucius said: ‘It is necessary that words (*ming*) be rectified! If words are not rectified, then speech will not be in order. If speech is not in order, then state projects will not be completed.’ This is [the *Mingjia*] strength. But when it is employed for overfine distinctions, the it is only destructive and divisive.” (tr. by Kidder Smith, 2003, p. 144; about the ascription of each trend of thought to a particular official department see also p. 131). See also Makeham, 1988, p. 10.

¹⁷Liu Xiang, 1965, *juan* 38/6b, p. 338.

¹⁸“Text that were written in Han times[...] are what Bernard Karlgren has called ‘systematizing texts’ that do not simply record ancient customs but ‘represent the endeavours of the Confucian school to determine what the beliefs and rites should properly be’.” (Vogelsang, 2002, p. 3; Karlgren’s quotation is taken from Karlgren, 1946, p. 203). Anyway it must be also clarified that, as Csikszentmihalyi and Nylan conveniently pointed out, “the impulse to assign early beliefs to academic ‘schools’ predicated on text-based traditions corresponds more closely with the genealogizing tendencies of the Eastern Han and post-Han periods than with the early Han realities.” (Csikszentmihalyi and Nylan 2003, p. 60). On the necessary shift and projection onto the Eastern Han period of the notion of terms such “school”, “scholastic lineage” and “text-based tradition”, see also Nylan, 2000.

¹⁹ Confucian, of course, but not only (See for instance Smith, 2003, p. 142, note 35).

²⁰ See Graham, 1978, p. 198.

persuader in a grand plan of systematization and classification, a polished categorical scheme through whose lenses interpret, understand and classify any cultural product of human thought. This “ethic shift” in considering the *Mingjia*’s literary and philosophical contents was aided by the almost obsessive attention these thinkers paid to the correctly fitting use of appropriate names to describe the corresponding actualities these names are conventionally called to signify; as to the obviously unpopular tendency to dialectically thrash and prove them wrong those who are unable to understand the crucial necessity for a correct mutual correspondence *ming-shi* 名實 (names-actualities), or cannot break through every-day thinking categories to extensively perceive the complexity and the malleability of language, a challenging yet fascinating possibility and exercise for the mind but at the same time a threat to a coherent appropriate use of language and consequent possible subversion of meanings and corresponding roles.

Nevertheless, as Michael Nylan brilliantly remarked, “of course it makes no sense to think of ‘schools’ (*chia*)²¹ in the pre-Han [...] period, if ‘schools’ implies strict sectarian divisions between well-defined groups. Evidence for the pre-Han period shows that the Warring States thinkers [...] borrowed from one another continually, apparently without fear of crossing potential lines between the various ‘scholastic lines’ (*chia*) established by various thinkers. [...] Such eclecticism continued apace in Han, long after Ssu-ma Tan’s catalogue divided works in the imperial collection into six main categories”²², let’s not even talk about the attempt of leading back each supposed “trend” or “school” to any bureaucratic department like in Ban Gu’s reconstruction: as Ryden suggests, “the Han use of the term[...] is a classifying notion applied to ‘certain tendencies’ of thought”²³, and I would argue even further, that in the specific case in Han times its use - due to the institution of categories apt to classify the materials stored in the Imperial Library²⁴ - is merely literary and functional and didn’t meant really any “school”, “trend” or even “thought” associated to individual thinkers of the past: it is just a sort of useful classification for books, nothing more than the labels on the shelves of our

²¹ “In Tan’s time, *jia* meant ‘people (with expertise in something)’” (Smith, 2003, p. 130, 147; Petersen, 1995, in particular pp. 3, 34-40). For a brilliant dissertation on the anachronistic employ of the term “school” before the Eastern Han, see Csikszentmihalyi and Nylan 2003.

²² Nylan, 1999, p. 50, note 82.

²³ Ryden, 1996, p. 5.

²⁴ “The writer looks at the contents of the imperial library and classifies the books setting out the broad features which define each group identified.” (*Id.*, p. 8).

contemporaries bookstores.²⁵ Finally, I personally agree with Petersens' general definition of *jia* as "person" and of the various *jia* described by Sima Tan as experts²⁶ in a specific field or masters of a particular technique: "when a name denoting a field of learning is postfixed by *chia*, a person especially cognizant within this field is referred to, this 'specialist' *chia* being a derivation of the *chia* referring to persons in general"²⁷; accordingly, *Mingjia* would mean "name specialists"²⁸.

Gongsun Long's unconventional attitude, his taste for subverting reality and making use of language paradoxes to outtalk opponents (whether political or dialectical) at his own please caused him to be eventually assimilated to "court jesters" – more conveniently called "ironical critics"²⁹ (滑稽 *huaji* or *guji*³⁰), which is an interesting interpretation yet unfortunately not fitting the case. The association probably arose because *guji* means "a quick-witted person (who) can [deliberately] mix up similarities and differences"³¹, which sounds evidently familiar to those who know that Gongsun Long was used to engage himself in debating analogous arguments³². Anyway, considering him a sort of court jester or professional entertainer is quite bizarre³³, and if we take as a starting point Yenna Wu's definition of the "four essential elements of satire" (aggression, judgement, play and laughter)³⁴, pivotal characteristic and protagonist of the ironical critics' speech, we can easily see that nor in anecdotes on Gongsun Long's life nor in the collection of texts that bears his name there is any appreciable trace of satire. Even if - according to available sources - in at least three

²⁵ Here comes the necessity for a more accurate and diachronic distinction of the peculiar meaning associated to the term, according to different authorial use and necessarily contextualized in a certain period of time.

²⁶ The interpretation of Sima Tan's use of *jia* as "expert" is supported also by Csikszentmihalyi and Nylan (see *Id.* 2003).

²⁷ Petersen, 1995, p. 34.

²⁸ *Id.*, p. 35.

²⁹ On this specific topic see for instance Knechtges 1971, Pokora 1973, Trauzettel 1993 and 1999, Wu Y. 1998 and 1999.

³⁰ On the origin of the term *huaji*, see *Lidai xiaoshuo biji xuan* 歷代小說筆記選, 1958, p. 260.

³¹ Wu Y., 1998, p. 15

³² Knechtges remarks that "the term *hua-chi* [...] in the early period meant something like 'smooth talker'", another aspect in common with the figure of Gongsun Long. (See Knechtges, 1971, p. 83).

³³ The character of the *huaji* resembles in demeanour and appearance the Shakespearean jester or fool; "almost all of the *hua-chi* stories collected in the *Records of the Historian* involve a jester who makes a moral point to his ruler by means of a witty speech full of sarcasm and irony" (*Id.*), in a sort of indirect remonstrance.

³⁴ *Id.*, p. 4.

occasions³⁵ Gongsun Long expressed himself in the rhetorical form of persuasion (*shui 說*)³⁶, and though we can recognize a moral intent in his attempts to persuade the aristocrats to whom he addresses his speeches, our diplomat doesn't make any use of sarcasm, humour or irony.

Eventually we can perhaps admit a topical and occasional use of (a sort of) wit³⁷ in his rhetoric, at least if we interpret it in terms of Freudian “sophistic thought-witticism”³⁸ or “sophistical [...] wit”³⁹, with which Gongsun Long's speeches share a common tendency to top words with an apparently absurd and nonsensical coat⁴⁰, soon dispelled by adamant and seemingly incontrovertible reasoning; though even if the figure of Gongsun Long might superficially resemble this sort of “jesters” – because of his impressive dialectical skills, use of the technique of absurdity and disinterested promptness to remonstrate to correct ruler's behaviour using the “art of persuasion”⁴¹ – he is for sure no true *huaji*, as there is no research of comic pleasure in his argumentations. Evidently there is an obvious entertainment⁴² component in the kind of public court debate (*yi 議*)⁴³ in which Gongsun Long engaged and enjoyed himself, to

³⁵ In addressing King Zhao of Yan, King Hui of Zhao and in admonishing the Prince of Pingyuan, trying his very best to convince them to stop any fighting, cease hostility and adopt a more kingly behaviour.

³⁶ In any case, as Kroll remarks, “the arts of ‘disputation’ (*pien*) and ‘persuasion’ (*shui 說*) were ascribed to the same person as mutually connected skills” (Kroll, 1985, p. 126); therefore it is no surprise to find Gongsun Long getting to grips with this different techniques of the rhetoric.

³⁷ “Wit[...] is exclusively verbal, and pertains to linguistic expressions of comic incongruity. Wit is really a compressed form of humor and is normally confined to epigrams, anecdotes, repartee and plays on words.[...] (it) is somewhat artificial and deliberately manufactured”; moreover, “wit is especially common in the speeches attributed to the Warring States persuaders, and in fact it was one of their most effective rhetorical instruments.” (Knechtges, 1971, respectively pp. 79-80 and p. 85)

³⁸ Freud, p. 158; the definition is applied by Freud to “stories whose façades are logical instead of comical”, which reinforces the opinion that Gongsun Long has very little to do with comic.

³⁹ *Id.*, p. 161.

⁴⁰ At least, such they sound – and are intentionally and deliberately conceived to sound so – at an average public's ears.

⁴¹ Pokora, 1973, p. 59; moreover, “ironical critics, while they may have borrowed a lot technically from comedians and similar people, directed their aims entirely towards the realization of concrete political and social plans. Only a few of the ironical critics made use of ‘dramatic’ techniques to achieve their aims, but all of them without exception uttered witty and sophisticated speeches to master some difficult situation.” (*Id.* P. 62); see also Wu Y., 1999, p. 35.

⁴² Also Harbsmeier underlines the fact that most probably Gongsun Long acted as an entertainer at court; however, I don't agree with his view of Gongsun Long as a sort of jester involved in a comic kind of entertainment: Gongsun Long was primarily a diplomat and an official, though we can admit that he might have indulged in court debates with the double intent of proving his skills as debater by challenging opponents and at the same time amusing a public (see Harbsmeier, 1998, p. 271, 300; *id.*, 1989, p. 142).

⁴³ *Yi* seems to assume both the form of persuasion (*shui*) and of argumentation (*bian*). According to Crumo, “disputation is somewhat different from persuasion, but the difference resides mostly in how much your opponent is allowed to say” (Crump, 1964, p. 6, note *). For an analysis of the technique and

the extent that we can talk of a real dialectic “performance”; still there is no apparent interest in our persuader – if not secondary and collateral to the real final goal of the discussion – to achieve an intentional comic effect; at most we can only say that he shrewdly and consciously plays on the amusing disconcert predictably aroused by his argumentations, turning the situation to his own advantage.

Gongsun Long as a protagonist of various anecdotes and direct or indirect quotations of his - or of the paradoxes that he became famous for, are scattered through most of the Masters’ Literature masterworks; this fact seems to openly contradict those who claim that Gongsun Long was a useless thinker of minor importance or that he didn’t leave any strong trace in the development of Chinese thought, since his cannot be considered as a proper “teaching” rooted in a moral ground, aimed at a higher goal, articulated in a clearly-structured theory.

The truth is, at least according to all these references (though at times unpleasant and caustic) to him and his topics for argument, Gongsun Long was one of a kind you couldn’t simply feel indifferent about: love him or hate him, scorn him or praise him, he was maybe ill-considered yet well-know. The thinkers of his own time were unable to ignore him and couldn’t help using him as a (bad) example, talking about him, quoting his arguments, condemning his devilish ability in discussion and blaming his demeanor as he was not openly showing (apparently, I would like to stress) sufficient devotion to the pursue of morally-oriented superior primary goal – just to tell everybody that he, his methods and his immoral arguments were to be avoided, deplored and disdained at any cost.

As Oscar Wilde shrewdly wrote, “There is only one thing in life worse than being talked about, and that is not being talked about”⁴⁴: in the end of all these complaints – maybe dressed with a flavour of envy for his skills, the result is that Gongsun Long’s most famous topics for discussion and paradoxes are known to everybody, a matter of fact nobody can deny.

A distinction must also be driven between the (*pseudo*)historical Gongsun Long, an official in the performance of his duty, fulfilling diplomatic tasks, and the brilliant

characteristics of *yi*, see Liu Xie 劉勰(ca 467-ca. 532)’s *Wenxin diaolong* 文心雕龍 ch. 24 *Yidui* 議對 (Zhongfa Hanxue Yanjiusuo 中法漢學研究所, 1968; for a translation, see Shih Yu-chung, 1970, pp. 191-201), written around 502 A.D.

⁴⁴Wilde, 1998, p. 44.

dramatis personae animating debates, dialogues, and witty anecdotes, possibly – according to the tradition and the fame that grew around him even at his time – one of the most skilled debaters ever.

These are just a few tasty quotations to start focusing Gongsun Long and his main field of interest – or at least what he is remembered for:

公孫龍辯者之徒⁴⁵

(*Zhuangzi - Tianxia*⁴⁶ *di sanshisan* 莊子·天下 第三十三)

Huan Tuan and Gongsun Long were followers of the *bianzhe*.⁴⁷

公孫龍折辯抗辭，別同異，離堅白，不可與眾同道也⁴⁸

(*Huainanzi*⁴⁹ - *Qisuxun* 淮南子·齊俗訓 ch. 11)

Gongsun Long distorted argumentations and answered words back, distinguished similarity and difference, separated hard and white: he couldn't go the same way as the masses.⁵⁰

公孫龍粲於辭而負名⁵¹

(*Huainanzi - Quanyanxun* 淮南子·詮言訓 ch. 14)

Gongsun Long made a name for himself as brilliant talker.

公孫龍著堅白之論，析言陪剖辭，務折曲之言，無道理之較，無益於治⁵²

(*Lun Heng - Anshu pian* 論衡·案書篇)

⁴⁵See Guo Qingfan, 2005, p. 121, *Zhuangzi jijie* 莊子集解, 1948, p. 294.

⁴⁶Dated By Graham to about 200 BC (Graham, 1981, p. 28).

⁴⁷See also Watson, 1968, p. 376 (“Huan Tuan and Gongsun Long were among such rhetoricians”) and Graham, 1986b, p. 284 (“Huan Tuan and Gongsun Long of the sophist’s party..”).

⁴⁸*Huainanzi honglie jijie* 淮南鴻烈集解, 1989, p. 369.

⁴⁹“presented to the throne and sequestered in 139 B.C.E.” (Smith, 2003, p. 146, note 47).

⁵⁰See also Larre et al., 1993, p. 144: “Gongsun Long cassait les arguments et retournait les refutations, distinguait le semblable du different, discernait le Dur et leBlanc; mais il ne put suivre la voie du commun des hommes.”; Graham, 1978, p. 174 : “Kung-sun Lung engaged in unreasonable disputations and shocking assertions, distinguished the same and different, seprated the *chien-pai*.”

⁵¹*Huainanzi honglie jijie*, 1989, p. 472.

⁵²Wang Chong, 1966, *Anshu pian* 安書篇 (ch. 83), *juan* 29, p. 2.

Gongsun Long wrote a discourse on *jianbai*. He split utterances to help dissect sentences, devoting himself to twisted talk. He didn't follow reasonable criterions, he is of no use for government.⁵³

公孫龍詭辭數萬以為法⁵⁴

(*Yangzi fayan* - *Wuzi juan er* 揚子法言·吾子卷二 ch. 2.8)

Gongsun Long turned his innumerable deceptive words into a method.

公孫龍有言：『論之為道辯，故不可以不屬意，屬意相寬，相寬其歸爭，爭而不讓，則入於鄙』⁵⁵

(*Yantie Lun* – *Zhenshi di sanshiyi juan liu* 鹽鐵論·箴石第三十一卷六)

Gongsun Long said: “To discuss means to debate arguments, that’s the reason why you cannot but fix your attention on a topic and reflect on it; concentration and reflection broaden each other, and their broadening each other leads back to dispute; when it comes to contend without letting others have the better, then you get into my humble domain.”

公孫之白馬孤犢，辭巧理拙，魏牟比之鴞鳥，非妄貶也⁵⁶

(*Wenxin diaolong* - *Zhuji di shiqi* 文心雕龍·諸子第十七)

The arguments about the white horse and the orphaned calf by Kung-sun [Lung-tzu] are exercises in casuistry, but they lack logical validity; and it was not without reason that Wei Mou compared them to the notes of the owl.⁵⁷

Let’s now give a closer look to the life and deeds of this eclectic personage whose merit – or guilt – is to have fascinated most; with his brilliant controversial skill in subverting reality and puzzling opponents with unbeatable paradoxes and language

⁵³Translation is mine; see also Smith, 2003, p. 143; Reding, 1985, pp. 478-479; Graham, 1978, p. 174: “Kung-sun Lung wrote essays about *chien-pai*, making hair-splitting analyses of propositions, busying himself with perverted statements and unreasonable comparisons, of no use for government.”

⁵⁴Yang Xiong 揚雄, 1992, p. 34-35.

⁵⁵*Yantie Lun*, 1974, p. 73

⁵⁶See Zongfa Hanxue Yanjiusuo, 1968, p. 53.

⁵⁷See Shih Yu-chung V., 1970, p.134; this quote refers to an episode recorded in *Zhuangzi Qiushui* 莊子·秋水 ch. 17; however it is not properly reported here, as Wei Gongzi Mou compared Gongsun Long to a frog but never to an owl (See also Lavagnino, 1995, p. 133 note 26).

jokes, Gongsun Long shows also a multifaceted character: as we will see, in his official career he unravels delicate thorny diplomatic issues and proves to be not only a deserving opponent in the debate arena but also an appreciated advisor to kings and princes of his age.

1.2 Gongsun Long's life: an outline

Talking about the “life” of a character whose historical authenticity is uncertain- as it is however normal when it comes to most ancient historical figures - is always hazardous and can easily meet harsh criticism. In fact, Gongsun Long's dates of birth and death are already by themselves an argument for discussion that involved many scholars; his “authorship” of the *Gongsun Longzi*, his narrative presence and role in the text and in anecdotes related to him can probably reduce him to a mere literary artifice, a purely fictitious character.

Why, then, getting involved in this delicate and thorny task? First of all, according to the conspicuous number of quotations in classical texts (both with literary and historical or pseudo-historical intent⁵⁸), there's enough evidence that a “diplomat Gongsun Long” most likely existed – notwithstanding the *Gongsun Longzi* “authorship” issue; my main concern is, to underline that the figure of a politically active and pragmatic character (at least according to our sources) has been associated by the tradition to a text criticized for being abstract, weird, inconclusive and even a pure sterile paradoxical joke for its own sake instead.

⁵⁸ For instance, talking about the *Shij liezhuan* 史記列傳, a sharp statement by Timoteus Pokora underlines a crucial matter, that “the biographies try to present certain characteristics of their heroes by recording their own speeches and writings. Thus the aim of such a biography is not necessarily that of documentation but sometimes that of literature, of art” (Pokora, 1973, p. 51), an aspect that, even if - strictly speaking - puts to question their historical rigour, nevertheless doesn't belittle their biographical value.

Aim is to show, at a second time, how these logico-argumentative skills and linguistic jokes were not merely a form of *divertissement*; expressed and developed in the text in a pretty schematic and dry way, they found an effective pragmatic verification as rhetoric techniques, as they were actually part of a well-established repertoire on which Gongsun Long – but obviously not him alone – drew, applying them in the practical context of real life experience to solve delicate diplomatic controversies in a brilliant and disarming way⁵⁹.

Let's see now how and in which circumstances Gongsun Long gave proof of his cunning intelligence and sharp tongue.

As said before, references and anecdotes that can be easily found in plenty of classical Chinese works allow us to draft an approximate biography - at least in broad terms – of Gongsun Long's life, tracing his movements across the Six States and resuming the offices held at various courts as counsellor and diplomat, always keeping in mind that absolute reliability of the sources used for this purpose (even the *Shiji*) can be put to question, that this attempt of chronology remains at a pure hypothetical level and must be considered as a general reference frame to help the reader contextualize the supposed author(?) and the text.

- **298 B.C. (264/265 B.C. ??)** Gongsun Long is a retainer at the court of Zhao Sheng 趙勝, Prince of Pingyuan 平原君; at the Prince's court, he entertains animated debates with Kong Chuan 孔穿, a descendant of Confucius, discussing two of the most famous paradoxes ever attributed to Gongsun Long: the “*Bai ma*” 「白馬」 and “*Zang san er*” 「藏三耳」. The episodes are attested in the following sources: *Lüshi Chunqiu Youshilan – Tingyan* 呂氏春秋有始覽·聽言 13/4.2; 1) 「白馬」: *Gongsun Longzi Jifu* 跡府 ch. 1/*Kongcongzi*⁶⁰ - *Gongsun Long juan* 4 孔叢子·公孫龍卷四; 2) 「藏三耳」: *Lüshi Chunqiu Shenyinglan – Yinci* 呂氏春秋審應覽·淫辭/*Kongcongzi* - *Gongsun Long juan* 4

⁵⁹This topic will be the core issue discussed in Chapter 2.

⁶⁰See *Kongcongzi* 孔叢子, 1995, pp. 36-39.

孔叢子·公孫龍卷四. If we consider year 264 as the date when the dialogue between Gonsun Long and Kong Chuan took place, as some scholars do⁶¹, then we should explain how can it be that the famous debate is quoted also in the episode reported by the *Liezi Zhongni* chapter, which in that case would have happened some twenty years earlier. Chronological incongruence is typical even in Chinese sources like the *Shiji*, which pretend to be historical: boundaries between history, myth and fiction are feeble and blurred, and this peculiarity of Chinese literature gave birth to a kind of “fictional history” that couldn’t be more far from our Western standards of historical and historiographical rigour. We should keep in mind this characteristic of Chinese (pseudo)historical accounts, considering also the corrupted nature of the *Liezi receptus*; single anecdotes, even if probably inspired and based at least in part on real events, should rather be considered examples of valuable narrative rather than reliable records of historical truths; moreover, as said above, characters are almost for sure fictitious pretexts to expound a specific persuader’s thought in exemplary tales. In fact, it is typical of Chinese literature “to invent pseudo-historical personages that could be made to represent anything the speaker desired”.⁶² Now considering the speculative experimental character of our attempt of chronologizing Gongsun Long’s life, the core issue is of course not the achievement of an historically exact reconstruction, but rather the sketch of a picture as complete and all-accomplished as possible of this half historical-half fictitious personage we are dealing with. At least, a picture coherent with the idea that his (almost) coevals had of him.

I’m more inclined to accept Kou Pao-koh’s hypothesis⁶³ of the debate taking place in the year 298 B.C., which appears more convenient and more philologically grounded. Moreover, it might solve all our chronological problems, except for the fact that in this case the dialogue with Kong Chuan would have happened before Gongsun Long became a retainer at the court of the Lord of Pingyuan, or we should admit that he was already a retainer at the court

⁶¹ See Hu Qu Yuan 胡曲园 and Chen Jinkun 陈进坤, p. 20.

⁶² Watson, 1958, p. 238. On the topic of historical reliability and historical allusion as employed in the *Shiji*, see chapter V, pp. 135-181.

⁶³ Kou Pao-koh, 1953, p. 13.

of Pingyuan but served him discontinuously, and that he occasionally served King Huiwen of Zhao as counsellor (ca 281/280 B.C.); from this point of view, the embassy to King Zhao of Yan (284 B.C.) would have been undertaken as a sort of diplomatic mission in the name of the state of Zhao (see below).

As the *Gongsun Longzi Jifu* chapter and the *Kongcongzi - Gongsun Long* chapter are too long to be extensively quoted and inserted directly here, we will limit ourselves to consider the *Lüshi Chunqiu* quotation below, while Chinese originals with full text English translation of mine of the two other sources can be found in Appendix A at pages 169-176.

In the *Lüshi Chunqiu Tingyan* chapter only a string of characters reminds us of the famous debate between Kong Chuan and Gongsun Long: 「孔穿之議公孫龍 … …」⁶⁴ while more satisfactory narration is to be found in the chapter *Yinci* 18/5.3:

孔穿、公孫龍相與論於平原君所，深而辯，至於藏三牙，公孫龍言藏之三牙甚辯，孔穿不應，少選，辭而出。明日，孔穿朝。平原君謂孔穿曰：「昔者公孫龍之言甚辯。」孔穿曰：「然。幾能令藏三牙矣。雖然難。願得有問於君，謂藏三牙甚難而實非也，謂藏兩牙甚易而實是也，不知君將從易而是者乎？將從難而非者乎？」平原君不應。明日，謂公孫龍曰：「公無與孔穿辯，⁶⁵ [其人理勝於辭，公辭勝於理]。」⁶⁶

Kong Chuan and Gongsun Long were arguing at the residence of the Lord of Pingyuan. So profound and involved were their arguments that they reached the proposition “Zang has three ears.”⁶⁷ Gongsun Long’s discussion of the

⁶⁴“[...] Kong Chuan’s debating with Gongsun Long” (Knoblock, Riegel, 2000, p. 291).

⁶⁵See Chen Qiyou 陳奇猷, 1990, p. 1186.

⁶⁶Knoblock and Riegel’s translation fills the gap with a parallel sentence of the same episode taken from the *Kongcongzi* (in brackets in the Chinese and English texts); see Knoblock and Riegel, 2000, p. 457.

⁶⁷“Zang san er” 藏三牙/耳 (as in the *Kongcongzi - Gongsun Long* chapter) is one of the most famous unsolved paradoxes associated to Gongsun Long, even if its very nature *qua* paradox is in my opinion questionable. Three main interpretative trends can be identified in trying to give sense to this puzzling expression, whose final ultimate explanation could be eventually given only by a dialogue which unluckily has not been handed down by the tradition. First of all, it must be said that the same paradox occurs in other sources with a final 耳 particle, and, of course, each theory conveniently tries to take advantage whether on one or another textual variant. In fact, as Graham with his usual precision reminds us, “This paradox is also known in two other forms: a) 藏三耳 cited in this form by the old commentator on *Kung-sun Lung tzü* (quoting the *Lü-shih ch’un-chiu* passage just given) and by Liu Shao 劉邵 (fl. 244 A.D.), who mentions it as a typical sophistry without explaining it. [A/N to be found in the *Taiping Yulan*, referred just to the *Jianbai Lun (Taiping Yulan 太平御覽, 1968, juan 464/7a, p. 2264]* b) 藏三耳 This is found in a version of the story of K’ung Ch’uan in the *K’ung ts’ung tzü*, otherwise almost identical

statement “Zang has three ears” was so extremely complex that Kong Chuan was unable to respond, and after a short time the latter excused himself and left. The next day, when Kong Chuan came to court, the Lord of Pingyuan said to him, “Gongsun Long’s discussion was extremely intricate.” “Yes, it was,” Kong Chuan replied. “He could almost have made Zang have three ears. Although this is so, his position was difficult to maintain. May I put a question to your grace? The claim that ‘Zang has three ears’ is difficult to argue because it is contrary to the facts, whereas the claim that ‘Zang has two ears’ is easy to argue because it affirms the facts. I wonder whether your grace will follow what is easy and agrees with fact, or what is difficult but contrary to fact?” The Lord of Pingyuan did not reply, but the next day he said to Gongsun Long. “Never again, sir, engage in disputation with Kong Chuan! (In him reason prevails in the proposition advocated, whereas in you the proposition triumph over reason.)”⁶⁸

- **before 296 B.C.(?)**⁶⁹ Gongsun Long apparently serves as attendant for the Prince of Liang 梁君, and prevents him to kill a peasant who involuntarily happens to cross his line of fire (*Xin Xu Zashi er* 新序雜事二⁷⁰); afterwards,

with that in the *Lü-shih ch'un-chiu*”(Graham, 1986a, p. 146). These are the three possible interpretations: 1) Zang is nobody but a John Doe, or “Jack”, as Graham prefers (*Id.*, 1978, pp. 226-227): just a commonly used name in examples like in the Mohist Canons hypothesis supported for instance by Graham: “‘Tsang’ was used by the Mohist dialecticians as a typical proper name” (*Id.*, pp. 146-147). See also Reding, 1985, note 97, p. 423. Gongsun Long here would then be trying to prove that “Zang has three ears”, applying the same demonstrative process used in the *Tongbian Lun* 通變論 (sum of concrete parts or single items perceived plus the category the part or item belongs to: two physical ears + “ear”, as sort of countable unit of measure that must be somehow implicitly admitted when dealing with things; in Rolf Trauzettel’s words, “the meta-basis of the speaking about things is added to the basis where the individual things that had been discussed are settled, and is considered to be part of it, as forming with it one basis” (Trauzettel, 1993, p. 24). Möller even suggests that names wouldn’t be mere conventional signs, but should rather be considered “real elements in a present world” (*Id.*, 2000, p. 107); if we assume his point of view, then names should be treated – and consequently counted – as *shi* 實 (actualities), supporting this first interpretation of the “*zang san*” paradox. 2) Zang is a phonetic loan word (*jiajiezi* 假借字) and stands for 羴 (“sheep”, see the *Zhongwen da cidian* 中文大辭典, 1962, Vol. XXI pp. 60-61 and Vol. XXIX pp. 168-169); the paradox should be read as “a sheep has three teeth”, highly resemblant to the *Tongbian Lun* animal examples (for instance “sheep having teeth”, even if the character used is 齒 and not 牙) or the famous lost paradox “*ji san zu*” 雞足三 (“a chicken has three legs”, quoted in the *Gongsun Longzi Tongbian Lun* and in *Zhuangzi Tianxia* ch. 33, see *Zhuangzi jijie*, 1948, p. 297), to which also Graham likens it (Graham 1986a, p. 147; see also Trauzettel, 1993); this theory finds its ground on the final 牙 considered as a noun (“teeth”) and not a final particle; 3) The whole expression refers in a shot to the conclusion reached by Gongsun Long in his argumentation in the *Jianbai Lun* 堅白論 (where by the way the expression 藏三 appears): that is to say, in a white and hard stone, three independent yet interrelated components (三) are preserved (藏) in their own inalienable form even when combined with each other (= 藏三耳). See also Gao You’s commentary to *Lüshi Chunqiu Yinci* chapter (Chen Qiyu, 1990, pp. 1188-89 note 6).

⁶⁸Knoblock and Riegel, 2000, pp. 457-458.

⁶⁹Zhongshan 中山 was conquered by Zhao 趙 in 296 B.C., that means that Gongsun Long’s encounter with Wei Gonzi Mou 魏公子牟 - if ever happened - must have taken place before this date. (See Yang Janguang, 1991, p. 130).

⁷⁰The same episode is reported in the *Yiwen leiju* 藝文類聚 *juan* 66, still with the Prince of Liang 梁君 as protagonist, while *Taiping yulan* 太平御覽 *juan* 457 and *Zhuangzi Yipian* 莊子逸篇 have the Prince of

Gongsun Long moves to Wei 魏, where he has contacts with Wei Gongzi Mou 魏公子牟 (ca 320-245 B.C.)⁷¹, Prince of Zhongshan 中山 (*Liezi Zhongni* 列子·仲尼 ch. 4, *Zhuangzi Qiushui* 莊子·秋水 ch. 17).⁷²

梁君出獵，見白雁群，梁君下車，彀弓欲射之。道有行者，梁君謂行者止，行者不止，白雁群駭。梁君怒，欲射行者。其御公孫襲⁷³下車撫矢曰：“君止。”梁君忿然作色而怒曰：“襲不與其君，而顧與他人，何也？”公孫襲對曰：“昔齊景公之時，天大旱三年，卜之曰：‘必以人祠，乃雨。’景公下堂頓首曰：‘凡吾所以求雨者，為吾民也，今必使吾以人祠乃且雨，寡人將自當之。’言未卒而天大雨方千里者，何也？為有德於天而惠於民也。今主君以白雁之故而欲射人，襲謂主君無異於虎狼。”梁君援其手與上車，歸入廟門，呼萬歲，曰：“幸哉！今日也他人獵，皆得禽獸，吾獵得善言而歸。”⁷⁴

The Prince of Liang went hunting; as he saw a flock of white wild geese, he got off his chariot, drew the bow and was about to shoot them. There was a passer-by on the path, and the Prince ordered him to stop, but he didn't. The flock of white wild geese got frightened. The Prince of Liang got angry and wanted to shoot the passer-by. His carriage attendant Gongsun Long got off the chariot and grabbed the arrow saying: "You Majesty, restrain Yourself." The indignant Prince of Liang lost his temper and replied angrily: "Long, you're not with Your Prince, you take the side of that man instead, how can it be?" Gongsun Long replied: "In antiquity at the time of Duke Jing of Qi, the sun was fierce and drought stroke for three years; the oracle response was that it was necessary to perform a human sacrifice, only then it would have rained. The Duke descended the Hall and kowtowed "The only reason why I'm striving for rain is for my people, now it is necessary to let a human being be sacrificed and only then will it rain; our humble person will satisfy the request." Having said that he didn't die, and it rained abundantly covering places at a distance of a thousand *li*, how could it be? Because he was deferent towards Heaven and kind to his people. Now My Lord wants to shoot a man because of the white wild geese. I say that My Lord doesn't differ from a tiger or a wolf." The Prince held his hand and got on the chariot with him; back to the Palace he entered the Grand Hall and (people all) cried hail to the Prince; (the Prince) said: "How propitious, indeed! Today they

Zhou 周君(See Chen Zhu, 1937, p. 6); finally, the Chinese scholar Yang Junguang supports the hypothesis that the protagonists of the episode should be Gongsun Long and the King of Wei instead of the Prince of Liang, but without providing any really convincing argumentation(Yang Junguang, 1991, pp. 134-135).

⁷¹“Prince Mou of Wei was the reputed author of a Taoist work in four sections which is no longer extant.”(See Watson, 1969, p. 185, note 16).

⁷²Hu Shi doubts that the dialogue ever took place (*Id.*, 1997, p. 169); I personally agree, as most probably this is “fiction”, a later rielaboration of exemplary figures involved in a debate, possibly used as didactic material; in any case, it is highly resemblant that the two speakers involved are simply *dramatis personae*, fictitious characters employed *ad hoc*.

⁷³Interesting graphic variant of Gongsun Long's name; seemingly, this is the only occurrence referred to Gongsun Long in the received texts.

⁷⁴See Chen Zhu 陳柱, 1937, p. 6; see also Liu Xiang, 1965a, *juan* 39/9.a-b, p. 344, where Gongsun Long's name characters though show no variants. Ho Ch'i Min 何啓民 reports three almost identical versions of the same episode in the *Taiping Yulan* 太平御覽 (*juan* 832, 457, 390), all quoting Zhuangzi, though the anecdote unfortunately has not been preserved in the received homonymous text (Ho Ch'i Min, 1956, pp. 24-25).

also went hunting, and they all got game, but my hunt provided me with good advice in return.”⁷⁵

Here below is the passage from the *Liezi* where Prince Mou of Zhongshan is harshly reprimanded and mocked by Yuezheng Ziyu 樂正子輿 for cultivating friendship with Gongsun Long and appreciating his teachings, an attitude – as we will see - totally opposite to that described in the *Zhuangzi* passage:

中山公子牟者，魏國之賢公子也。好與賢人游，不恤國事，而悅趙人公孫龍。樂正子輿之徒笑之。公子牟曰：「子何笑牟之悅公孫龍也？」子輿曰：「公孫龍之為人也，行無師，學無友，佞給而不中，漫衍而無家，好怪而妄言。欲惑人這心，屈人之口，與韓檀等肆之。」公子牟變容曰：「何子狀公孫龍之過歟？請聞其實。」子輿曰：「吾笑龍之詒孔穿[.]子龍之徒，焉得不飾其闕？吾又言其尤者。龍誑魏王曰：『[.]有指不至。[.]白馬非馬。孤犢未嘗有母。』其負類反倫，不可勝言也。」公子牟曰：「子不論至言而以為尤也。尤其在子矣。[.]無指則皆至。[.]白馬非馬，形名離也。孤犢未嘗有母非孤犢也。」樂正子輿曰：「子以公孫龍之鳴皆條也。設令發于餘竅，子亦將承之。」公子牟默然良久告退曰：「請待余日，更謁子論。」⁷⁶

Prince Mou of Chung-shan was the cleverest of the sons of the lord of Wei. He liked to go around with clever people, took no interest in state affairs, and delighted in the sophist Kung-sun Lung of Chao. Men like Yüeh-cheng Tzū-yü laughed at him for this. Prince Mou asked Tzū-yü: 'Why do you laugh at my taste for Kung-sun Lung?' [Tzū-yü answered N/A] 'Kung-sun Lung is the kind of man who goes ahead without a teacher, and studies without having friends to advise him. He is nimble with his tongue but eccentric, a syncretist who belongs to no one school, a lover of the extraordinary who talks wildly, trying to confuse men's minds and win verbal victories. He studies with men like Han Tan.' Prince Mou looked grave and said: 'Why do you give such an exaggerated account of him? Let me hear you justify it.' [Tzū-yü answered N/A] 'I laugh at the way Kung-sun Lung fooled K'ung Ch'uan[.]⁷⁷ You are Kung-sun Lung's disciple, of course it is your duty to gloss over his defects. I will tell you the most outrageous case of all. This is what Kung-sun Lung said when he was making a fool of the King of Wei: "[.]By pointing it out, you fail to reach it; [.] A white horse is not a horse. An orphan calf has never had a mother." There is no end to his perversion of reason and sense.' [Prince Mou answered N/A] 'You pretend that these sublime sayings are outrageous simply because you can't understand them; it is your own attitude which is outrageous. [.] Without pointing, you reach everything; [.] "A white horse is not a horse", because the name diverges from the shape; "An orphan calf has never had a mother", because when it had it was not an orphan calf.' [Yüeh-cheng Tzū-yü said N/A] 'You think that all Kung-sun Lung's mouthings make good sense. Even if he blew them out of another hole, you would go on believing him.' Prince Mou was silent for a while. Then he took his leave, saying: 'Allow me to call on you another day and discuss the matter again.'⁷⁸

⁷⁵ Translation is mine.

⁷⁶ See *Leizi zhu* 列子註, 1960, 1960; as this specific editions bears no page numbers, see *Zhongni* ch. 4.

⁷⁷ On chronological incongruity of this episode, see page XXX.

⁷⁸ See Graham, 1990, pp. 86-90.

The praising tone of the *Liezi*, which abruptly turns to open reprimand in the *Zhuangzi*, should not deceive the reader: of course, it must be contextualized within the interpretation proper to a determined philosophical trend, from a partial point of view and according to the principles advocated and the aims pursued by those belonging to that very same current of thought. In the light of these basic preliminary considerations, to delineate one as far as possible impartial (if ever possible) overview and dispel the shadows of suspicion and mistrust towards Gongsun Long and his highly technical paradoxical jargon, I would like to strike a blow in his defense and underline the fact that this simply reflects the subjective point of view and the particular philosophical orientation of the compilers of the two composite editorial collection. It must be always kept in mind that we are considering multi-layered text, edited by many “authors”, through many subsequent stages in a complex editing process, affected by possible later interpolations, by corruption – be it voluntary or involuntary, physical or ideological - and possibly superimposed moralizing intentional structure. Characters are mostly literary pretexts for discussing hot topics and issues, fictitious one-dimensional embodiments of particular ideas supporting specific opinions, functional to support a certain thesis or way of thought, or on the contrary to deconstruct that of an adversary. Of course an analysis of the reception of Gongsun Long’s thought and deeds in different philosophical traditions, though fascinating, goes beyond the scope of delineating the philosopher’s features and life main events, which still remains here the our focus: therefore what is most important here is that it seems almost certified that Gongsun Long had philosophical intercourse with the Prince of Zhongshan, and that seemed relevant enough to his contemporaries to have it handed down. Here is the passage taken from the *Zhuangzi Qiushui* chapter:

公孫龍問于魏牟曰：“龍少學先王之道，長而明仁義之行；合同異，離堅白；然不然，可不可；困百家⁷⁹之知，窮眾口之辯；吾自以為至達已

⁷⁹ On the meaning and correct interpretation of *baijia* 百家, see the excellent Petersen 1995; according to Petersen, the term seems to identify the authors of a bulk of anecdotes and compilations of didactic stories, records of popular culture used by Zhuangzi’s contemporaries as a rich source of argumentative *exempla*; this kind of materials would fit well in Yenna Wu’s literary category of *xiaoshuo* 小說, “a group

。今吾聞莊子之言，茫然異之。不知論之不及與？知之弗若與？今吾無所開吾喙，敢問其方。”公子牟隱機大息，仰天而笑曰：“子獨不聞夫埳井之蛙乎？謂東海之鱉曰：‘吾樂與！出跳梁乎井干之上，入休乎缺甃之崖。赴水則接腋持頤，蹶泥則沒足滅跗。還虯蟹與科斗，莫吾能若也。且夫擅一壑之水，而跨埳井之樂，此亦至矣。夫子奚不時來入觀乎？’東海之鱉左足未入，而右膝已繫矣。于是逡巡而卻，告之海曰：‘夫千里之遠，不足以舉其大；千仞之高，不足以極其深。禹之時，十年九潦，而水弗為加益；湯之時，八年七旱，而崖不為加損。夫不為頃久推移，不以多少進退者，此亦東海之大樂也。’于是埳井之蛙聞之，適適然驚，規規然自失也。且夫知不知是非之竟，而猶欲觀于莊子之言，是猶使蚊負山，商虬馳河也，必不勝任矣。且夫知不知論極妙之言，而自適一時之利者，是非埳井之蛙與？且彼方趾黃泉而登大皇，無南無北，爽然四解，淪于不測；無東無西，始于玄冥，反于大通。子乃規規然而求之以察，索之以辯，是直用管窺天，用錐指地也，不亦小乎？子往矣！且子獨不聞夫壽陵余子之學于邯鄲與？未得國能，又失其故行矣，直匍匐而歸耳。今子不去，將忘子之故，失子之業。”公孫龍口喅而不合，舌舉而不下，乃逸而走。⁸⁰

Kung-sun Lung said to Prince Mou of Wei : “When I was young I studied the Way of the former kings, and when I grew older I came to understand the conduct of benevolence and righteousness. I reconciled different and sameness, distinguished hardness and whiteness, and proved that not so was so, that the unacceptable was acceptable. I confounded the wisdom of the hundred schools and demolishes the arguments of a host of speakers. I believed that I had attained the highest degree of accomplishment. But now I have heard the words of Chuang Tzu and I am bewildered by their strangeness. I don’t know whether my arguments are not as good as his, or whether I am no match for him in understanding. I find now that I can’t even open my beak. May I ask what you advise?” Prince Mou leaned on his armrest and gave a great sigh, and then he looked up at the sky and laughed, saying, “Haven’t you ever heard about the frog in the caved-in well? He said to the great turtle of the Eastern Sea, ‘What fun I have! I come out and hop around the railing of the well, or I go back in and take a rest in the wall where a tile has fallen out. When I dive into the water, I let it hold me up under my armpits and support my chin, and when I slip about in the mud, I bury my feet in it and let it come up over my ankles. I look around at the mosquito larvae and the crabs and the polliwogs and I see that none of them can match me. To have complete command of the water of one whole valley and to monopolize the joys of the caved-in well – this is the best there is! Why don’t you come some time and see for yourself?’ But before the turtle of the Eastern Sea had even gotten his left foot in the well his right knee was already wedged fast. He backed out and withdrew a little, and then began to describe the sea. ‘A distance of a thousand li cannot indicate its greatness; a depth of a thousand fathoms cannot express how deep it is. In the time of Yü there were floods for nine years out of ten, and yet its water never rose. In the time of T’ang there were droughts for seven years out of eight, and yet its shores never receded. Never to alter or shift, whether for an instant or an

of miscellaneous sayings, anecdotes, and brief tales (which) overlapped with various philosophical discourses[...], had folk origins[...] and presumably were presented to the rulers for their information, thereby serving some political and moralistic functions[...].” (Wu Y., 1999, pp. 3-4).

Petersen’s article shows also that the traditional interpretation of *baijia* as “one-hundred schools of thought” or “- philosophers” applied to the Warring States period is totally anachronistic, as its meaning wasn’t conceived as such at least until the Eastern Han.

⁸⁰See *Zhuangzi Qiushui* ch. 17 (*Zhuangzi jijie*, 1948, pp. 146-147, Guo Qingfan, 2005, pp. 597-603)

eternity; never to advance or recede, whether the quantity of water flowing in is great or small – this is the great delight of the Eastern Sea!’ When the frog in the caved-in well heard this, he was dumfounded with surprise, crestfallen, and completely at a loss. Now your knowledge cannot even define the borders of right and wrong, and still you try to use it to see through the words of Chuang Tzu – this is like trying to make a mosquito carry a mountain on its back or a pill bug race across the Yellow River. You will never be up to the task! He whose understanding cannot grasp these minute and subtle words, but is only fit to win some temporary gain – is he not like the frog in the caved-in well? Chuang Tzu now – at this very moment he is treating the Yellow Springs or leaping up to the vast blue. To him there is no north or south – in utter freedom he dissolves himself in the four directions and drowns himself in the unfathomable. To him there is no east or west – he begins in the Dark Obscurity and returns to the Great Thoroughfare. Now you come niggling along and try to spy him out or fix some name to him, but this is like using a tube to scan the sky or an awl to measure the depth of the earth- the instrument is too small, is it not? You’d better be on your way! Or perhaps you’ve never heard about the young boy of Shou-ling who went to learn the Han-tan Walk. He hadn’t mastered what the Han-tan people had to teach him when he forgot his old way of walking, so that he had to crawl all the way back home. Now if you don’t get on your way, you’re likely to forget what you knew before and be out of a job!” Kung-sun Lung’s mouth fell open and wouldn’t stay closed. His tongue stuck to the roof of his mouth and wouldn’t come down. In the end he broke into a run and fled.⁸¹

- **284 B.C.**⁸² A short anecdote set in Zhao⁸³ is reported in the *Huainanzi Daoyingxun* 淮南子·道應訓, where Gongsun Long, who is about to move to Yan 燕 on a diplomatic mission, talks with a mysterious “disciple” :

昔者，公孫龍在趙之時，謂弟子曰：“人而無能者，龍不能與遊。”有客衣褐帶索而見曰：“臣能呼。”公孫龍顧謂弟子曰：“門下故有能呼者乎？”對曰：“無有。”公孫龍曰：“與之弟子籍。”後數日，往說燕王。至於河上，而航在一汜，使善呼者呼之。一呼而航來。故曰：聖人之處世，不逆有伎能之士。⁸⁴

In the past, when Gongsun Long was in Zhao, he said to his disciples: “I would not accompany talentless people.” There was a guest dressed in a brown robe tied with a belt; when interviewed, he said: “I can shout”. Gongsun Long, turning back to his disciples, asked them: “Is there now anybody in the house who is able to shout?”. They answered: “None”. Gongsun Long replied: “Thou shall be registered among the disciples.” After a few days, they set off to request an audience to the King of Yan. They came to a river bank, and the ferry was on the opposite riverside. They let the one good at shouting cry, he cried out once and the ferry came. Therefore we say that a sage departs himself this way, as not to oppose any talented scholar.⁸⁵

⁸¹See Watson, 1968, pp. 185-187.

⁸²Kou Pao-Koh, 1953, p. 12.

⁸³The episode seems to prove that Gongsun Long was actually travelling from state to state to offer his advice, still having Zhao as a point of reference - if not a proper native land.

⁸⁴See *Huainan honglie jijie*, 1989, p. 398-399.

⁸⁵Translation is mine; see also Morgan, 1969, p. 122.

The King Zhao 昭 of Yan 燕 brings together the sovereigns of five states in order to attack the State of Qi⁸⁶, this is the reason why – as anticipated above - Gongsun Long moves to Yan 燕 on a diplomatic mission, trying to dissuade King Zhao 昭 and make him withdraw from his proponentments of war (*Lüshi Chunqiu*⁸⁷ *Shenynglan - Yingyan* 呂氏春秋審應覽·應言). Gongsun Long attempt is even praised in the *Lüshi Chunqiu* itself an exemplary act of persuasion (*shuo* 說) *tout-court* 「公孫龍之說燕昭王以偃兵及應空洛之遇也 … … 」⁸⁸.

公孫龍說燕昭王以偃兵。昭王曰：“甚善。寡人願與客計之。”公孫龍曰：“竊意大王之弗為也。”王曰：“何故？”公孫龍曰：“日者大王欲破齊，諸天下之士，其欲破齊者，大王盡養之；知齊之險阻要塞君臣之際者，大王盡養之；雖知而弗欲破者，大王猶若弗養；其卒果破齊以為功。今大王曰‘我甚取偃兵’。諸侯之士，在大王之本朝者，盡善用兵者也，臣是以知大王之弗為也。”王無以應。⁸⁹

Gongsun Long persuaded King Zhao of Yan to abolish the use of weaponry. The King declared, “Perfectly splendid! I, the Unworthy One, hope to plan how to do with my guests.” “I humbly suspect that the king will not carry through with the plans.” “Why?” asked the king. “At one time, your great majesty wanted to destroy Qi. All the *shi* of the world who shared that desire were boundlessly supported by your great majesty, Those with knowledge of the dangerous passes and critical strongholds in Qi, as well as the relations between lord and ministers in Qi, were boundlessly supported. But those with such knowledge who did not want to destroy Qi were merely supported by your great majesty. In the final analysis, it was the destruction of Qi that was regarded as the true achievement. Now, your great majesty may say, ‘I very much want to adopt a policy that will abolish the use of weapons.’ But of the knights of the feudal lords, those present at your great majesty’s court are skilled at warfare. It is thus that your subject knows that the king will not carry through with the plans.” The king could not respond.⁹⁰

➤ **283 B.C.**⁹¹ Gongsun Long moves to Zhao 趙, where he acts as counsellor in dealing with Qin 秦 (*Lüshi Chunqiu Shenynglan - Yinci*

⁸⁶In the 28th year of reign of King Yan Zhao 燕昭王 (See Qian Mu, 1934, p. 40).

⁸⁷“compiled in 239 B.C.” (Knoblock and Riegel, 2000, p. 1); “The *Lüshi Chunqiu* is reliably dated to the years around 239 B.C.” (Smith, 2003, p. 132, note 9).

⁸⁸“[.]in Gongsun Long’s *persuading* King Zhao of Yan to lay down his arms as well as in his responding to the encounter at Kongluo” (Knoblock and Riegel, 2000, p 291)

⁸⁹Knoblock and Riegel, 2000, p. 465.

⁹⁰Knoblock and Riegel, 2000, pp. 465-466.

⁹¹According to Chen Qiyu 陈奇猷, it happened in the 24th year of reign of King Zhao of Qin 秦昭王(see Yang Junguang, 1991, p. 137).

呂氏春秋審應覽·淫辭 18/5.2): Qin and Zhao stipulated a mutual defense treaty, but Qin attacks Wei 魏, while Zhao comes to the aid of Wei reneging on the treaty. Qin sends an envoy to Zhao, as Zhao is clearly violating the agreement; Gongsun Long, invited to help solve the situation, succeeds in the task subverting evidence, showing that actually it is Qin's fault not to support Zhao in his attempt of giving aid to Wei:

空雄之遇，秦、趙相與約約曰：“自今以來，秦之所欲為，趙助之；趙之所欲為，秦助之。”居無幾何，秦興兵攻魏，趙欲救之。秦王不說，使人讓趙王曰：“約曰‘秦之所欲為，趙助之；趙之所欲為，秦助之。今秦欲攻魏，而趙因欲救之，此非約也。’”趙王以告平原君。平原君以告公孫龍。公孫龍曰：“亦可以發使而讓秦王曰：‘趙欲救之，今秦王獨不助趙，此非約也。’”⁹²

At the meeting at Kongxiong, Qin and Zhao joined together in a treaty, which said: “From this time forward, Zhao will support Qin in whatever Qin desires to do, and Qin will support Zhao in whatever Zhao desires to do.” Shortly thereafter, Qin raised an army to attack Wei, and Zhao wished to rescue the latter. The king of Qin was displeased and sent a man to reprimand the king of Zhao. “Our treaty says, ‘Zhao will support Qin in whatever Qin desires to do, and Qin will support Zhao in whatever Zhao desires to do’. Qin now desires to attack Wei, and Zhao on account of this wishes to assist Wei. This is contrary to our treaty.” The king of Zhao reported this to the Lord of Pingyuan, who told Gongsun Long. Gongsun Long said, “You too may send out an emissary to reprimand the king of Qin saying, ‘It is Zhao's desire to assist Wei, but now the king of Qin alone refuses to support Zhao. This is contrary to our treaty.’”⁹³

Here comes out the brilliant debater, who with a incontrovertible argument and a logic trick checkmates his adversary with a masterstroke, subverting the commonsensical way of thinking and defeating his opponent by force of words.

- **280/281 B.C.**⁹⁴ Gongsun Long discusses with King Huiwen 惠文 (298-266 B.C.) of Zhao on how to cease war (*Lüshi Chunqiu Shenyinglan - Shenying* 呂氏春秋審應覽·審應 18/1.5)

This is one of Gongsun Long's best plea to a sovereign and act of persuasion, struggling to convince the King to emend his pernicious attitude, as –

⁹²See Knoblock and Riegel, 2000, pp. 456-457.

⁹³*Id.*, p. 457.

⁹⁴In the 18th year of reign of King Huiwen of Zhao 趙惠文王 (See Yang Junguang, 1991, p. 138). Also Ignace Kou Pao-Koh dates this episodes to ca 281 B.C. (*Id.*, 1953, p. 12).

surprisingly, at least for Gongsun Long's detractors - it would be expected by a true *shi* 士 in manifesting loyalty to the throne:

趙惠王謂公孫龍曰：“寡人事**偃兵**十餘年矣而不成，兵不可偃乎？”公孫龍對曰：“偃兵之意，**兼愛**天下之心也。兼愛天下，不可以虛名為也，必有其實。今藺、離石入秦，而王縞素布總；東攻齊得城，而王加膳置酒。秦得地而王布總，齊亡地而王加膳，所非兼愛之心也。此偃兵之所以不成也” [...].⁹⁵

King Hui of Zhao said to Gongsun Long, “I have endeavored for more than ten years now to abolish the use of weapons of war but have not succeeded. Is it impossible to abolish the use of weaponry?” “The idea of abolishing weapons,” replied Gongsun Long, “requires for its success a mind that loves all the world universally. Such universal love cannot be brought about with empty words but requires concrete deeds. Now, when Lin and Lishi were absorbed by Qin, your majesty dressed in mourning garb; when you attacked Qi to the east and took a walled city, you celebrated the victory with liquor and a feast. When Qin gains territory, your majesty mourns; when Qi loses territory, your majesty feasts. This contradicts any intention to love the world universally, and this is why you have been so unsuccessful in abolishing the use of weaponry.”[.].⁹⁶

Interestingly enough, in this passage two of the cardinal mohist concepts and technical terms appear (*yan bin* 偃兵 “cease war, abolish weaponry, lay down weapons”) and *jian'ai* 兼愛 (“universal love”, “impartial caring”); the occurrence has been widely used to try to prove a sort of affiliation to the Mohist, or a juvenile early training experienced at a Mohists school⁹⁷. Now Gongsun Long is evidently against the use of violence – the fact can be easily proved by efforts lavished in preventing wars and conflicts scattered throughout the sources here examined while trying to draw a portrait of him through his life; however this specific terminology is alien to Gongsun Long's usual vocabulary, and, most of all, never shows up in the bundle of texts named and known as *Gongsun Longzi*, a *corpus* that for simplicity at this point we can consider if not an original coherent creation on his own hand, at least a partial heredity of his rhetoric skills. As I will argue in paragraph 1.5.2 at pages 51-54 below, I find it hardly demonstrable that Gongsun Long was ever a Mohist in any proper sense of the word.

⁹⁵Knoblock and Riegel, 2000, p. 442.

⁹⁶*Id.*

⁹⁷ Also Reding points out this point in common that Gongsun Long should have shared with the Mohists (Reding, 1985, pp. 429-430; 434).

- **ca 259/257 B.C.**⁹⁸ invites the Prince of Pingyuan not to follow Yu Qing 虞卿's subtle advise and consequently not to ask for an enlargement of his fiefdom (*Zhanguo*⁹⁹ *Zhao san - Book of Zhao* 戰國策·趙三 King Xiaocheng di liu 孝成王第六 or *Qin zheng Zhao Pingyuan jun shi ren qing jiu yu Wei* 秦政趙平原君使人請救於魏; *Shiji Pingyuanjun liezhuan* ch. 76).

Here is the *Zhanguo* version of this episode, drier and shorter than the broad narration reported in the *Shiji* (which follows straight after), and with no explicit moral judgment given about Yu Qing's behaviour:

秦攻趙，平原君使人請救於魏。信陵君發兵至邯鄲城下，秦兵罷。虞卿為平原君請益地，謂趙王曰：「夫不鬥一卒，不頓一戟，而解二國患者，平原君之力也。用人之力，而忘人之功，不可。」趙王曰：「善。」將益之地。公孫龍聞之，見平原君曰：「君無覆軍殺將之功，而封以東武城。趙國豪傑之士，多在君之右，而君為相國者以親故。夫君封以東武城不讓無功，佩趙國相印不辭無能，一解國患，欲求益地，是親戚受封，而國人計功也。為君計者，不如勿受便。」平原君曰：「謹受令。」乃不受封。¹⁰⁰

Ch'in attacked Chao. Then Lord P'ing-yüan, Chao Sheng, dispatched a man to seek help from Wei and Lord Hsin-ling of Wei set forth troops. When the Wei forces reached the walls of Han-tan the Ch'in troops withdrew. Yü Ch'ing wanted to use this incident to increase Lord P'ing-yüan holdings, so he said to the king of Chao: "It was the power of Lord P'ing-yüan which avoided harm to the state without so much as using a soldier or breaking a weapon. Now to use a man's power and neglect to reward his achievement is not proper." "True", said the king and increased Lord P'ing-yüan holdings. Kung-sun Lung heard of it and gaining audience with Lord P'ing-yüan he said: "You were given the fief of Tung Wu-ch'eng without ever having overturned an army or killed an enemy general. All the heroic officers of Chao deserve a higher rank than you, excellency, but you have been made chief minister because you are related to the royal house. You took the fief of Tung Wu-ch'eng instead of refusing it because of your lack of merit, and you accepted the seal of minister of Chao instead of refusing it because of a lack of ability. Now that, for the first time, you have succeeded in relieving the state's troubles, you immediately want an increase in your fief. In this manner the king's relatives will get the fiefs while the king's citizens do all the good. If I were to make your plans for you, excellency, I would say you should refuse an increase in land." "I accept your commands", said the Lord P'ing-yüan, and he refused the fief.¹⁰¹

⁹⁸In 259 B.C, according to Hu Qu Yuan and Chen Jinkun (*Id.*, 1987, p. 5); in the 9th year of reign of King Xiaocheng 趙孝成王 (265-245 B.C.), while Zhao was menaced by Qin, according to Yang Junguang, (*Id.*, 1991, p. 139).

⁹⁹ Composed between 26-8 B.C.

¹⁰⁰ Zhang Qingchang 張清常 and Wang Yandong 王延棟, 1994, p. 499.

¹⁰¹ Crump, 1979, pp. 347-348.

Similarly, as said above the anecdote is reported also in the *Shiji* in a more detailed way, and, in particular, with a more stressed moral connotation in its tone:

虞卿欲以信陵君之存邯鄲為平原君請封。公孫龍聞之，夜駕見平原君曰： “龍聞虞卿欲以信陵君之存邯鄲為君請封，有之乎？”平原君曰：“然。”龍曰：“此甚不可。且王舉君而相趙者，非以君之智能為趙國無有也。割東武城而封君者，非以君為有功也，而以國人無勳，乃以君為親戚故也。君受相印不辭無能，割地不言無功者，亦自以為親戚故也。今信陵君存邯鄲而請封，是親戚受城而國人計功也。此甚不可。且虞卿操其兩權，事成，操右券以責；事不成，以虛名德君。君必勿听也。”平原君遂不听虞卿。¹⁰²

[..] Excellency Yü wanted to request a fief for the Lord of P'ing-yüan because [the Lord of P'ing-yüan caused] the Lord of Hsing-ling to save Han-tan. Kung-sun Lung 公孫龍 heard of this and hitched up his carriage that night to see the Lord of P'ing-yüan. "I've heard that Excellency Yü wants to request a fief for you because [you caused] the Lord of Hsin-ling to save Han-tan. Is this true?" "Yes," said the Lord of P'ing-yüan. "This will never do. The king raised up your Lordship to be Prime Minister of Chao was not because [men with] your intellect or ability were not to be found in Chao. That he ceded East Wu-c'heng as your fief was not because he thought you had merit and other men of the state lacked accomplishments. Rather, it was because you were kin. When Your Lordship received the Prime Minister's seal, you did not decline, saying you were incapable, and when the king awarded you land, you did not claim that you had no merit; this too was because you were kin. Now you would seek enfeoffment for the Lord of Hsin-ling's rescue of Han-tan. This would be a kinsman receiving a city, whit his merit calculated as that of a commoner of the state. This will certainly not do. Moreover, Excellency Yü will have two options. If his scheme succeeds, he will lay claim on you with the right half of the tally [to your fief]. If his scheme fails, you will owe him a favor for nothing. My Lord must not heed him." The Lord of P'ing-yüan did not heed Excellency Yü's advice.¹⁰³

- **Old age (before 251 B.C.)** : Gongsun Long is still at Pingyuan's court, and at this time his remarkable rhetorical fluency and impressive dialectical skills have already gained him a considerable crowd of enemies; in order to get him out of the way and neutralize his sharp tongue, the state of Qi 齊 sends Zou Yan 鄒衍 to discuss with him (Liu Xiang's *Bielu*) : defeated, Gongsun Long is dismissed by the Prince (*Shiji* ch. 76) (this must have happened necessarily **before 251 B.C.** when the Prince of Pingyuan dies¹⁰⁴).

¹⁰²Sima Qian, 1963, pp. 2369-2370.

¹⁰³Nienhauser, 1994, pp. 206-207.

¹⁰⁴Yang Junguang reports that, according to the *Shiji Pingyuanjun Yuqing liezhuan* 史記·平原君虞卿列傳 *juan* 76 and the *Liuguo biao* 六國表 the Prince of Pingyuan 平原君 should have

As the *Shiji* witnesses, the Lord of Pingyuan apparently accorded great favor to Gongsun Long for many years, at least until when he, already an old man, was overtalked in discussion by Zou Yan, and fell in disfavour with the prince; finally the Lord, who had always shown himself willing to listen to Gongsun Long's advice before, in contrast with his previous benevolent attitude decided to dismiss him: maybe the Lord was ill advised, just negatively impressed by Gongsun Long's last performance or even influenced by previous disagreements we are not informed about¹⁰⁵, a sign of the caducity of honors and favors granted by men.

Here is the quite impersonal and terse comment about Gongsun Long's dismissal in the *Shiji*:

平原君厚待公孫龍。公孫龍善為堅白之辯，及鄒衍過趙，言至道，乃絀公孫龍。¹⁰⁶

[..]The Lord of P'ing-yüan treated Kung-sun Lung very well. Kung-sun Lung was skilled in disputing on "the white and hard". When Tsou Yen 鄒衍 passed through Chao and spoke of the supreme way, [the Lord of P'ing-yüan]demoted Kung-sun Lung.¹⁰⁷

A more detailed account and description of the arguments discussed during the meeting between Gongsun Long and Zou Yan is given by Liu Xiang:

齊使鄒衍過趙，平原君見公孫龍及其徒綦母子之屬，論‘白馬非馬’之辯，以問鄒子。鄒子曰：‘不可。彼天下之辯有五勝三至，而辭正為下。辯者，別殊類使不相害，序異端使不相亂，杼意通指，明其所謂，使人与知焉，不務相迷也。故勝者不失其所守，不勝者得其所求。若是，故辯可為也。及至煩文以相假，飾辭以相悖，巧譬以相移，引人聲使不得及其意。如此，害大道。夫繳紛爭言而競后息，不能無害君子。’坐¹⁰⁸皆稱善。¹⁰⁹

died in the 15th year of reign of King Zhao Xiaocheng 趙孝成王 (265-245 B.C.), that is to say 251 B.C.; the author quotes also the *Shiji Zhao Shijia* 史記•趙世家 *juan* 43, according which the Prince should have died in the 14th year of the same reign instead, but claims it to be a mistake. See Yang Janguang, 1991, p. 131; see also Nienhauser, 1994, p. 207 (text and note n 15): "The Lord of P'ing-yüan died in the fifteenth year of King Hsiao-c'heng of Chao (251 B.C.)"

¹⁰⁵More probable, Gongsun Long had already somehow displeased the Lord and that's why he had been slightly reprimanded by the latter before, for indulging in linguistic jokes contrary to good sense while discussing with Kong Chuan (see pp. 169-172), but without such serious consequences.

¹⁰⁶Sima Qian, 1963, p. 2370.

¹⁰⁷Nienhauser, 1994, p. 207.

¹⁰⁸Note the use of the verb *zuo* in this occasion, which clearly proves the fact that this kind of court debate was public and performed in front of an audience; see also Kroll, 1985, pp. 121-122; 127.

¹⁰⁹Liu Xiang 劉向, 1965, *juan* 38/5b-6a, p. 338.

The State of Qi sent Zou Yan to Zhao; the Prince of Pingyuan granted an audience to Gongsun Long and his disciple Qi Muzi; they discussed the “white-horse-not-horse” argument and questioned Zouzi about it; Zou Yan answered:¹¹⁰ “This is not admissible. The disputation recognized throughout the world has ‘five wins and three arrivals’¹¹¹, of which correctness in phrasing is the least. The disputant distinguishes separate kinds of thing so that they do not interfere with each other, arranges in sequence different starting-points so that they do not confuse each other, dredges his ideas and makes his meanings intelligible, and clarifies what he has to say; he shares his knowledge with others and does not busy himself with misleading them. In this way the winner does not fail to make his point and the loser finds what he is seeking. When it comes to elaborating style in order to put up a pretence, adorning phrases in order to make nonsense of the other’s case, using subtle comparisons to make him shift his ground, stretching what he literally says so that he cannot get back to his own idea, to behave like this is harmful to the Great Way. Engaging in tangled debates and competing to keep talking the longest cannot but be harmful to being a gentleman.”¹¹² Those who attended all commended him.

To better focus and visualize Gongsun Long’s life main events – at least those more “historical”, as concerning meetings with members of the aristocracy which give us some point of reference in trying to fix approximative dates, here is a simplified version of the scheme drawn by Qian Mu¹¹³:

趙惠文王	取齊昔陽 燕昭王(二十八年)擊齊入臨淄	公孫龍游燕說昭王以偃兵當在此時或稍後
同	秦撥趙石城	公孫龍與趙惠文王論偃兵當在此時稍後
同	秦撥魏兩城	秦欲攻魏公孫龍教趙讓其非約疑即指此
趙孝成王	平原君相(平原先相惠文王此為再相也)	
同	秦圍邯鄲楚魏來救 荀卿已先在趙與趙孝成王論兵當在此時 稍後	公孫龍說平原君勿受封在此時 其後鄒衍來龍遂見絀
同	平原君卒	公孫龍之卒當亦在此時前後

¹¹⁰ This first lines of the translation and the last are mine, while the more consistent part in the middle is taken from Graham(see below note 106).

¹¹¹ The expression is evidently another paradox whose explanation went lost; see Graham, 1978, p. 20.

¹¹² Graham, 1978, pp. 20-21.

¹¹³ See Qian Mu, 1934, pp. 40-42.

1.3 The two Gongsun Longs in history: who's who

A brief account on Gongsun Long's name

What is probably more striking about the *Gongsun Longzi* in particular - and the Logicians' works and speeches in general - is probably the apparent complete absence of a didactic-didascalic tone and ethico-political intent underneath (typical of the contemporary Masters Literature instead), which is the most peculiar characteristic of these texts and, at the same time, their greatest difficulty. When it comes to their scope and public, no final solution supported by ultimate evidence has been given, nor a definitive agreement has been reached among scholars East and West.

Chinese scholars tried long to bring Gongsun Long back to the right "Way", and great impulse to this attempt has been a misleading trace in the *Shiji*, conveniently and indiscriminately used to justify and argument Gongsun Long's hypothetic affiliation to- or provenience from the Confucian circle. This hardly supportable theory can be easily denied both by a more accurate and systematic comparison of the sources and by a quick chronologic calculus. It is interesting here to note how it came that Gongsun Long was to be taken – or better say, *mistaken* – as one of Confucius' disciples, and to identify and put into evidence where this theory came from. As it will be discussed below, the source of confusion can be identified rather simply in a case of homonymy.

The three quotations here taken into consideration are all from the *Shiji* chapters where a "Gongsun Long" character is mentioned. To help dissolve any doubts and to facilitate comparison between the quotations, they are already divided in two blocks: one referring to the "[Confucian Gongsun Long](#)" (coherently taken from *Shiji Confucius' disciples* chapter 67) and the "[Logician Gongsun Long](#)".

Here is the first quotation, talking about the "Confucian Gongsun Long":

➤ 公孫龍，字子石，少孔子五十三歲¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴Sima Qian, 1963, p. 2219.

Gongsun Long's *zi* was Zi Shi, and he was fifty-three years younger than Confucius.¹¹⁵

(*Shiji Zhongni dizi Liezhuan* ch.67)

But we do also have two more quotations for a Gongsun Long expert in dissertation (the “Logician Gongsun Long”):

- 而趙亦有公孫龍，為堅白同異之辯¹¹⁶

(*Shiji Mengzi Xunqing Liezhuan* ch.74)

And in Zhao there was Gongsun Long, who debated on “hard and white” and “similarity and difference”.¹¹⁷

- 公孫龍善為堅白之辯¹¹⁸

(*Shiji Pingyuanjun Liezhuan* ch.76)

Gongsun Long was skilled in debating on “hard and white”¹¹⁹

By this first comparison, is it almost already self-evident that the two characters can hardly be the same person. The confusion about these two characters has been nourished further on by Zhang Shoujie 張守節 (*fl.* 725-735)’s *Shiji Zhengyi* 史記正義 annotation to *Shiji Zhongni dizi liezhuan* 史記·仲尼弟子列傳 ch. 67 - according which Zi Shi would have been a dialectician expert in *jianbai*¹²⁰ – and by Sima Zhen 司馬貞 (*fl.* 720 A.D.)’s *Shiji Suoyin* 史記索隱 annotation to *Shiji Mengzi Xunqing liezhuan* 史記·孟子荀卿列傳 ch. 74 – according which Gongsun “Bing”¹²¹ would have been

¹¹⁵See also Nienhauser, 1994, p. 83.

¹¹⁶Sima Qian, 1963, p. 2349.

¹¹⁷See Nienhauser, 1994., p. 185.

¹¹⁸Sima Qian, 1963, p. 2370.

¹¹⁹See Nienhauser, 1994, p. 207.

¹²⁰Sima Qian, 1963, p. 2219-2220, note 1.

¹²¹According to the commentary to the *Liezi* and the *Zhuangzi*, the Logician’s *zi* would have been Bing 秉.

Kongzi's disciple¹²², in fact mistaking one for another, and giving a totally confounding interpretation.

Moreover, in the *Shiji Suoyin* Sima Zhen quotes an interesting graphic variant of Gongsun Long's name - used, according to the author, in the *Kongzi Jiayu* 孔子家語·公孫龔. Sima Zhen states that, if we take for granted that the *zi* of this disciple was Zi Shi, than this variant is not completely out of context: the components of the character *long* 龔 used here are a stone (*shi* 石) surmounted by a dragon (*long* 龍), instead of the usual simple dragon character (*long* 龍). A few scholars¹²³, in order to support the hypothesis of the dialectician himself been called Zi Shi, even suggested that this could be a case of *hewen* 合文, and tried to use this rare and unique occurrence as a piece of evidence, supported in their attempt also by the *Baishui bei* 白水碑 inscription which lists a certain 公孫龍石¹²⁴: but here again we go in a vicious circle, as the *Baishui bei* is a list of Confucius's disciples(!).

This distorted interpretation is supported also by Yang Shen 楊慎 (1488-1559)¹²⁵ and even by the famous Qing scholar Kang Youwei 康有為 (1858-1927)¹²⁶: in the preface to his commented edition of the *Lunyu* 論語, while listing main features of Kongzi 孔子's disciples, he identifies the Confucian Gongsun Long as an expert of *jianbai* (「公孫龍專堅白」).¹²⁷

Leaving apart for the moment any further speculations about the name issue in itself, and coming to an indicative age calculus of the two supposed-to-be-one characters, it is utterly impossible that the two Gongsun Longs could be one and the same person: as far as the first one is concerned (the “Confucian” one, when Kongzi died in 479 B.C. in the

¹²²Sima Qian, 1963, p. 2349 note 1.

¹²³Ho Ch'i Min cites Gui Youguang 歸有光, Liang Yusheng 梁玉繩 and Jin Shoushen 金受申 (See Ho Ch'i Min, 1956, p. 22). Contrary to what Ho claims, Jin Shoushen openly and firmly supports the opposite hypothesis (「申思公孫龍必非一。」 Jin Shoushen, 1922, p. 3) and probably Gui Youguang's position according to Ho is only due to a note in the former's *Shiji* commented edition (See *id.*), which quotes the *Baishui bei* 白水碑 inscription (see end of page 14 and below note 45); the only true supporter of the “Confucian” Gongsun Long hypothesis seems to be Liang Yusheng.

¹²⁴See Liang Yusheng, 1981, pp. 1205-38; on *Baishui bei* see p. 1206, on Gongsun Long see pp. 1227-28.

¹²⁵Kou Pao-Koh identifies the source where Yang Shen expresses this view in the *Shaoshi shanfang bicong* 少室山房筆丛 (See *Id.*, 1953, p. 7; for a complete quotation of the original text, see Hu Daojing 胡道靜, 1992, p. 7).

¹²⁶See Jin Shoushen 1922, p. 3.

¹²⁷Kang Youwei, 1984, p. 1.

41st year of reign of King Jing 敬 of Zhou 周, his disciple Gongsun Long, named Zi Shi and 53 years younger than the Master would have been 20 years old; about the second one (the “[Logician](#)”), in the 58th year of reign of King Nan 赧 of Zhou (approximately 257 B.C.) when Zhao 趙 attacked Qin 秦, Gongsun Long was already a retainer at the court of the Prince of Pingyuan, where he discussed with Kong Chuan 孔穿 (314-249 B.C. according to *Shiji Kongzi Shijia* 史記·孔子世家), Kongzi’s great-grandson (sixth generation)¹²⁸. It is crystal-clear that more than two hundred years separate the life-span of these two people, and that any conjecture or attempt of consider them as one doesn’t have any historic, philosophic or even logic ground.¹²⁹

The idea that the Logician Gongsun Long’s *zi* would have been Bing 秉 (accepted also by the *Shiji Suoyin* at the top of this page) comes from the *Zhuangzi Xuwugui* 莊子·徐無鬼 chapter 24, where a trend of thought ascribed to a certain Bing” is acknowledged by Zhuangzi among the five most important philosophical movements of the time : 「然則儒墨楊秉四，與夫子¹³⁰為五」。Cheng Xuanying 成玄英’s commentary glosses the quote stating that Bing is Gongsun Long 「秉者，公孫龍字。」¹³¹, probably because in this particular episode Zhuangzi is having a talk with Hui Shi, notably Gongsun Long’s acquaintance, who is also mentioned as one of the five outstanding philosophical trends, that is to say the *Ru* 儒, the Mohists 墨, the Yanghists 楊 = 楊朱, Bing 秉 = 公孫龍 (?), Hui Shi 夫子 = here Zhuangzi’s interlocutor, 惠施.

¹²⁸See Wang Guan, 1992, p. 26; also Yang Junguang states the impossibility that the dialectician Gongsun Long could have been the same person listed in the *Shiji Zhongni dizi liezhuan* ch. 67 as one of Confucius’ disciples, restating that more than two hundred years separate this man and the person who discussed with Kong Chuan, Confucius’s nephew and descendent of six generation. (See Yang Junguang, 1991, p. 131).

¹²⁹ An excellent exposition of – and solution to – the issue of the two Gongsun Longs is given also by Ignace Kou Pao-koh (1953, pp. 7-9).

¹³⁰Here the binomial *fuzi* refers to the philosopher Hui Shi 惠施.

¹³¹See *Zhuangzi jijie*, 1948, p. 214.

A second coherent reference is to be found in the *Liezi Zhongni* 列子仲尼 ch. 4, where Yin Jingshun 殷敬順's commentary states that Gongsun Long's *zi* was Zi Bing 「龍字子¹³²秉」¹³³.

However the assumption is not totally convincing¹³⁴, as there is no clue that Gongsun Long ever attracted such a huge retinue of disciples to grant him similar consideration – even if Gongsun Long himself happened to have disciples - or that the current of thought in which the so-called Logicians or Dialecticians can recognize themselves did actively played such an important role in the philosophical panorama of the period.

Nevertheless, the most trustworthy and authoritative assertion supporting the idea that the dialectician's name would have been Zi Bing comes from the preface to the *Gongsun Longzi*, attributed to Xie Xishen 謝希深: 「公孫龍子, 姓公孫, 名龍, 字子秉」¹³⁵. From one point of view, we must keep in mind that almost for sure the author of this preface was also handling most of the same sources we are now relying upon; from another point of view, we cannot exclude *a priori* he could possibly be privy to some crucial information or have at his disposal sources that went lost during the ages.

Here is Ho Ch'i Min 何啓民's scheme¹³⁶, useful to sum up and describe in a graphic way the above-mentioned situation about the two Gongsun Longs and their *zi*, even if Xie Xishen's statement is not taken into account:

¹³²According to Xu Fuguan 徐復觀, Yin Jingshun added here a “子” character only by convention, as a general rule, but it is a commentator's personal choice and cannot be trusted. (See Xu Fuguan, 1982, p. 11).

¹³³See Ho Ch'i Min, 1956, p. 20.

¹³⁴ Ho Ch'i Min speculates that Bing's true identity would be: 1) Song Xing 宋鉞 according to Hong Yixuan 洪頤煊 (1765-1833); 2) Zi Mo 子莫 according to Di Qinjiang 翟晴江; 3) Wei Gongzi Mou 魏公子牟 according to Hu Daojing 胡道靜. (Ho Ch'i Min, 1956, p. 6).

¹³⁵Jin Shoushen 金受申, 1922, p. 1-2.

¹³⁶See *Id.*, p. 21. The Chinese scholar provides also an explanation of the four possible hypothesis about the two Gongsun Longs (1. Gongsun Long being both expert in *jianbai* and Confucius' disciple; 2. Gongsun Long expert in *jianbai* and Confucius' disciple as two different persons; 3. Gongsun Long expert in *jianbai* being “Bing”, chief of one of the five great trends of thought identified in the *Zhuangzi*; 4. Gongsun Long expert in *jianbai* and “Bing””, chief of one of the five great trends of thought, as two different persons), each followed by a detailed list of sources, authors or commentators supporting that one particular theory (*Id.*, pp. 21-22).

公孫龍	字子石	孔子弟子	史記仲尼弟子列傳
公孫龍		為堅白之辯者	史記孟子荀卿列傳、平原君虞卿列傳、莊子秋水篇、戰國策、淮南子
公孫龍	字子秉	與儒墨楊惠而為五	列子釋文、莊子成疏

Finally, we can conclude that, across the Spring and Autumn and Warring States period there have been two homonymous Gongsun Long:

- 1) a *Ru*, one of Kongzi's disciples, whose *zi* was Zi Shi 子石, who was 53 years younger than the Master (*Kongzi Jiayu* and *Shiji Zhongni dizi liezhuan* ch. 67);
- 2) a *Logician*, whose *zi* might have been Bing 秉 (or Zi Bing 子秉), a skillful debater well-versed in *jianbai* arguments, living during the Warring States period.

1.4 「公孫龍，趙人也」 or wasn't he?

Gongsun Long's place of origin

而趙亦有公孫龍...¹³⁷

According to what we have seen by now, we can state with a certain confidence that the bad name gained by Gongsun Long for being an indecipherable and mocking character, associated to almost undisentangle arguments which are not only part of his dialectical repertoire, but also object of a cryptical and almost incomprehensible text is for sure well-deserved.

Moreover it is not only Gongsun Long's name and affiliation – as we have already seen, and as it will be soon discussed below, respectively – that are subject of an

¹³⁷ *Shiji* ch. 73; see Sima Qian, 1963, p. 2349.

animated debate and clash between scholars on the interpretation and reconstruction of original sources, but also identification of his mother country is controversial and problematic, because of the few fragmentary and often contradictory information available to us. Though apparently not our main concern, this discussion not only can provide us further evidence of Gongsun Long's actual movements across the Six States, reconstructing an hypothetical map, but also can help discern which could be references to the Confucian Gongsun Long instead, reinforcing our previous conclusions on the existence of a case of homonymy.

After skimming available references, here is a reasoned schematic summary of the diverse “nationalities” attributed to the Logician Gongsun Long, according to major sources which expressed themselves on this topic, with relative accurate bibliographical recalls.

Zhao 趙

Zhao is the state most frequently acknowledged by early Chinese sources as eligible cradle of our persuader, though of course no ultimate proof able to dispel any doubts for good can be provided when dealing with such ancient and potentially corrupted sources; what we know for sure and can tell so far is that Gongsun Long, if not a proper native of Zhao, was a kind of “foster child” to this state, as he spent a considerable part of his life in attendance at the Zhao court.

Hanshu Yiwenzhi 漢書藝文志, *Huainan honglie – Qisu* 淮南鴻烈·齊俗¹³⁸; *Liezi Zhongni* 列子·仲尼¹³⁹; *Zhuangzi Qiushui* 莊子·秋水 (Sima Biao 司馬彪's commentary)¹⁴⁰; *Nanhua zhenjing shu* 南華真經疏 – *Qiwu lun* 齊物論¹⁴¹, *Qiushui*

¹³⁸*Huainan honglie jijie, shang ce*, 1989, p. 369.

¹³⁹*Liezi zhu – Zhongni pian* 列子註·仲尼篇, 1960.

¹⁴⁰*Zhuangzi jijie*, 1948, p. 146.

¹⁴¹*Nanhua zhenjing zhushu*, 1988, vol. 16, *juan* 2, p. 297.

秋水¹⁴² ch. 17, *Tianxia* 天下¹⁴³ ch. 33, by Chen Xuanying 成玄英; *Shiji Zhongni dizi liezhuan – Zhenyi* (quoting *Mengzi* 孟子)¹⁴⁴

Wei 魏

It is not surprising that Wei could have been considered as Gongsun Long's place of origin, since according to literary sources when young he was politically active in this state; this fact can easily lead to the conclusion that he was not only offering his advice and attending upon Wei, but that he might also be born there.

Lüshi Chunqiu Yingyan 呂氏春秋·應言 ch. 18/7 (Gao You'高誘's commentary)¹⁴⁵

Wei 衛

This is possibly a mistake for 魏; the fact that this hypothetical origin is suggested in the *Zhengyi* lets us suppose that it is most probably due to confusion with the homonymous Confucius' disciple.

Shiji Zhongnidizi liezhuan - Zhengyi 史記·仲尼弟子列傳正義 (quoting *Kongzi Jiayu* 孔子家語)¹⁴⁶

Chu 楚

As above, also in this case there's a high probability that the Logician Gongsun Long had been mistaken with the Confucian Gongsun Long.

¹⁴²*Id.*, *juan* 19, p. 498.

¹⁴³*Id.*, *juan* 35, p. 672.

¹⁴⁴Sima Qian, 1963, p. 2219 note 1.

¹⁴⁵Chen Qiyu, 1990, p. 1215, note 9.

¹⁴⁶Sima Qian, 1963, p. 2219 note 1.

Shiji Zhongnidizi liezhuan jijie 史記·仲尼弟子列傳集解 (quoting Zheng Xuan 鄭玄)¹⁴⁷

1.5 Gongsun Long: a *Ru*, a Mohist or...none of the two?

而趙亦有公孫龍，為堅白同異之辯¹⁴⁸

The scarce information we were capable of collecting about the life of Gongsun Long, as we have already seen, are scattered over many diverse classical sources belonging to different trends of thought¹⁴⁹. Of course this situation has severe consequences on the objectivity of these accounts and on the judgement each text provides of our persuader, giving voice to disparate interpretation of his moral and political role on the scene. Of course similar nuances have not gone unnoticed, and inspired various imaginative hypothesis – in most cases even supported by sources, which however happen to be subjective and deeply influenced by personal feelings and even intellectual envy.

Many later – even contemporary - attempts of moralizing Gongsun Long's conduct, for instance, flew into a sort of parable of the “lost sheep” with a Confucian flavour, about a young disciple who studied as a *Ru* and only later diverted from the Way. As an example, let's just have a quick look at this passage from *Zhuangzi*:

¹⁴⁷*Id.*

¹⁴⁸Sima Qian, 1963, p. 2349.

¹⁴⁹ To be honest apart for the *Ru* and *Mo* hypothesis, there is also another alternative other than those exposed in this chapter, that is a Daoist hypothesis propounded only by Guo Moruo 郭沫若, and applied mainly to Hui Shi; as it has never been taken into consideration by any other scholar – nor before nor later – we can assume it to be marginal in the context of studies on Gongsun Long, therefore it has been left out of our present discussion; those interested in deepening the topic can personally check Guo Moruo's materials (*Id.*, 1951, pp. 52-53). I would suggest also to have a careful look at Ignace Kou Pao-Koh's criticism and deconstruction of Guo Moruo's Daoist hypothesis (See *Id.*, 1953, pp. 88-90).

龍少學先王之道，長而明仁義之行，合同異，離堅白，然不然，可不可；困百家之知，窮眾口之辯，吾自以為至達矣。¹⁵⁰

“When I was young I studied the Way of the former kings (先王之道), and when I grew older I came to understand the conduct of benevolence and righteousness (仁義之行). I reconciled different and sameness (合同異), distinguished hardness and whiteness (離堅白), and proved that not so was so, that the unacceptable was acceptable. I confounded the wisdom of the hundred schools and demolishes the arguments of a host of speakers. I believed that I had attained the highest degree of accomplishment.”¹⁵¹

This anecdote – if read literally – really gives grounds to believe Gongsun Long a perverted Confucian indeed!

Another interpretative trend plays on the technical jargon that Gongsun Long has in common with the Mohist Canons in particular; aided by the evidence of large part of these texts which penetrated into the last chapters of the *Gongsun Longzi*, the supporters of this hypothesis can take advantage also of Gongsun Long’s “pacifism”, as the use of a typically mohist terminology – terms such as *fei gong* 非攻 or *jian’ai* 兼愛 – works in their favour.

For the sake of simplicity, we will call these two main hypothesis emerged on Gongsun Long’s possible affiliation the “*Ru* hypothesis” and the “Mohist hypothesis”, and we will proceed straightforward to examine them in detail. Our task is, of course, to try to be as objective as humanly possible, skim what is clearly an external intervention and superimposition of ideas, identify what can possibly be relied upon, and finally extrapolate an image of the “real” original Gongsun Long – being he a historical or just a fictitious character, still we need to do justice to his true intentions, considering him in an absolute value reclaimed by the use (or *misuse*) other debaters and scholars made of this figure, to subdue him to expressive and narrative exigencies.

¹⁵⁰*Zhuangzi jijie*, 1948, pp. 146-147, Guo Qingfan, 2005, pp. 597-603.

¹⁵¹See Watson, 1968, pp. 185-186.

1.5.1 The *Ru* hypothesis

As already anticipated in paragraph 1.3, the main reason why Gongsun Long has been forced to fall within the *Ru*¹⁵² is the accidental homonymy with one of Confucius' disciples; the truth is, there are indeed a few more deceptive clues that might go astray, and lead to believe there are grounds to consider Gongsun Long a *Ru*:

- First of all, his education (as he himself declares in the *Zhuangzi* – or better say, as the author/compiler of this anecdote put it in Gongsun Long's mouth): “When young, I studied the way of the former kings (先王之道)” (*Zhuangzi Qiushui*); The ideal training of a proper Confucian, indeed.
- Political engagement: Gongsun Long's political engagement clearly stands out in many anecdotes; nobody can deny that Gongsun Long was mainly an expert politician who put his dialectical skills to use, actively involved in the political scene of his time.
- *Yinwenzi* 尹文子 and *Kongcongzi* both quote Confucius's statement on *zhengming* 正名, making it the basis and pillar of the *mingjia*¹⁵³; similarly, also the *Hanshu* bibliographical catalogue associates the quotation to the *mingjia* : 「名家者流，蓋出於禮官。古者名位不同，禮亦異數。孔子曰：『必也正名乎！名不正則言不順，言不順則事不成。』」； quoting the Master is considered sufficient proof of Gongsun Long's Confucian background and affiliation
- In an anecdote set in Wei, Gongsun Long is described riding a chariot, and in particular he seems to be entrusted with the official title of carriage attendant; as riding is one of the Six Arts (*liu yi* 六藝) the episodes lends itself easily to support the “*Ru* hypothesis”

¹⁵² See Yang Junguang, 1991, pp. 239-240; Zhou Changzhong, 1991, p. 2.

¹⁵³ See Kou Pao-Koh, 1953, p. 9.

- In *Gongsun Longzi Jifu* ch.1¹⁵⁴, Gongsun Long is reported quoting an anecdote on Kongzi as authoritative source to support his argument
- Still in *Gongsun Longzi Jifu* ch. 1, Kong Chuan 孔穿, Kongzi's descendant, asks Gongsun Long to be accepted as disciple¹⁵⁵; to a Confucian's ears, the idea of a descendant of the Master betraying his ancestor's path, committing himself to a different kind of teaching sounds utterly unacceptable (at least in principle), better say inconceivable; therefore Gongsun Long must be a true Confucian himself
- Confusion aroused between a "Logician Gongsun Long" (Zi Bing) and Kongzi's disciple (Zi Shi) because of their homonymy (See paragraph 1.3)
- Origins of the members of the "School of Names" are identified by Ban Gu in the *Hanshu* bibliographical catalogue as stemming from the protocol officers (名家者流,蓋出於禮官)

These remarks seem to cast reasonable doubts on the possibility that Gongsun Long might at least have had some contact with the *Ru* enclave, which is no surprise at all as they by nature occupied official positions and held office at courts; we should keep in mind the unnegligible fact that at that time no insurmountable limits or strict boundaries were raised between thinkers belonging to different orientations, and that cultural interchange was on the agenda, to the point that – as unearthed manuscripts testify, disclosing us brand new horizons - we cannot even say with certainty who really thought and said what: as Watson pointed out, the Warring States persuaders should all be considered a sort of "eclectics"¹⁵⁶, who enriched their individual thought at times manipulating and reelaborating in an original distinctive way ideas borrowed from other persuaders of different – if not opposite – opinions.

First of all, we should consider the fact that - obvious enough - none of this sources was authored by Gongsun Long; these quotations all report what later scholars, editors and thinkers – even probably his disciples, who edited the *Gongsun Longzi Jifu* - thought of him, and especially what they decided to hand down about him, maybe

¹⁵⁴See Yang Jinguang, 1991, p. 240

¹⁵⁵See *id.*

¹⁵⁶Watson, 1958, in particular chapter V; see also Nylan, 1999, p. 19.

adding an extra aura of respectability, a more fashionable version covered by a glittering coat of moral conformity.

Knowing what we know about the skills, main interests and characteristics of Gongsun Long, it is clear enough that he cannot be considered properly “Confucian”, at least if we associate the term to the semantic universe we are used to according traditional academics so far – that is, a disciple of Confucius’s thought in a canonical way, and presumably a member of a school representing one of the three lines of transmission that derived from the original teaching of the Master.

Defining Gongsun Long “Confucian” doesn’t fit at all, unless we consider the term “*Ru*” under a different light, and in the specific case in Michael Nylan’s eyes, broadening and diversifying its significance as identifying at least three different types of *Ru*: “ ‘true Confucians’, ‘classicists’, and ‘career-bureaucrats’ ”¹⁵⁷. If we stick to the starting point that “well into the Han times, the *corpus* that we now call the ‘Confucian Classics’ was regarded as the common literary heritage of *all* well-educated people”¹⁵⁸ and that “even the self-identified Confucian masters of the Han period are best described as ‘eclectics’”, thus the *Ru* domain includes also all learned people mastering classical¹⁵⁹ culture and expertise in multiple fields of high-level knowledge¹⁶⁰: only in this case can Gongsun Long be considered legitimately a “*Ru*”, as he combines political commitment and broad learning with a peculiar interest in what – surprisingly – comes out to be considered a task of a “true” *Ru* (at least in Han times): *lun tongyi* 論同異(!)¹⁶¹, “discuss similarities and differences”¹⁶², a topic often associated also with Gongsun Long in particular - and the *mingjia* in general.

¹⁵⁷Nylan, 1999, p. 19.

¹⁵⁸*Id.*

¹⁵⁹ Intending “classical” in its broadest meaning – not strictly referring to what later became known as Confucian Canon.

¹⁶⁰ As Michael Nylan points out, “the *Yen t’ieh lun* [...] (Gale, 1967, p. 15), recording the Salt and Iron Debates of 81 B.C., shows opponents of the Ju shoring up their position by citing texts now considered ‘Confucian’ (e.g., the *Odes*). Even more tellingly, the same text identifies as ‘Ju’ some ‘thousand’ advisors to Kinh Hsüan of Ch’i at Chi-hsia, though these advisors reportedly included Tsou Yen, Shen Tao, and T’ien P’ien[.]” (Nylan, 1999, p. 37, note 12).

¹⁶¹ Nylan, 1999, p. 39, note 19; references can be found in two chapters of the *Hanshu*, ch. 43 *Weixian zhuan* (漢書卷七十三章賢傳第四十三) and ch. 88 *Rulin zhuan* (漢書卷八十八儒林傳第五十八). Nylan provides only the reference to the *Rulin* chapter.

¹⁶² Even if in the specific case referring to the *Wenxin Diaolong*, Andrew Plaks provides an interesting translation of the similar (at least to a certain extent) expression [...事異義同者] (“different examples with a common meaning”), which might be – in my opinion – useful also for a better understanding of the *Tongbian Lun* and *Mingshi Lun*. (Cai Zong-qi, 2001, p. 169).

1.5.2 The Mohist hypothesis¹⁶³

Though to a certain extent more coherent, the assimilation of Gongsun Long's thought to that of the Mohist¹⁶⁴ doesn't do justice to the originality of the Logician. The truth is, he actually shares with the Mohists a bunch of common examples and topics for discussion, though it is undeniable that methodology of use and development of argumentative techniques - as well as opinions expressed - are evidently opposite.

Here comes again the question of the shared "cultural product" and "cultural heritage": different thinkers will always show similarities and have points in common, as every persuader is – like we also are – influenced by the cultural *humus* in which he grew up. All of them owe some inspiration to other trends of thought, though without any detriment to their uniqueness, and must therefore be considered singularly as autonomous persuaders. With these preliminary considerations clear in mind, let us see now what might link Gongsun Long to the Mohists.

- Use of similar technical terminology in the *Gongsun Longzi* (in the so-called "corrupted chapters"¹⁶⁵), and in particular in *Gongsun Longzi Tongbian Lun*

¹⁶³According to Wang Guan, first supporters of this questionable hypothesis were Lu Sheng 魯勝 (Western Jin period, ca. 265-317); according to Graham, (*fl.* 291 A.D.) (*Id.*, 1986a, p. 162) in his *Mobian zhuxu* 墨辯注序, and the Qing scholar Zhang Huiyan 張惠言 (1761-1802) in his *Shu Mozi jingshuo jiehou* 書墨子經說解後, where the author states not only that Gongsun Long's thought should have stemmed from the Mohist theories, but also that similarly the way of thinking of Hui Shi, Shenzi 申子 and Han Feizi should also have derived from Mohist teachings. (See Wang Guan, 1992, p. 14). Actually, if we read the only extant part of Lu Sheng's work, a preface preserved in his biography in the *Jinshu* 晉書, what we discover is not that he was anyhow supporting the "Mohist hypothesis", but just that he assembled scattered surviving parts of what were (or might have been) the original writings of the Logicians, and edited Mohists *Explanations* and *Canons* in a more organic way. (See Graham, 1986a, pp. 162-163).

¹⁶⁴ See Zhou Changzhong, 1991, pp. 3-4; Yang Junguang, 1991, pp. 240-241; Wang Guan, 1992, pp. 14, 18-20, 74. Wang Guan is not convinced himself that Gongsun Long might have been a *Mo*, but quotes a list of Chinese scholars who supported the "Mohist hypothesis": Lu Sheng, Wang Ronfu 汪容甫, Zhang Huiyan 張惠言, Sun Yirang 孫詒讓, Wu Feibai 伍非百, and Hu Shi.

¹⁶⁵ See paragraph 2.1.

通變論 ch. 4, *Jianbai Lun* 堅白論 ch. 5 and *Mingshi Lun* 名實論 ch. 6) and the Mohist Canons, in particular, the term 類 *lei*¹⁶⁶

- Similar examples are used in argumentation: 白馬, 二有一/(二無一), 堅白石

In the table below you will find just a few examples of argumentations common to both the *Gongsun Longzi* and the Mohist Canons¹⁶⁷; of course the Mohist assert opinions contrary to those supported by Gongsun Long:

墨經	論點	公孫龍子	論點
小取	白馬馬也。乘馬乘馬也。	白馬論	白馬非馬。
經上	堅白不相外也。	堅白論	堅白石不相外。藏三。
經下	於一有知焉。 有不知焉。說在存。	堅白論	於石一也。有知焉。 有不知焉。
經說下	石一也。 堅白石二也而在於石。 故有知焉。 有不知焉。可。	堅白論	於石一也。 堅白二也而在於石。 故有知焉。 有不知焉。

- 偃兵 *yan bing* (“cease the war”): Gongsun Long openly shows a pacifist political attitude, recalling the Mohist principles of *fei gong* 非攻 (“against offensive war, “condemnation of offensive war”) and *jian'ai* 兼愛¹⁶⁸ (“universal

¹⁶⁶See Wang Guan, 1992, p. 18-19. According to the author, Gongsun Long, Hui Shi and Mao Gong should have belonged to a wing of the Mohist school particularly interested in - and devoted to dialectics and rhetoric. For an extensive analysis of the term *lei* see Lucas, 2005, pp. 358- 363. After careful reading of Lucas’s considerations, I am personally inclined to accept Graham’s translation of the term as “kind”, while the author’s choice “sort” seems to match only partially and under certain conditions (see *id.*, p. 361), a concept than can maybe a bit more vaguely but still more properly be called “kind”. Lucas himself quotes Cheng Chung-ying’s personal communication in his endnotes, which properly states that “sorts are natural kinds plus intensional kinds” (*id.*, p. 365 note 26). Finally, *lei* are better translated –if necessary – as “kinds”.

¹⁶⁷The table was inspired by Xu Fuguan's discussion on similarities between Mohist Canons and *Gongsun Longzi* arguments (See Xu Fuguan, 1982, p. 13).

¹⁶⁸The scholar Jin Shoushen calls Gongsun Long a *bie Mo* 別墨, such as a sort of “irregular” Mohist, that, even if later he diverted from the Mohist teachings, still when young he was philosophically raised up in the traditional tracks of Mohism, possibly even in a Mohist school, and so necessarily akin to them (See Jin Shoushen, *cit.*, p. 4) . In particular, it is interesting to report here what Jin says further, justifying his position by considering the heterogeneity of the fields of interest of ancient philosophers, shading a light on that aura of ambiguity and that elusive borderline that characterizes many thinkers, which the

love”, “impartial caring”), and explicit reference to the concept of *jian'ai* in the *Lüshi Chunqiu* (see the dialogue with King Huiwen of Zhao at pages 32-33¹⁶⁹)

- As it appears immediately self-evident to the reader of the *Gongsun Longzi*, large interpolations from the Mohist Canons were used as patches to fill in lost parts of *Gongsun Longzi Tongbian Lun* ch. 4, *Jianbai Lun* ch. 5 and *Mingshi Lun* ch. 6¹⁷⁰

We might agree that evidence is quite weak. As far as “*yan bing*” is concerned, Mozi’s and Gongsun Long’s positions are not the same: Mozi is against aggression (*fei gong*) but not as absolute value, as he supports the ideal of a preventive “just war” instead, while the Logician seems to be contrary to conflicts in themselves, whatever the reasons behind them.

About the “corrupted chapters”, though they show clear resemblances and even quote entire strings of text from the *Mojing*, this has no particular relevance or meaning in the attempt of classifying Gongsun Long as a Mohist, and it is not surprising at all anyway: as we had the occasion to point out elsewhere, and as Graham so brilliantly expounded, the editors of these corrupted chapters clearly draw on the *Mojing* to fill in gaps and missing portions of text. Moreover, quotations still (try their best to) respect in content what are supposed to be the two opposite philosophical positions of opponent and philosopher, which is especially clear in the case of the *Jianbai Lun*¹⁷¹.

Finally, we should consider that, apart from the *Ru*, the Mohist were the only real organization clearly recognizable beyond reasonable doubts as a proper “school”¹⁷², with a strictly hierarchical structure, requiring official inscription in quality of “disciple” and demanding submission and obedience to a master. The simple fact of advocating rulers to stop fighting and propositively supporting a natural inclination and a visceral desire for peaceful coexistence is not enough for being considered a true Mohist: this is rather a sign of the times, as reflects a more general tendency and shared

tradition vigorously tried to smooth over and uniform by a rigid strict organization and classification into clearly defined static schools, brearing precise limits and borders of acceptability as regarding to conformity of thought.

¹⁶⁹See Yang Janguang, 1991, p. 241; it is exactly the use of this Mohist terminology by chance put in Gongsun Long’s mouth that allows Hu Shi to declare that in the end the persuader would have been just 「墨家一派」 (Hu Shi, 1968, p. 104).

¹⁷⁰See *Id.*

¹⁷¹See *Id.*, p. 242.

¹⁷²See for instance Lewis, 1999, p. 60.

feeling of uneasiness and insecurity in respect to the socio-political scene, governed by violence, abuses of power and principle of “survival of the fittest”, which characterized the Warring States period.

As Feng Youlan states, “during the Warring States period, owing to the fierce fighting of the time, there were many persons who preached pacifism. Thus Mencius opposed aggression, and Kung-sun Lung also advocated cessation of war. This current was general to the age, and it is certainly not because of this doctrine that Hui Shih and Kung-sun Lung became famous.”¹⁷³

1.5.3 An alternative interpretation: Gongsun Long as *bianshi* 辯士

All *shi* were persuaders. However, though all *shi* persuaded, there were men of several differing traditions among them¹⁷⁴

By now, we have clarified that Gongsun Long was not really a *Ru*, nor a *Mo*, and that even Han categories like that of *Mingjia* are a bad match. It is time to find out who or what Gongsun Long really was, and a way to express it coherent with the line of thought exposed and the reasonings unravelled in the previous pages. My own choice is for “*bianshi*” 辯士 or “*bianzhe*” 辯者, all-purpose terms that can fully express the aspects considered by now: the political role and the official charge (*shi*) of somebody skilled in argumentation and debates (*bian*)¹⁷⁵, who is not a full-time philosopher in the Western sense of the word, but rather a politician – like all Warring States persuaders should be also considered.

¹⁷³ Feng Youlan, 1952, p. 195. See also Kou Pao-Koh, 1953, pp. 86-88.

¹⁷⁴ Crump, 1964, p. 4.

¹⁷⁵ For a definition of *bian*, see *Shuowen Jiezi* 說文解字, 1981, p. 756 (十四篇下 742上); Lu Xing discusses the definition as follows: “*Shuo Wen Jie Zi* 說文解字 [...] defines the word *bian* as 1) *bian* 辯 (argumentation and disputation); 2) *bian* 辨 (making distinctions); 3) *bian* 變 (making changes), and 4) *zhi* 治 (achieving justice and order).” (Lu Xing, 1998, p. 88).

Feng Youlan (Fung Yu-lan) seems to be the first contemporary scholar to use the terms *bianzhe*¹⁷⁶ and *bianshi* to define the seven *Mingjia*¹⁷⁷ quoted in the *Hanshu* bibliographical catalogue, assessing a term that is probably the most faithful to the original spirit which animated the debates of these persuaders: 「司馬談所說的名家，在先秦著作中称为“辯者”。」¹⁷⁸ and 「名家者流，出於辯士。」¹⁷⁹

To be more precise, the philosopher distinguished between a faction of real sophists (understood in our commonsensical disparaging sense) – the “詭辯家” (*guibianjia*) – among them, clarifying that these thinkers would be only interested in pernicious language jokes, emerging from a movement of people trying to oppose the rule-by-law system imposed by the newly established abusive governments of the Warring States period¹⁸⁰; on the contrary, the true *Mingjia* would devote themselves to their rulers and put their dialectical skills and the achievements reached in their work on language to the complete exclusive disposal of the ruling class which employed them effectively: 「通过对詞和概念的研究为当时的统治阶级服务。」¹⁸¹

However, in a later stage Feng adjusted the trajectory of his previous statements and orientated it towards the juridical sphere, identifying the *Mingjia* as attorneys; this was partly because of Deng Xi’s fame, but his conjecture on the juridical character of the *Mingjia* is supported, according to his opinion, by a passage in the *Zhanguo* where the diplomat Su Qin uses the binomial *xingming zhi jia* 刑名之家¹⁸², giving rise to further

¹⁷⁶“There was one group of philosophers which was known as the School of Names (*ming chia* 名家) by Han scholars, but which during the Warring States period was generally known as the School of Forms and Names (*hsing ming chia* 刑名家), or as the ‘Dialecticians’ (*pian che* 辯者).” (Feng Youlan, 1952, p. 192).

¹⁷⁷In 1932 Feng Youlan already drew an ulterior distinction among the *bianzhe*, identifying a “*he tongyi*” (合同異, “reconcile similarities and differences”) faction (*pai* 派) and a “*li jianbai*” (離堅白, “separate hard and white”) faction; according to this classification, Hui Shi would have been part of “*he tongyi*” faction, while Gongsun Long a member of the “*li jianbai*” faction: 「战国时籠統的說法，都說辯者“合同異，離堅白”。其实这两个“标語”表示出辯者中两个主要派别，一派主張“合同異”，一派主張“離堅白”；前者以惠施为首，后者以公孙龙为首。」 (Feng Youlan, 1964, p. 326). In fact, the hypothetic distinction is not so neat and its borders are quite blurred: it is hardly said that the few *Mingjia* whose texts were traded down by the tradition dealt exclusively with only one of these two main field of interest (“*he tongyi*” and “*li jianbai*”), while actually the two topics seem rather to be part of a broader discourse articulated in two interlacking domains with equal relevance and considered on the same level; on the topic see also Xu Fuguan 徐復觀, 1982, p. 10, Zhou Yunzhi 周云之, 1994, p. 132)

¹⁷⁸Feng Youlan, 1964, p. 320.

¹⁷⁹Feng Youlan, *Yuan Ru Mo* 原儒墨, in Feng, 2004.

¹⁸⁰Feng Youlan, 1964, p. 321.

¹⁸¹*Id.*

¹⁸²See Feng, 1952, p. 192, note 1 and 1968, p. 65.

speculations on the supposed origins of this grouping of people, having in common a particular interest in language, paradoxes and names. Feng himself stated that the basic reason of his change of mind in regard to the definition of the Logicians would be the absence of a proper identifiable “*bianshi*” class during the Warring States period¹⁸³.

This is of course not true, as early Chinese sources themselves largely employ terms like *bian* and *bianshi*: just think of *Mozi*, *Mengzi*, *Zhuangzi* or *Hanfeizi*!¹⁸⁴ Even if we want to recognize a strong Han intervention in the editing process of these texts, we cannot deny that their core material still dates to the Warring States, and, even admitting a work of general invasive emendation, reorganization and even rephrasing of these texts, we cannot conclude that it’s all a big Han forgery.

Therefore, I still agree that *bianshi* or *bianzhe* not only can be employed in a Warring States historical context, but also it is highly recommendable to apply them to define persuaders of this age, such as Gongsun Long, as they probably are the only appropriate because: 1) they don’t apply Western categories to a totally alien sphere, 2) they do not even make use of later Han division into “schools” of thought.

Hu Shi instead is pretty confident in defining Gongsun Long as *bianzhe*; nevertheless, it must be underlined that he doesn’t consider the *bianzhe* group of thinkers the original spontaneous expression of an independent brand new trend, but rather a sort of “*Bie Mo*” 別墨¹⁸⁵, a later collateral evolution generated by the outflow of a spurious group of “dissidents”, who gave birth to a personal rielaboration yet unequivocally rooted in the Mohist cradle.¹⁸⁶ In particular, Gongsun Long would be just a late representative of this trend, crowned by fame.

I personally agree with Kroll, who stated that “the Chankuo/Han period seems to have abounded with pien shih, the name applied to ‘wandering persuaders’ (yu shui

¹⁸³ 「我說『名家者流，出於辯士。』，[...]辯士一名，雖為先秦書中所常見，但[...]非社會上確有一種人，稱為辯士。名家者流，蓋出於訟師。」(See Feng, 1968, p. 63). Feng Youlan’s statement leaves the reader a bit puzzled, as the term *bianzhe* is incontrovertibly used already in early classical sources to define precisely Hui Shi and Gongsun Long, as shown above: “the Warring States had its *own* name for sophists – not *Mingjia* but *bianzhe* 辯者, ‘disputers’ or ‘debaters’. Indeed, *Zhuangzi* chapter 33 applies this term explicitly to Hui shi and Gongsun Long.”(Smith, 2003, p. 143).

¹⁸⁴ “Bianche [...] ne désignent pas, à notre avis, une école de penseurs bien délimitée. A cet égard, il est significatif qu’un philosophe comme Hanfeizi qui se livre à une critique acerbe de tous les débatteurs ne connaisse pas une école de dialecticiens. [...] la sophistique apparaît chez Hanfeizi comme une attitude générale at qui n’est pas d’un seul penseur. Elle est considérée plutôt comme une forme de dégénérescence.” (Reding, 1985, p. 460).

¹⁸⁵ Idea supported also by Liang Qichao 梁啟超 (1873-1929) (See *Id.*, 1923, p. 165).

¹⁸⁶ Hu Shi, 1997, p. 170.

游說”¹⁸⁷; Gongsun Long in my opinion was one of these individual wandering persuaders (*youshi* 游士, *youshi jia* 游士家, *youshuo zhi shi* 游說之士¹⁸⁸, *youtan zhi shi* 游談之士)¹⁸⁹, and “advisor on rulership”¹⁹⁰ who proposes a particular governing technique or method, propounds a certain political agenda and pursues official appointment at court, in order to concretize his political program enacted by the occasional local lord. Gongsun Long is a *bianzhe*, in the true sense of the word: an expert in dissertation, discrimination, argumentation, distinction drawing¹⁹¹; a skilled dialectician, a word magician and a shrewd politician, capable of outtalking even the most experienced opponent; a cunning rhetor of almost incomparable ability, having great familiarity with the tricks and traps of diplomacy and politics. He is no *Ru* nor *Mo*, he is just a persuader, a politician (in the etymological meaning of the term), “directly concerned with political action, he has special skills and is willing to put them at the service of anyone in power”.¹⁹²

If we really want to find Gongsun Long an affiliation at any cost, then I would rather dare call him a *Zonghengjia* 縱橫家¹⁹³ (though we have already discussed long the limits of applicability of such classifying terminology and its lacks). Even if a little bold, we cannot deny that our persuader has familiarity both with all rhetorical techniques (including persuasion) both with diplomacy at the highest levels, two qualities he shares with persuaders such as those later organized under the *zonghengjia* category.

¹⁸⁷ Kroll, 1985, p. 126. For a charming description of their mastering of dialectics see Levi, 1992, pp. 52-52. Oliver (1971, p. 84) classifies *youshui* (or *youshi* 游士) in three categories: storytellers, professional persuaders operating at feudal courts and diplomatic agents, though according to my own opinion, at least the last two categories overlapped most of the time as functionaries were often sent as envoys abroad. On this topic, see also Xing Lu, 1998, p. 80, where *youshui* are defined as “persons who engaged in *shui* (N/A persuasion) activity by travelling around and acting as political consultants to kings of various states”.

¹⁸⁸ Sima Qian, 1963, p. 1895 (*Tianjing zhongwan shijia di shi liu* 田敬仲完世家第十六ch. 46). A *shi*, according Crump, is “specialist in governing [...] a man who has learning [...] offering his service.” (*Id.*, 1964, p.2).

¹⁸⁹ Kern, 2000, p. 229.

¹⁹⁰ Sivin, 1995, p. 20.

¹⁹¹ On *bian*, even if applied in a Mohist context, see the extensive discussion by Chaehyun Chong (*Id.*, 1999).

¹⁹² Crump, 1964, p. 9.

¹⁹³ “The school of *tsung-heng* probably originated with officials who were emissaries” (Crump quoting the *Hanshu* bibliographical catalogue, *Id.*, p. 90; Crump thinks that the term *zonghengjia* as used in the *Hanshu* should simply mean “politicians or diplomats”, see *Id.*, p. 93-94); see also p. 89, Wilhelm, 1957, p. 313 and Kroll, 1985, pp. 123-124.

Being “argumentation” (*bian*) his forte, nevertheless he proves to (or, at least, he is reported to) be skilled also in the technique of “persuasion” (*shui*), while interacting with King Zhao of Yan, King Huiwen of Zhao and the Lord of Pingyuan; in fact, these anecdotes - if we consider the very form in which they were transmitted - undoubtedly fall withing what Nylan calls “political persuasion”¹⁹⁴.

According to Kern: “ ‘persuasion’ [...] is a general term for all oral attempts to influence rulers except one’s own [...] restricted to the activities of those ‘wandering persuaders’ beyond the borders of their own state”.¹⁹⁵ Though I agree that persuasion is unquestionably a typical rhetorical technique for argumentation, mastered especially by “wandering persuaders” in the Warring States period, I wouldn’t exclude so categorically that it might be occasionally directed to one’s own ruler too, and I see no reason to limit the sphere of persuasion only without the borders of one’s state. Not to mention the fact that I would challenge anybody say exactly what “one’s own state” or “one’s own ruler” would mean for these ambitious outsiders, used to the practice of serving diverse rulers during one’s lifetime, ready to serve anybody willing to employ them and to give them the chance to put into practice their socio-political agenda.

Eventually, my opinion is Gongsun Long was indeed a learned scholar, who when young had the chance to study what was considered the indispensable milestones in the “cultural luggage” of a cultured person, according to contemporary schooling standards; moreover, in the course of this kind of training, he developed skills of rhetoric and persuasion to the utmost¹⁹⁶. He decided to take up politics as a career, and became an independent wandering persuader and finally a *bianshi*, a “scholar-official” who put his rhetorical techniques to the service of sovereigns, without belonging to any organized group of thinkers whatsoever. As Maspero pointed out, “alors commença une lingée de Dialecticiens et de Sophistes, *pien tchö*, appartenant en principe à toutes les écoles, qui, discutant sur les noms, *ming*, plus que sur les idées, dissertant sur les définitions et les

¹⁹⁴ Nylan, 2000, p. 211.

¹⁹⁵ Kern, 2000, p. 235.

¹⁹⁶ Though “nowhere in early texts do we find a recognizable persuader asserting that someone was his teacher, nor do we discover any name connected with the *teaching* of rhetoric: this despite the fact that argumentation (*pièn*) and persuasion (*shùi*) are acknowledged to be essential skills for a *shih*, or adviser to a ruler”(Crump, 1964, p. 100). I suggest that some kind of transmission or teaching of these kind of techniques, possibly in a master-disciple relationship, must have been available at the time.

distinctions, sont commun comme l'École Nominaliste', *ming-chia*"¹⁹⁷, and Gongsun Long was just one of these *bianzhe*, member of all and none "school".

¹⁹⁷ Maspero, 1955, p. 442.

CHAPTER 2

Gongsun Long 公孫龍子 : the text

2.1 The *Gongsun Longzi*: text structure and the so-called “original chapters”

The decision as to what constitutes a ‘part’ of a text, and therefore the question of which ‘parts’ of the text must be found to relate to which (and to what whole), is itself an interpretative act.¹⁹⁸

First of all, a short premise must be made as we need to clarify what we mean here with “original chapters” and, consequently, “corrupted chapters”. The distinction is used to identify how the individual texts assembled together as part of the *Gongsun Longzi* can be divided in two groupings, accordingly to their conservation. The definition “original chapters” usually identifies the *Baima Lun* and *Zhiwu Lun*¹⁹⁹, which seemingly are in better conditions and present a more stable structure: they share a more organic inner structure, an almost coherent argumentative process and logic development of reasoning, similar grammatical and formal usages and common lexical choices²⁰⁰. They probably represent the exposition of the most ancient core of rhetorical arguments used by those persuaders later classified as *mingjia* – among whom Gongsun Long stands out.

Now we should spend a few words about the “corrupted chapters”, those which show clear logical incongruencies and even contradictions in their argumentations, visible

¹⁹⁸ Sharrock and Morales, eds., 2000, pp. 14-15.

¹⁹⁹ Graham considers “original” also the first issue discussed in the *Tongbian Lun* (the so-called “Left and Right” argument), as it shows resemblances with the grammar and style of the *Baima Lun* and *Zhiwu Lun* rather than with the last three later chapters, including the one in which it appears (*Id.*, 1986a, p. 137; pp. 193-195). About the *Baima Lun*, he states that “the *Essay on the White Horse* existed in substantially its present form at least as early as the 1st century A.D. (*Id.*, p. 158).

²⁰⁰ “Les traités du Gongsun Longzi qui n’ont pas de passages communs avec le Mojing [i.e. the *Baima Lun* and the *Zhiwu Lun*] sont aussi nettement mieux organisés du point de vue de la forme et de la pensée.” (Reding, 1985, p. 389).

signs of textual corruptions or evidences of later textual reelaboration and reorganization. According to Graham, chapter 4, 5 and 6 were forged between 300 and 600 A. D. , shamelessly copying from the Mohist Canons²⁰¹. About the first chapter (the *Jifu*), it is crystal clear that it was written only later as a sort of narrative biographical note or premise to the collected work, a text presumably compiled by Gongsun Long's followers or disciples, written in the third person employing a praising tone. As far as the other chapters are concerned, not only is it possible to identify parts of the Mohist Canons²⁰² that were irresponsibly used to fill in textual lacunae of the *Gongsun Longzi* ch. 4, 5, 6, but these show also respect of Tang imperial taboos²⁰³ and substantial differences in the choice of grammatical particles and wording if compared to the "original" chapters.

As *Baima Lun* ch. 2 and *Zhiwu Lun* ch. 3 will be object of a detailed discussion and attempt of translation in the next pages of the present work, we will limit ourselves here to highlight a few main characteristics of the *Gongsun Longzi* in general, but paying attention in particular to the "corrupted chapters"; for a broader attentive discussion of these latter, we refer the reader to Graham's revised work, *Studies in Chinese Philosophy & Philosophical Literature*.

- Discursive structure²⁰⁴ is employed in chapters 2,4,5, where the dialogical give and take assumes the typical argument-counterargument sequence²⁰⁵: an

²⁰¹ *Id.*, 1957.

²⁰² Graham, in his still insuperable work of textual reconstruction, has singled out all the passages that are paralleled in the Mohist Canons, providing the necessary references to crosscheck the correspondences between the two texts. See in particular his table in *Id.*, 1986a, p 137.

²⁰³ See Graham, 1957, pp. 171-174; both the commentary and the episode of Yin Wen and the King of Chu in the *Jifu* seem to respect Tang Emperors' name taboos: "Further, a comparison between the two versions of the story of Yiin Wen 尹文 and the King of Chyi in the *Gongsuen Long tzyy* and the *Leushyh chuenchiou* shows that in the former the characters 民 and 治 have been replaced by 人 and 理, evidently in order to avoid the taboos of the Tang Emperors Taytzong 太宗 (Shyhmin 世民, 627-649) and Gautzong 高宗 (Jyh 治, 650-683). The former taboo was observed throughout the dynasty and sporadically as late as 1003, but the latter lapsed in 806. Now these two characters are completely absent from the commentary as well as the text. Of the other early Tang taboos, the Taoist Canon edition of the commentary provides only one example of 世 (Taytzong) and one of Iuan 淵, the personal name of Gautzoo 高祖 (618-626)[..] Since the commentator tries whenever possible to give Gongsuen Long's arguments a moral or political interpretation, and often uses such characters as 君 and 亂, the absence of two such common characters as 民 and 治 can hardly be accidental." (pp. 172-173).

²⁰⁴ "matching of response to query in the formal genre of court debate [...] – *yidui* 議對" (Cai Zong-qi, 2001, p. 166), presumably reproducing in outline arguments of the same kind of the debate with Kong Chuan, or providing materials for discussion, with a didactic intent in order to prepare somebody to this kind of intellectual challenge.

Objector or Opponent, who embodies common sense *il senso* (questioning) – a Philosopher or Persuader, (answering). As Chang Han-liang underlined, “it is interesting to note that chapters 2, 4, 5, which are respectively entitled *Baima* (White Horse), *Tongbian* (Understanding change) and *Jianbai* (On hardness and whiteness), are in dialogue form, observing the generic convention of *Dakewen* 答客問 (A response to a guest’s queries) or *Zhuke lunnan* 主客論難 (A host-guest dialogue), not unlike the Platonic dialogues.”²⁰⁶

- Two chapters, 3 and 6, were apparently conceived as treaties²⁰⁷
- The *Gongsun Longzi* opens with a posthumous composite introduction, highlighting overlapping episodes on the life of Gongsun Long and drawing attention on the paradox – or, better say, the debate – that made him famous, that is the “White Horse” argument, which is reported having been discussed with Kong Chuan at the court of the Prince of Pingyuan.
- The “Corrupted chapters” were filled in with portions taken from the Mohist Canons

***Jifu* 跡府²⁰⁸** : the title means “collection of anecdotes”²⁰⁹ and can be found written with the character *ji* 跡 or with its graphic variant 迹; posthumous, it is written in a narrative style and was probably compiled by disciples²¹⁰ as it talks about Gongsun Long in third person. In case there were any doubts on its later composition, at the very beginning we find the expression “*liu guo*” 六國. The chapter shows a stratified composite nature: it reports the dialogue between Gongsun Long and Kong Chuan, which is partially repeated in two slightly different versions, suggesting that the various anecdotes were

²⁰⁵ Goldin, 1993, p. 9.

²⁰⁶ Chang Han-liang, 1998, pp. 27-28.

²⁰⁷ Pang Pu thinks that the *Zhiwu Lun* is also a dialogue, though avoiding to introduce the direct speech by the verb *yue* 曰 (see Id., 1989, p. 54); as the *Zhiwu Lun* is one of the best preserved and probably oldest chapters, I find it hard to believe that the editors that assembled the *Gongsun Longzi* would not intervene in the text if they thought it was actually meant to be a dialogue conveniently inserting *yue* at the beginning of each line, therefore I’m considering it here as a “treaty” or at least a text dissertative in nature.

²⁰⁸ A precise account of all sources of and references to this chapter is provided by Graham (1986a, p. 179).

²⁰⁹ See Zhou Yunzhi, 1994, p. 73.

²¹⁰ Apart from the use of the third person and the repetitions of the anecdote of the debate with Kong Chuan, a ulterior proof of the later composition of the *Jifu* is the use of the expression *liu guo* 六國 to talk about the Warring States period, which is never used before the Qin (See Pang Pu, 1989, p. 41).

seemingly cut from other sources and sewed together. As full-text translation is provided in Appendix A, I will not dwell further on this chapter, adding only a few remarks on internal literary quotations: the episode of Confucius and the King of Chu cited in the dialogue can be found also in *Kongcongzi - Gongsun Long juan 4*, in *Kongzi Jiayu-Haosheng* 孔子家語·好生 chapter 10²¹¹ and in the *Shuoyuan-Zhigong* 說苑·至公 chapter 14²¹²; the discussion between Yin Wen and the King of Qi, used by Gongsun Long as example is reported also in the *Lüshi Chunqiu Xianshilan – Zhengming* 呂氏春秋先識覽·正名16/8.3²¹³.

Tongbian Lun 通變論: the chapter is clearly corrupted; three partially incomplete arguments bearing examples only superficially similar are put together in one chapter, giving to the reader - unable to follow what is presented as a consequential line of thought, yet clearly is not - the strong impression of a botched collage of dialogues taken from different sources and assembled together in a hurry, a superficial editing without a closer and responsible look at the real meanings and topics of their contents.

Seemingly, the title was inspired by the *Dazhuan* 大傳 (*Xici zhuan* 繫詞傳)²¹⁴ of the *Yijing* 易經²¹⁵, which dates from the Western Han²¹⁶. The binome *tongbian* 通變 is composed by two words that, taken independently, already mean “change” (*yi* 易) by themselves, and respectively: 1) *tong* 通 means change as the endless continuous evolution in motion from one stage to another, in a harmonious and fluid linear progression without interruptions ; 2) *bian* 變 means change as the overcoming of opposite pairing polarities in contrast. As Tian Chenshan assumes, “whereas *bian* suggests becoming in light of difference, *tong* expresses the kind of becoming in light of continuity – a becoming from one event to another.”²¹⁷ *Tong* is “continuity through

²¹¹Wang Deming 王德明, 1998, pp. 109-110.

²¹²Liu Xiang, 1987, p. 349; compiled by Liu Xiang, the *Shuoyuan* was presented to the throne in 17 B.C. (Loewe, 1993, p. 444).

²¹³See Knoblock and Riegel, 2000, pp. 401-402.

²¹⁴*Xicixhuan shang di wu zhang* 繫詞傳上第五章, in *Zhouyi quanjie* 周易全解, 1989, p. 475.

²¹⁵Graham, 1986a, p. 164; according to Plaks, “*Tongbian*” would mean “continuity and variation”, “using *tong* 通 as the verb for ‘carrying through changes [通其變] and saying that ‘continuity is achieved through ‘changes’ [變則通]” (Cai Zongqi, 2001, p. 184).

²¹⁶Loewe, 1993, p. 221.

²¹⁷Tian Chenshan, 2000, p. 442; see also p. 450.

change”²¹⁸, though entails a second meaning, denoting the achievement of a thorough comprehension of changes and the ability to behave accordingly going along with the natural movement of changes – nothing but a metaphor for the flow of the *Dao*. Finally, the title is usually translated as “Understanding Change”.

The whole chapter, in fact, is about the necessity of distinguishing between similarities and differences, in order to name things properly; in particular, the last example on colors has stimulated the imagination of some scholars²¹⁹, who tried to read it in *wuxing* 無行 terms. I personally disagree, as in my opinion the example plays on a rudimentary version of color theory, applied to a *jianbai*-like kind of argument: what the persuader is saying here is another way of expressing the non-compenetrability of component terms in a compound – similarly in the *Jianbai Lun*. “Blue and white are not yellow” – this is clear enough, and the reason why the sum of white and blue as having teal as result is judged “not admissible” is that while the colors blue and white are “pure colors” (*zhengse* 正色)²²⁰, “teal” for our persuader is not. In fact, it should be a “mixed color” (*jianse* 間色), result of the melting of white and blue in a total fusion, but if we assume as a starting point that under any circumstances everything remains preserved (*zang*) in its own nature and integrity, then if we mix white and blue what we will have is not teal but a white/blue grid of dots, still perceived as teal to the naked eye at a certain distance, like the minuscule separate colored dots of which printed images on magazines we discovered are made of, if examined under a microscope. As Solomon points out, “*ch’ing* mixed with *po* is not a blurring of two things, but a third thing with visible parts [...], a tint where we find the two united in a mixture where the visible parts suggest their undiluted former selves.”²²¹

Still it is undeniable that there are some internal contradictions in many parts of the chapter, gaps that, as said above, Graham brilliantly showed were filled in with parts cut from *Mozi Jingxia* 墨子經下 and *Jingshuo xia* 經說下. According to Graham, three main arguments are discussed in this chapter (Left and Right, Sheep and Ox, Blue and

²¹⁸ *Id.*

²¹⁹ Hu and Chen, 1987, p. 56; Zhou Yunzhi, 1994, pp. 71-72, 104.

²²⁰ “‘correct’ as it describes a color in which it is felt there are no traces of any other color [...] as opposed to one which is known or felt to be the product of a mixture” (Solomon, 1981-83, p. 271). See also Fung Yiu-ming 馮耀明, 1986, p. 279.

²²¹ *Id.*, p. 256.

White) while according to Hu Quyuan and Chen Jinkun the text should be divided in two main argumentations²²²; I am personally inclined to follow this latter, which is more complete, and will be discussed step by step here below:

1st argumentation

二無一 : A new element can never be called by the former name of its individual components, which still preserve their nature but are now involved in a new compound, thus they change in form but not in nature. Nevertheless, according to the *ming-shi* one-to-one necessary relationship and in obedience to *zhengming*, a new compound deserves a new name. The example chosen says that in “two” there is no “one”, though of course two is the result of the sum of two units; nevertheless, “two” still represents a brand new independent “oneness”.

二者左與右: a new compound is – and of course will always be – made of the sum of its component parts, which have to drop their original proper names as individuals when united together to form a new “one”, but are still recognizable and identifiable as constituent parts in the new compound; in the specific case, “‘right’ and ‘left’ can be added to produce the ‘two’ of numeration, but [...] neither taken alone may be thought of as ‘two’”.²²³

變非不²²⁴變: in my opinion, this is not a proper argumentation in itself, but simply the final conclusion of the previous two, stating that though things modify their external appearance and name when they undergo change, their nature is still preserved. Finally, we come up to have a kind of “change” that is not a proper, radical one.

²²² See Hu and Chen, 1987, p. 49. The authors only provide a very schematic list of the main argumentations (which I am using here as reference, in Chinese) while explanations of the main arguments are mine.

²²³ Solomon, 1981-83, p. 238.

²²⁴ According to Yu Yue 俞樾 and Tan Jiefu 譚戒甫, *bu* might be a later interpolation; see Yang Janguang, 1990, p. 211.

2nd argumentation (in turn divided in two)

羊合牛非馬 } The “animal examples” aim to demonstrate that to belong to
 牛合羊非雞 } the same kind (*lei* 類) at least two characteristics in common are
 required²²⁵; similarly, only one missing feature is declared not enough to classify
 elements as belonging to different kinds²²⁶. Unfortunately there is no clue which would
 be the correct discriminating criterion. The example 牛合羊非雞 introduced at the end
 of the first block resemble the reasoning expressed in the *zang san er/ji san zu*
 (藏三耳/雞三足) paradoxes²²⁷: the author sums the concrete number of animal feet to
 the abstract concept of “foot”, stating that “oxen and sheep have five hooves”
 (牛、羊足五) while “chicken has three feet” (雞足三).

青以白非黃 } These two examples on colors were already discussed above
 白以青非碧 }

Jianbai Lun 堅白論 : The chapter is partially corrupted and, as Graham remarked, “since pre-T'ang commentators knew the *White Horse* but not the *Hard and White*, we may conclude that the two cannot have been parts of one book, and that there are grounds for suspecting that the *Hard and White* did not yet exist”.²²⁸

²²⁵ Hu Quyuan and Chen Jinkun quote the *Erya* classification criterion for certain species (that is for birds having feathers, for oxen and sheep having fur) as a general standard of reference that should work also with the “animal examples” in the *Gongsun Longzi* (*Id.*, 1987, p. 54). In fact, the text is corrupted and some parts of the reasoning are missing, confused or even contradictory (see also Zhou Yunzhi’s analysis, *Id.*, 1994, p. 72-73); as a result, no coherent criterion valid for distinguishing similarity and difference is identifiable in the text. Here is a small table which reports the results of the comparisons between the animals quoted in the examples :

羊	牛	馬	雞
有齒	無	/	/
有角	有角	無	/
無	無	有尾	/
有毛	有毛	/	有羽

²²⁶ See Zhou Yunzhi, 1994, pp. 69-70.

²²⁷ See note 67 at pages 24-25, where an analysis and interpretation of the paradoxes is given.

²²⁸ Graham, 1986a, p. 161

The *Jianbai Lun* has a dialogic structure, and deals with the question whether a hard and white stone (*jianbai shi* 堅白石) is made of two (philosopher's point of view) or three (opponent's point of view) different components, where the common thought is of course personified by the latter and supports the idea that qualities necessarily melt in each other while forming a new compound element (*jianbai ying* 堅白盈), therefore giving three as a result. Gongsun Long (or whoever else on his behalf) instead thinks that qualities are – and remain – always and necessarily separate from each other (*jianbai li* 堅白離) and somehow preserved in their original integrity, supporting a point of view based on a sort of principle of antitypy. Even when they are accidentally concretized in a particular object, they should be considered only associated to this object, the final result of the equation for its being two.

The origins of the famous compound term by which the chapters is named remain unclear; according to Makeham²²⁹, the compound would refer to an ancient sophism preserved in an almost original version in the *Lüshi Chunqiu*. Only in a second time the expression would have entered the Mohist *Canons* first and then the *Gongsun Longzi* - if we consider the *Canons* as primary source of the “corrupted chapters” – or viceversa, if we take the *Gongsun Longzi* to be earlier or contemporary but still independent. Thus the binomial would have undergone a gradual process of change in meaning, finally acquiring the *status* of technical term²³⁰. Graham's interpretation instead states that “pre-Han and Han references are not to a sophism at all, but to the technical use of *chien-pai* “as-hard-and-white” for the mutually pervasive in general[.] After the Han the usage was forgotten[.] and a second explanation appeared, that the problem of hardness and whiteness might be a dispute over the tempering of swords mentioned in the *Lü-shih ch'un-ch'iu*.”²³¹ In my opinion, a convenient synthesis of the two orientations must be drawn; as a matter of fact, we can say that:

1) there actually was a anecdote on the tempering of sword using the term *jianbai*, that can be found more or less in its original form in the *Lüshi Chunqiu*;

²²⁹ Makeham, 1989.

²³⁰ Also Sima Biao 司馬彪(c. A.D. 300) expressed doubts whether *jianbai* should be considered a kind of disputation on inseparables or a paradox in its own right (see Graham, 1978, p. 176).

²³¹ Graham, 1986a, p. 160.

2) the term *jianbai* does apply – and it is quite incontrovertible - to the thorny unsolved question of the mutual pervasiveness/non-pervasiveness of qualities as they can be perceived and experienced in concrete particular objects;

3) the debate on the mutual pervasiveness/non-pervasiveness of qualities concerned both the author/authors of the *Jianbai Lun* both the compilers of the Mohist *Canons*, who expressed two opposite views on the topic;

4) also the dialogue narrated in the anecdote on the tempering of swords faces the same debate between two characters, each supporting one of the very same two possible opposite views already identified in the *Jianbai Lun* and in the Mohist *Canons*;

Therefore

5) the way *jianbai* is used in the “tempering swords” paradox on one side and in the *Jianbai Lun* and Mohist *Canons* on the other side is substantially the same, and refers to the very same core nevralgic issue: **a**) do qualities melt in each other and amalgamate homogeneously when there are reified in a concrete object? In this case we would have three distinct elements – *jian*, *bai* and *shi*, all to be considered on the same existential level – which fuse in each other giving birth to a new comprehensive entity, subsuming in itself all the previously separated items; therefore *jianbai shi* would count for three; or **b**) do they preserve their individuality in a somewhat indifferentiated state still when contained in the particular object? In this specific case, which expresses the persuader’s point of view, *jianbai shi* would count for two: [*jianbai shi* 堅白石 = (堅石 *jianshi*) + (白石 *baishi*) = 2] , two separated sensory realms²³² that cannot be perceived at the same time due to the limits of human nature²³³, identifying different aspects of the stone, which in itself is qualified by both while the two qualities remain separated one from another yet indissolubly attached to the stone. It is clear that in this case the three

²³² See Chan Chi-ching, 1998, pp. 37-38; Pang Pu, 1989, pp. 15-17.

²³³“Qualities belonging to different realms of experiences cannot be combined to form a single sign” (Chan Chi-ching, 1998, p. 38), and “Gongsun Long assumes that two different occasions of perception are exclusive and separate[...] hardness is not revealed in seeing the white and whiteness is not revealed in feeling the hard” (Cheng Chung-ying, 1997, pp. 157-158): see also Pang Pu, 1989, p. 15; Chen Guimiao, 1975, pp. 138-139; Hu Quyuan and Chen Jinkun, 1987, pp. 38-39; Yang Junguang, 1991, p. 164. In spite of my usual scepticism I must admit Thierry Lucas’ successful formal treatment of the argument turns out to be very helpful and quite fitting; I quote here his conclusions about the graphic representation he provided, to which I still send the reader back for a better understanding (see Lucas, 1993, p. 244): “in the Discourse on Hard and White [...] two axes are clearly present: (1) the thing-axis T containing among other things this concrete stone a; (2) an axis S containing two different sorts s and t, for ‘seeing’ and ‘touching’. [...] I surmise that Kung Sun Lung’s underlying universe of discourse is neither the set T nor the set S, but the combination TxS. [...] TxS contains the two different elements (a, s) and (a, t), the eye-perceived stone and the hand-perceived stone.” (Lucas, 1993, pp. 242-243).

elements do not share the same existential level, as “similar to the horse”²³⁴, which is only a concept/sign without a referent, a stone cannot exist as a material object without any qualities.”²³⁵

Trying to determine with precision which use of the term and which anecdote came first is almost an impossible task, what can be said for sure is that *jianbai* was – if not properly a technical term in itself since the very beginning – at least a couple of qualities used as examples that became a binome *per antonomasia*: “a general term for distinct but mutually pervasive properties, of which hardness and whiteness are taken as the typical example[..].”²³⁶

Mingshi Lun 名實論 : it is a kind of brief programmatic “preface”(actually, a postface) written in a narrative form, in which the cardinal principle of *zhengming* 正名 (rectification of names) is discussed, together with the crucial relationship between names (*ming* 名) and their corresponding actualities (*shi* 實)²³⁷. After the Qin and Han Dynasty it is normal for the preface (*xu* 序) to be put at the end of a text and, if we consider the fact that the *Gongsun Longzi* as we know it was clearly assembled in a period later than the materials in it were formulated, therefore as Pang Pu states this chapter *qua Gongsun Longzi* preface is put in a correct position inside the *Gongsun Longzi* chapter sequence²³⁸. To support the standpoint that *ming* and *shi* should be in a one-to-one relationship, as to a name should necessarily correspond one and only actuality, a few examples with the indexicals *bi/ci* 彼/此 (that/this) are drawn: the name used to signify “this” cannot be used at the same time to signify “that” and viceversa or we would end in chaos, as different names would be applicable to the same actuality and the same name could be represented by two different actualities. To avoid such a situation that would spread to all social strata with obvious negative recoils and ill-omened consequences on public order, *shi* must correctly interpret and perform accordingly their corresponding *ming*, without exceeding the limits imposed by their semantic and performative scope – that is to say, not overcoming their proper “position”

²³⁴ Clearly the author here refers to famous *baima* paradox, which will be object of the third chapter.

²³⁵ *Id.*

²³⁶ Graham, 1978, p. 171.

²³⁷ Chen Guimiao, 1975, p. 39; Pang Pu, 1989, p. 69.

²³⁸ See Pang Pu, 1989, p. 6, 69.

(*wei* 位)²³⁹, in harmony with the normative principle of *zhengming*. This means also a necessary fluidity and adaptability in the naming process: as *shi* accidentally undergo change, they don't correspond to their previous *ming* any more, requiring a necessary adjustment of their name to express their new condition at best.

2.2 Gongsun Longzi: Variations on a theme

Daozang 道藏 and *Shuofu* 說郛 editions face to face

The most famous *Gongsun Longzi* version is apparently the *Daozang* 道藏 edition²⁴⁰ (accomplished in 1445), which has been used as reference canonical text in the centuries and, in particular, from the commentary of Yan Kejun 嚴可均 to his *Daozang* collated edition²⁴¹ (1802) onward, it is also almost unanimously accredited as the earliest and most reliable complete textual version²⁴², source for subsequent editions.

²³⁹ *Wei* is the correct position each actuality has to properly occupy and conform to so that names are successfully rectified (Pang Pu, 1989, p. 28).

²⁴⁰ See *Daozang* vol. 27, pp. 168-175. It is necessary to point out here that, apart from the six-chapter *Gongsun Longzi*, the two chapters *Baima Lun* and *Zhiwu Lun* are also extensively quoted elsewhere in the *Daozang*, and precisely in the *Nanhua zhenjing yushi zalu – juan shang* 南華真經餘事雜錄 - 卷上 (*Daozang* vol.15, pp. 959-961); the editor of this text is known and identified in the Northern Song scholar Chen Jingyuan 陳京元 (1024-1094), who is recorded to have completed editing the preface to the *Nanhua zhenjing* in 1084 (See also Graham, 1964-65, p. 128). This two-chapter version, which shows no striking variants (especially the *Zhiwu Lun* is almost identical) in respect to the corresponding titles of the *Daozang* six-chapter version, may allow us to speculate also on a possible dating of the six-chapter *Gongsun Longzi* as much earlier as the whole *Daozang* collection official publication date. Also Reding remarks that “cette édition du *Daozang* date de 1445, mais remonte probablement à une version antérieure faite à l' époque des Song vers le debut du douzième siècle.” (Reding, 1985, note 7, p. 387). Anyway, as no evidence is given for a precise dating of the six-chapter version, the *Daozang* publication date has still to be considered as general reference.

²⁴¹ Yan Kejun, in his *Gongsun Longzi ba* 公孫龍子跋 writes explicitly: 「唯《道藏》本為差善。」 (“Only the *Daozang* edition is quite good”); see also Yang Junguang, 1991, p. 154)

²⁴² See Yang Junguang, 1991, p. 152. As far as Western scholars are concerned, see for instance Graham's authoritative assertion that “the Taoist Canon edition [...] is consistently superior to others. [...] We are bound to accept the Taoist Canon reading as the ‘lectio difficilior’.” (Graham, 1986a), a statement that

The only remarkable attempt to controvert this general trend and demonstrate that the *Shuofu* 說郛 edition²⁴³ by Tao Zongyi's 陶宗儀 (1316–1403) should be considered earlier instead is that by Zhang Zongxiang²⁴⁴ 张宗祥, which in my opinion remains unfortunately too unsubstantial and speculative to have a real effect on textual exegesis.

Apart from that, it mustn't be forgotten that the oldest version is not necessarily the truest or closest to the original elaboration of the source material, being also aware that "original" doesn't make much sense in the process of text production in the Warring States period. Anyway, what we can tell for sure is that the *Daozang* and the *Shuofu* editions clearly present textual variants, and that in two cases at least the *Shuofu* version seems to be more consistent with the general meaning of the argument being treated. The fact that subsequent *Gongsun Longzi* editions seem to be moulded whether on the *Daozang* either on the *Shuofu*²⁴⁵ suggests in my opinion that they were both considered authoritative sources. Table (1) shows all textual variants (in most cases homophones) in the two editions²⁴⁶, listed in order of appearance:

1)

<i>Daozang</i> Edition	<i>Shuofu</i> Edition	Occurrences	Chapters
			跡
辯	辨	4	跡府(3), 通變論 (1)
材	才	1	跡府
於	于	21	All chapters
耳	爾	1	跡府
爾	耳	1	跡府

couldn't help influencing all later attempts of providing textual reconstruction and translation of the *Gongsun Longzi*.

²⁴³See *Shuofu jian* 47, pp. 1a-6a.

²⁴⁴On this topic and on the possibility of the *Shuofu* text as been earlier than the *Daozang* edition see Yang Janguan, 1991, p. 153; the scholar Zhang Zongxiang in his collated *Shuofu* edition (1927) suggest this hypothesis, based on the analysis and comparison of compilation dates of three Ming Dynasty *chaoben* 抄本 in the *Shuofu*, whose authors - except one - are identified and historically traceable.

²⁴⁵Fundamentally on the *Daozang*, as highlighted by Yang Janguang, 1991, pp. 153-154.

²⁴⁶The appearance of this kind of acoustic variants may suggest a stage in the process of textual reproduction based on transcription under dictation, as we will see below.

唯	惟	1	跡府
謬	繆	1	跡府
謂	為	5	白馬論 (1), 通變論 (3), 堅白論 (1)
固	故	1	指物論
鄰	連	2	通變論
強	強	1	通變論
甚	其	1	堅白論
已	也	1	堅白論
知	智	1	堅白論
明	則	1	名實論

It can be easily spotted that the *Baima Lun* and the *Zhiwu Lun* show almost no relevant variants, and seem to be quite stable in wording and to have already achieved an overall steady and accredited textual composition; most of the variants are to be found in those chapters which are also considered the later and most corrupted ones, especially in the *Jifu* (which was compiled for sure after Gongsun Long's death, as we have already seen), in the *Jianbai Lun* and in the *Tongbian Lun*.

The table below couples textual variants face to face, quoting respective pronunciation reconstructions according to the two most acknowledged systems. The acronym Ch. stands for “character”; textual variants (in the first column the *Daozang* variant, in the fifth the *Shuofu* variant) are paralleled, each followed by phonetic reconstruction in Karlgren's and Baxter's systems and contemporary Chinese pronunciation in *pīnyīn* transcription:

Ch. DZ	Karlgren	Baxter	<i>Pīnyīn</i>	Ch. SF	Karlgren	Baxter	<i>Pīnyīn</i>
跡	*tsjāk	tsjek	jì	疏	*ʃjo	srjo	shū
辯	*b'jan	bjenX	biàn	辨	*b'jan	bjenX	biàn
材	*dz'əg	dzoj	cái	才	*dz'əg	dzoj	cái

於	*'o	'jo	yú	于	*giwo	hju	yú
耳	*níəg	nyiX	ěr	爾	*níär	nyeX	ěr
唯	*dīwər	ywij	wéi	惟	*dīwər	ywij	wéi
謬	*mlǐög	mjiwH	miù	繆	*mlǐög	mjiwH	miù
謂	*giwəd	hw+jH	wèi	為	*gwia	hwex	wèi
固	*ko	kuH	gù	故	*ko	kuH	gù
鄰	*lǐən	lin	lín	連	*lǐan	ljen	lián
甚	*ziəm	dzyimx	shèn	其	*kiəg	gi	qí
強	*g'iang	gjang	qiáng	強	*g'iang	gjang	qiáng
已	*ziəg	yiX	yǐ	也	*dja	yæX	yě
知	*tjǐg	trje	zhī	智	*tjǐg	trjeH	zhì
明	*miǎng	mjäng	míng	則	*tsək	tsok	zé

跡(*tsiäk or tsjek)/疏(*šiə or srjo) are apparently unrelated – lexically, phonetically and graphically, and are probably to be considered a simple scribal mistake, of minor importance if we consider that it appears in the title of the first chapter (the *Jifu*) but doesn't affect the understanding or meaning of the text in itself. 疏 has a graphic variant written with the foot radical 𠬞 屮, the same as 跡. It is not improbable that 跡 might have been first misread and mistaken for this graphic variant, and, during an ulterior act of copying substituted with his 疏. About 跡(*tsiäk or tsjek), in other editions it is commonly found in the title of the first chapter of the *Gongsun Longzi* also in his graphic homophonous variant 迹.

The couples 辯/辨(*b'ian or bjenX), 材/才(*dz'əg or dzoj), 唯/惟(*dīwər or ywij), 謬/繆(*mlǐög or mjiwH), 固/故(*ko or kuH), 知/智(*tjǐg or trje) are all constituted by homophonous characters²⁴⁷ and can be considered examples of classifier variants²⁴⁸

²⁴⁷ “In ‘Loan Characters in Pre-Han Texts’, 1-9, Bernhard Karlgren explicitly excludes characters belonging to the same *xiesheng* (N.A. 諧聲, homophonophoric characters) series from his analysis of possible loan characters (*jiajiezì* 假借字) since they are by their very nature ‘authorized’ to be used paronomastically for one another.” (Kern, 2005a, note 33 p. 187).

²⁴⁸ Boltz, 1997, p. 270.

except for the couple 固/故 (*ko or kuH) ; moreover, 繆 is a common loan word for 謬²⁴⁹, so as 智 is used for 知²⁵⁰: this evidence allows us to consider the several above-mentioned couples as acoustic variants, which may hint to a procedure of text reproduction by dictation. The character 強 not only is a loan word for 強, but its use is so widespread that it is simply considered as a common graphic variant of the former one. About 辯/辨, actually there would be a lexical difference, the first graph meaning “to debate” and the second “to discriminate”; however, the use the *Shuofu* version makes of 辨 is not occasional but systematical, suggesting that it is using it as a synonym for 辯.

The characters 已 (*ziəg or yiX) /也 (*diə or yæX) are not in the same rhyme category, but their graphic similarity and common use as final particles can easily justify the textual variant as a copying mistake or lexical textual variation of secondary importance, as in the specific case it doesn't modify the text meaning dramatically. The case of 耳(*niəg or nyiX) /爾 (*niär or nyeX) is alike, as the two characters don't rhyme even if there seems to be a slight assonance, but they are both final particles and the fact that in the two versions of the text their occurrence and substitution is alternated²⁵¹ suggest some kind of copying confusion or textual instability.

The two couples 甚(*ziəm or dzyimx)/其(*kiəg or gi) and 明(*miəng or mjæng)/則(*tsək or tsok) are proof of evident scribal errors occurring in the *Daozang* version, as its variants don't make much sense in the passage where they appear in the text, or at least the corresponding *Shuofu* variants seem more coherent. The first couple appears in the *Jianbai Lun*, and it is quite evident that the most logical choice is 其:

²⁴⁹See Karlgren, 1957, pp. 275-276.

²⁵⁰See *Id.*, pp. 228-229, and Shaughnessy, 2006, p. 17.

²⁵¹The variants appear in the first chapter, in the dialogue between Kong Chuan and Gongsun Long, when the former is asking the philosopher to accept him as a disciple (See below).

Shuofu Jifu: 孔穿: [...]不取先生以白馬為非馬爾, 請去此術則穿請為弟子。
龍曰: 先生之言悖; 龍之所以名乃以白馬之論耳[. .]。
Daozang Jifu.: 孔穿: [...]不取先生以白馬為非馬耳, 請去此術則穿請為弟子。
龍曰: 先生之言悖, 龍之所以為名者乃以白馬之論爾[. .]。

DZ 曰：「物白焉，不定其所白。物堅焉，不定其所堅。不定者兼，惡乎甚石也？」

SH 曰：「物白焉，不定其所白。物堅焉，不定其所堅。不定者兼，惡乎其石也？」

“Some thing is white in it, but it doesn’t fix the ‘White’. Some thing is hard in it, but it doesn’t fix the ‘Hard’. What is not fixed is universal, how could it ever be fixed to the stone then?”

The couple 明/ 則 instead appears in the *Mingshi Lun*:

DZ 知此之非也，知此之不在此也，明不謂也。

SH 知此之非也，知此之不在此也，則不謂也。

By parallelism with the sequent sentence, the same in both versions

DZ=SH 知彼之非彼也，知彼之不在彼也，則不謂也。

it is possible not only to fill in a gap where a character dropped (知此之非此也) , which is of great help to understand the meaning, but also to deduce that the appropriate variant to chose in this case is 則. The sentence, playing on indexicals to explain the necessary unambiguous relationship between names and actualities, runs like this: “Knowing that ‘this’ is not (the same as) ‘this’ and that ‘this’ is not in ‘this’, **then** (則) you don’t name it (so).”

About 於 (*o or ‘jo)/于 (*giwo or hju), the two particles were not homophonous²⁵² and – as Pulleyblank underlined – they also had distinct usages until the Warring States period, when their scope started to overlap: 於 gradually substituted 于, which in modern Chinese is used as a simplified character for the former one, and whose meaning is now considered perfectly interchangeable. As it can be proved in analysing

²⁵²See Qiu, 2000, pp. 361-362: “‘於’ yú and ‘于’ yú were both used as prepositions whose usages were strikingly similar. But in antiquity they were by no means homophonous [...], so they cannot be treated simply as different writings of one and the same word. (Possibly due to dialectical or temporal differences, the prepositions {於} and {于} may well represent differentiated forms derived from what was originally one word. Yet some linguists maintain that at a relative early stage there was a certain difference between their usage as prepositions)[...]”.

and counting the occurrences of the two particles in a selection of classical texts²⁵³, the shift to the preference of the use of 於 from the Warring States period onwards seems to be a gradual one. It is interesting to note that, while the *Daozang* editions only uses 於, the *Shuofu* quotes both the two particles, as it happens in most contemporary classical texts. Of course this cannot be considered a definitive proof, as the use of 於/于 can also be influenced by regional or dialectical uses or by a scribe's own personal preference, anyway it gives the impression that the *Daozang* was further normalized in order to present a highly consistent level of textual conformity and homogeneity, possibly trying to write “ancient style”.

There are also four cases of diffraction that involve entire strings of text or sentences which alter the meaning and influence the interpretation of the text; one of these is in the *Baima Lun* and will be discussed later on in Chapter 3, here below are two sentences, both taken from the *Tongbian Lun*:

DZ 羊與牛唯異,羊有齒,牛無齒。而羊、牛之非羊也,之非牛也,未可。

SF 羊與牛唯異,羊有齒,牛無齒。而牛之非羊也,羊之非牛也,未可。

Probably in the *Daozang* version the 羊 character has been somehow overlooked, omitted and in second moment added in the text – unfortunately in the wrong place; the *Shuofu* parallelism makes the sentence run smooth and is more coherent with the *usus scribendi* of the text; my translation is “Sheep and oxen differ only in that sheep have

²⁵³ All the data collected and listed in the table below on the occurrence of the particle 於 and 于 were collected from the textual versions used as reference in the *ICS Ancient China Text Concordance Series* (See Bibliography):

	於	于
<i>Lunyu</i>	174	8
<i>Mengzi</i>	489	45
<i>Laozi</i>	282	1
<i>Mozi</i>	614	35
<i>Zhuangzi</i>	762	23

incisors²⁵⁴ and oxen don't. However, saying that a ox is not (the same as) a sheep and a sheep is not (the same as) a ox is not admissible.”²⁵⁵

DZ 不相鄰而相鄰, 不害其方也。

SF 不相連而相連, 不害其方也。

In this case, in both versions grammar and structure are respected, it is the meaning that changes (though slightly) according to the version we refer to; the meaning of the whole sentence is also highly controversial, because – as Graham has proved - this is one of those quotations that were (*mis-*)taken from the Mohist Canons.²⁵⁶ The meaning is “[..]they are not **DZ** adjacent / **SF** contiguous one to the other, though their being **DZ** adjacent / **SF** contiguous one to other would not do harm to their position”.

The last example comes from the *Jianbai Lun*:

DZ 得其白,得其堅,見與不見與不見 離。一、一不相盈故離

SF 得其白,得其堅,見與不見離。不見離一、一不相盈故離

Similar to the first case examined regarding the *Tongbian Lun*, here we have an example of erroneous repetition of a string of characters in both versions: in the *Daozang* we have 與不見 written twice, in the *Shuofu* 不見離 has been rewritten and mistaken as the beginning of the following sentence. The final translation should keep in consideration both versions and try to synthesize these two contributions in what we can supposed to be a sentence as close as possible to the hypothetical original, eliminating superfluous influential repetitions: “In perceiving “white” and in

²⁵⁴ This is a mistake probably due to the fact that part of this passage what filled copying blindly from the Mohist Canon; in reality both sheep and oxen have incisors. See Graham, 1986a, pp. 143-145 and Solomon, 1981-83, p. 241.

²⁵⁵ I am conscious of the reader's difficulty in understanding sentences taken out of context; however, as my aim here is not to give a commented translation but to point out textual variants and differences between the *Daozang* and *Shuofu* version I will not dwell on a detailed summary and contextualized explanation of this and the following passages, but try to stay focused on the topic and discuss purely philological matters. The general meaning of this first example is that having only one different characteristic is not enough to decide whether two things belong or not to the same kind (*lei*).

²⁵⁶ Graham, 1986a, pp. 142-143; Graham shows that the original meaning of the expression 「不害其方」 in the Canons refers in fact to the tallying of squares.

perceiving “hard”, what you see and what you don’t see remain separate. One and the other don’t mutually compenetrates, therefore they are separate.”

Finally, we can conclude that the study of single couples of variants and of switching strings of text in the conflation obtained by the comparison between *Shuofu* and *Daozang* editions – giving no priority or primacy to any of the two versions - prove the compresence of what can be identified as occasional errors derived from a process of writing by memory or under dictation (acoustic and lexical variants) and at the same time what are clearly identifiable as copying mistakes (scribal errors), testifying the multi-layered structure of the *Gongsun Longzi*²⁵⁷ and showing the traces of the diverse nature of the subsequent stages and modes of textual reproduction it went through. Of course we cannot tell which *strata* came first, or which portions of the text could be more loyal to an hypothetical antigraph. We can only notice the evidence of the concomitance of a process of direct copying and of an oral transcription still visible in the received text, and state the fact that critical points are sometimes better solved following the *Daozang* version, while other times it is the *Shuofu* version to be superior.

Moreover, the apparent stability of the first two “chapters”, confirmed by textual variants analysis, leads to the conclusion that these two had already acquired a steady structure well before the others, and further supports the hypothesis that the various arguments exposed in the *Gongsun Longzi* should be considered singularly, each as an individual accomplished text on its own with a separate textual history, and not as if they were conceived as a homogeneous *corpus* or unitary text²⁵⁸, as a unique string of thought developing and unravelling through a logic progressive philosophical percouse from beginning to end.

Finally, even if according to Yang Junguang the emergence of textual variants between the *Daozang* and the *Shuofu* editions should lead to the conclusion that we are

²⁵⁷ See Kern, 2002, pp. 171-172.

²⁵⁸ What Boltz calls “the compositional structure of early Chinese texts” (*Id.*, 2005, p. 51); as Kern remarks while summarizing Boltz’s contribution in the introduction to his *Text and Ritual in Early China*, “in their particular forms, the received versions of the classical *corpus* are likely to represent not so much the integrity of a single authorial composition but the final result of editorial interpretation and rearrangement. The texts we have are fundamentally ‘composite in nature’ and we are no longer in the position to routinely equate any received text with a particular authorial hand (not to mention the biographical circumstances of an author, which often in a perfectly circular fashion, have been reconstructed only from the text identified with the person.” (Kern, 2005a, p. xvi).

facing two different lines of transmission²⁵⁹, after an accurate analysis I would rather say that what we have here is two witnesses that represent a single line of transmission in the textual lineage of the *Gongsun Longzi*.

2.3 *Gongsun Longzi* - Other editions

Apart from the *Daozang* and the *Shuofu* editions, a few more have been edited and published²⁶⁰, and, according to the brief list of names given by the scholar Chen Xianyou, the following should be the most remarkable ones: Zhou Ziyi's 周子义 *Zihui* 子汇 edition²⁶¹, published in the middle of the Wanli 萬曆 period (1573 – 1620) of the Ming 明 Dynasty; Ma Su's 馬驪 (1621- 1673) *Yishi* 釋史 edition (1670); Qian Xizuo's 钱熙祚 *Shoushan ge congshu* 守山閣叢書 edition²⁶², published during the Qing 清 Dynasty in the 24th year of the Daoguang 道光 Period (1844); the Chongwen shuju's 崇文书局 *Zishu baijia* 子书百家 edition, published the first year of the Guangxu Period 光绪 of the Qing Dynasty (1875).

²⁵⁹ Yang Junguang, 1991, pp. 153-154.

²⁶⁰ See Chen Xianyou 陈宪猷, 1990, p. 11 and Yang Junguan, 1991, pp. 152-155; what I refer to when speaking of “editions” means different full-text publications of the collective work commonly called *Gongsun Longzi* and constituted by a certain number of chapters, ascribed to it as a whole since the first two printed version (*Daozang* and *Shuofu*) we can rely on, and not to single chapters or passages which happen to be partially (or in some rare cases even totally) reproduced, included or quoted in other literary works.

²⁶¹ This textual version is the same that appeared in the late Ming Era in the *Yefang yikan* “*Shi'er zi*” edition 葉方疑刊《十二子》本; followed by the *Daozang* edition, it is to be found also in the *Mingjia jiyao* 名家輯要 section of the *Zhongguo zixue mingzhu jicheng* 中國子學名著集成, edited by Huang Jie 黄杰 in 1978.

²⁶² See *Shoushan ge congshu juan* 23, pp. 1a-13b.

Of course this list doesn't exhaust the topic; table (3) is a more complete survey quoting all major editions:

(3)

Author	Collection title	Epoch	Commentary	Notes
Tao Zongyi 陶宗儀 (1316–1403)	<i>Shuofu</i> 說郛	Yuan/Ming	No commentary	Textual variants in respect to the <i>Daozang</i> edition ²⁶³
	<i>Daozang</i> 道藏	Ming (1445)	Commentary (author's name not specified)	Considered "orthodox" version
Yang Shen 楊慎 (1488-1559)	<i>Yang Sheng'an</i> ²⁶⁴ <i>xiansheng pingzhu xian Qin Wuzi quan shu</i> 楊升庵先生評注先秦五子全書	Ming	Commentary attributed to Xie Xishen (995-1039)	
Yang Shen 楊慎 (1488-1559)	<i>He zhu mingjia pidian zhuzi quan shu – Yang Sheng'an xiansheng wu se pidian Gongsun Longzi</i> 合諸名家批點諸子全書·楊升庵先生五色批點公孫龍子	Ming	Commentary (author's name not specified)	
Ouyang Qing 歐陽清 Ming	<i>Wuzi shu</i> 五子全書	Ming (23 rd year of the Jiaqing Period 嘉靖 = 1544)	Commentary (author's name not specified); no original preface, preface by Ouyang Qing (according to the <i>Siku quanshu</i> , written in the 5 th year of the Jiaqing Period 嘉靖 = 1526)	<i>Gongsun Longzi</i> in 1 <i>juan</i>

²⁶³A more extensive and detailed comparison will follow below.

²⁶⁴*Hao* 号 of Yang Shen 楊慎 (1488-1559), Ming Dynasty poet and literati.

Zhou Ziyi 周子義 (余有丁) (1529-1586)	<i>Zi hui</i> 子彙	Ming (1577) Wanli Period 萬曆 (1573-1620)	Commentary (author's name not specified); in 1 <i>juan</i>	Same edition to be found in the <i>Congshu Jicheng</i>
Zheng Zilong (ed.) 鄭子龍 (1523 - 1598)	Ye Fang Yikan <i>Shi'er zi</i> 葉方疑刊《十二子》	Ming	Commentary by Zhou Ziyi	Same edition as Zhou Ziyi's
Xie Rushao 謝汝韶	<i>Ershi jiazi shu</i> 二十家子書	Ming (6 th year of the Wanli Period 萬曆 = 1578) Printed by the Jifan Chongde Shuyuan 吉藩崇德書院	Commentary attributed to Xie Xishen (995-1039)	
Feng Mengzhen 馮夢楨 (ed.) (1548-1595)	<i>Xian Qin zhuzi hebian</i> 先秦諸子合編	Ming (30 th year of the Wanli Period 萬曆 = 1602); printed by Mian Miaoge 綿眇閣	?	?
Zhong Xing 鐘惺 (1574 - 1624)	<i>He ke wujia yan</i> 合刻五家言	Ming	Commentary (author's name not specified)	
Zhang Maocai (ed.) 張懋采 (Ming)	<i>Yang Sheng'an xiansheng pingzhu Xian Qin wuzi shu</i> 楊升庵先生評註先秦五子全	Ming (5 th year of the Tianqi Period 天啓 = 1625); printed by Zhang Shi Hengqiu ge 張氏橫秋閣	Commentary attributed to Xie Xishen (995-1039)	

Chen Renxi (ed.) 陳仁錫 (1581-1636)	<i>Zhuzi qishang</i> 諸子奇賞	Ming (6 th year of the Tianqi Period 天啓 =1626)	Commentary attributed to Xie Xishen (995-1039)	Two chapters missing (<i>Zhiwu Lun</i> and <i>Mingshi Lun</i>)
Gui Youguang (Guang Xifu) 歸有光 (光熙甫) (1506-1571)	<i>Zhuzi huihan</i> 諸子彙函	Ming (6 th year of the Tianqi 天啟 period = 1626)	Commentary (author's name not specified)	Two chapters missing (<i>Jifu</i> and <i>Tongbian Lun</i>)
Fu Shan 傅山 (1607-1684)	<i>Shuang hong kan jibei cun</i> 霜紅龕集備存	Ming/Qing	Commentary by Fu Shan	Two chapters missing (<i>Jifu</i> and <i>Mingshi Lun</i>)
Ma Su 馬驢 (1621- 1673)	<i>Yishi</i> 釋史	Qing (9 th year of the Kangxi Period 康熙 = 1670)	No commentary	Different chapters order ²⁶⁵
Xin Congyi 辛從益 (1760-1828)	<i>Gongsun Longzi zhu</i> 公孫龍子注	Qing (1787)		To be found in <i>Yuzhang congshu di' er ji</i> 豫章叢書 第二集
Yan Kejun 嚴可均 (1762 – 1843)	<i>Daozang</i> 道藏 collated edition	Qing (7 th year of the Jiaqing Period 嘉慶 = 1802)	Commentary (author's name not specified)	
Zhang Haipeng 張海鵬 (1755-1816)	<i>Mohai jinghu</i> 墨海金壺	Qing (15 th year of the Jiaqing Period 嘉慶 = 1810)	Commentary attributed to Xie Xishen (995-1039)	

²⁶⁵ *Gongsun Longzi* chapters order in the *Yishi* is the following : 〈跡府〉、〈白馬論〉、〈通變論〉、〈堅白論〉、〈指物論〉, 〈名實論〉。

Wang Rangtang 王纘堂	<i>Ershi'er zi quanshu</i> 二十二子全書	Qing (13 th year of the Daoguang Period 道光 = 1833) ; published by 王氏棠蔭館	Commentary (author's name not specified)	
Qian Xizuo 钱熙祚 (1801-1844)	<i>Shoushan ge congshu</i> 守山閣叢書	Qing (24 th year of the Daoguang 道光 Period = 1844)	Commentary attributed to Xie Xishen (995-1039)	
Chongwen shuju 崇文书局	<i>Zishu baijia</i> 子书百家	Qing (First year of the Guangxu Period 光绪 = 1875)	Commentary attributed to Xie Xishen (995-1039)	
Changbai Majiashi 張白馬佳氏 (?)	<i>Ninghanzhai congshu</i> 倭漢齋叢書	Qing (22 nd year of the Guangxu Period 光绪 = 1896)	Commentary (author's name not specified)	
Chen Li 陳澧 (1810-1882)	<i>Gongsun Longzi zhu</i> 公孫龍子注	Qing	No commentary	

2.4 The *Gongsun Longzi* through the ages

To some extent, research on the literary classics is an investigation about the conditions and processes of their establishment.²⁶⁶

Now that we have explored all the major editions of the *Gongsun Longzi*, it is time to have a closer look at the alternating fortunes it endured through the ages, to see how it came to be the text that we know as it appears today, in its current form. A ride through the ages with a little help from dynastic histories and private scholars' bibliographical entries is what we need to get an overall view of the textual history of the *Gongsun Longzi* and achieve better understanding of the reasons that led to its composite stratified nature and structure, letting a few crucial points emerge.

The first record of the *Gongsun Longzi* is to be found in the *Qian Hanshu* 前漢書 bibliographical catalogue, where it is recorded in 14 *pian* 篇²⁶⁷ under the *mingjia* 名家 section, and the homonymous author is defined as a teacher from Zhao 趙, dialectician involved in debates on *jianbai* 堅白:

公孫龍子十四篇 趙人師古曰即為堅白辯者²⁶⁸

The presence of two anecdotes in Liu Yiqing 劉義慶 (403-444 A.D.)'s *Shishuo Xinyu* 世說新語 confirms the actual existence, tradition and transmission of at least two fundamental arguments discussed by – and attributed to Gongsun Long, corresponding to what became the supposed to be core “original” chapters of the *Gongsun Longzi* (*Baima Lun* and the *Zhiwu Lun*). Both anecdotes appear in chapter 4 *Wenxue* 文學, the first is anecdote n. 16:

²⁶⁶ Wu and Sha, 2007, p. 55.

²⁶⁷“La dénomination de l'unité matérielle de texte différait selon que le rouleau était en soie ou en bambou, *juan* pour l'un, *pian* pour l'autre.” (Drège, 1997, pp. 242-243.)

²⁶⁸See *Qian Hanshu juan 30 – Yiwenzhi di shi* 前漢書卷三十·藝文志第十。

16. 客問樂令「旨不至」者，樂亦不復剖析文句，直以麈尾柄确几曰：「至不？」客曰：「至！」樂因又舉麈尾曰：「若至者，那得去？」於是客乃悟服。樂辭約而旨達，皆此類。²⁶⁹

16. A questioner once asked Yüeh Kuang about the statement “Meaning do not reach” (*chih pu chih*). Yüeh for his part made no further detailed analysis of the words or sentence. Instead, he directly seized the handle of his sambar-tail chowry (*chuwei*) and struck it against the table, asking, “Does it reach or not?” The questioner said, “It reaches.” Yüeh then lifted the chowry and said, “If it reaches, then how can it be removed?” At this point the questioner realized what he meant and accepted it. The brevity of Yüeh’s statements and the perceptiveness of his ideas were all of this sort.²⁷⁰

And the second one, anecdote n. 24:

24. 謝安年少時，請阮光祿道白馬論。為論以示謝，于時謝不即解阮語，重相咨盡。阮乃歎曰：「非但能言人不可得，正索解人亦不可得！」²⁷¹

24. When Hsieh An was young he requested Juan Yü to talk about Kung-sun Lung-tzu’s “Discourse on the White Horse” (*Pai-ma lun*). Juan wrote a treatise and showed it to Hsieh. At the time Hsieh did not immediately understand Juan’s terminology and repeatedly questioned him until he was satisfied. At the end Juan said with a sigh, “It’s not just the man who can talk who’s hard to find, but precisely the man who probes for explanations who’s equally hard to find.”²⁷²

As further proof of the existence of *Gongsun Longzi* – or at least of parts of the text as we know it - in this period, the Jin scholar Zhang Zhan 張湛 (*fl.* ca. 370 CE) quotes the *Baima Lun* in his commentary to the *Liezi*.²⁷³ The *Gongsun Longzi* is also mentioned in the *Jinshu* 晉書 but, contrary to expectations, not in the bibliographical catalogue: the *Gongsun Longzi* White Horse argument “*bai ma fei ma*” (白馬非馬) is quoted as the reference source to emend the homophone *fei* character 飛 used in a similar expression (恣飛馬之雄辭).²⁷⁴

During the Southern and Northern Dynasties period, we have two traces of the *Gongsun Longzi*, one of which is however misleading; the first evidence is given by the

²⁶⁹See Liu Yiqing 劉義慶, 1982, *Wenxue di si* 文學第四, p. 10.

²⁷⁰See Mather, 2002, p. 105. The term *zhi* and its possible meaning and translations will be further discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

²⁷¹See Liu Yiqing 劉義慶, 1982, *Wenxue di si* 文學第四, p. 13.

²⁷²See Mather, 2002, p. 111.

²⁷³See *Liezi zhu - Zhongni pian* 列子註·仲尼篇, 1960; see also Wang Guan, 1988, p. 9.

²⁷⁴See *Jinshu juan 127 kaozheng* 晉書 卷一百二十七考證。

author Liu Xiaobiao 劉孝標 (Liu Xun 劉峻) (462-521 CE) in his *Guangjue Jiaolun* 廣絕交論, when talking about a “yellow horse” and “jade-blue chicken” paradoxical debate (「[...]黃馬之劇談, 從碧雞之雄辯」) quoted in the *Wenxuan* 文選²⁷⁵, fact that is considered by Wang Guan reliable evidence of the existence of *Gongsun Longzi* between the Wei 魏 (386-534/535) and Liang 梁 (502-556) Dynasties²⁷⁶. Graham explains accurately the supposed origin of the paradox²⁷⁷, which according to him would recall the *Gongsun Longzi Tongbian Lun*:

The commentator Li Shan 李善²⁷⁸ (whose preface is dated 658) explains the “yellow horse” by a reference to the paradox 黃馬驪牛三 [...], ascribed to the dialecticians in the *Chuang-tzu*.²⁷⁹ For the “jade-blue chicken”, he quotes a letter (no longer extant) of Feng Yen (馮衍, first century A.D.): [...]碧雞之辯, 不足難也。 “[...] and the argument about the jade-blue chicken will present no difficulty”. The two sophistries seem therefore to have had different origins, but to mention them together [...] became a literary cliché. [...] Now according to a very obscure section of the *Understanding Change* (i.e. *Tongbian Lun*), “sheep” together with “ox” is not “horse” or “chicken”, “blue” together with “white” is not “yellow” or “jade-blue”, but “horse” is to be preferred to “chicken”, “yellow” is to be preferred to “jade-blue”. [...] If we could be sure that Liu Hsün was the originator of the cliché, this would put his date as late as the 6th century A.D.²⁸⁰

However, according to David Knechtges’ commented translation of the *Wenxuan*, “the bronze horse (*jinma* 金馬) and jade cock (*biji* 碧雞) were supernatural objects discovered in the Yizhou 益州 (Southern Yunnan?) area. Emperor Xuan of the Han dispatched Wang Bao to bring them back to the capital. Wang however, died of illness en route. See *Han shu* 25B.2830, 64B.2830. The *Han shu* ‘Treatise on Geography’ (28A.1600) says that the bronze horse and jade cock were found on Mount

²⁷⁵There is actually also another similar example regarding part of a speech that Gongsun Long addressed to the Lord of Pingyuan in the *Xinxu*, quoted in *juan* 39 (See *Wenxuan quanyi*, 1995, p. 2785, note 31 at page 2788, and Liu Xiang, 1965a, *juan* 39/7a)

²⁷⁶See Wang Guan, 1992, p. 9.

²⁷⁷See Graham, 1986, pp. 147-148.

²⁷⁸“Li Shan 李善 (630-689) wrote a commentary for the collection, giving detailed notes on the numerous allusions.” (See Nienhauser, 1986, p. 891)

²⁷⁹See *Zhuangzi* chapter 33 *Tianxia*, 18th thesis.

²⁸⁰See Graham, *ibidem*.

Yutong 禺同 of Qingling 青蛉 prefecture [...]. See also *Shuijing zhu* (37.6.59), which also records a ‘Eulogy to the Bronze Horse and Jade Cock’ attributed to Wang Bao.”²⁸¹

This statement in my opinion contradicts only in part what asserted above by Graham, as in our eyes Li Shan’s explanation can still be considered a quite reasonable – within its obvious proper limits of attainability – possible evidence in itself as far as the preservation of the *Gongsun Longzi* is concerned, though it is quite clear that a further distinction must be drawn.

In fact, in the light of these lastly acquired data, we can affirm with a fair degree of certainty that the two expressions seem to have unrelated origins and to hint to pretty different objects. Consequently, the quotation from Feng Yen’s lost letter would be a true reference to a missing paradoxical argument, while the *Wenxuan* “bronze horse and jade-blue cock” would by chance echo to a previous (lost) paradox, yet having almost nothing to do with it. Finally then, as a consequence of Liu Xiaobiao’s misinterpretation of the origins of the *Wenxuan* quotation and its erroneous overlap on the actual one and only paradox, the *Wenxuan* can’t be considered as evidence in reconstructing the textual history of the *Gongsun Longzi*.

The second attested reference comes from Falin 法琳 (572-640)’s *Poxie Lun* 破邪論, included in the Buddhist Canon (*Dazang jing* 大藏經) and presented in the year 622: 「昔公孫龍著堅白論。罪三皇非五帝。至今讀之人猶切齒。」²⁸²

This piece of evidence, though short, provides us useful information: it does not only confirm the existence of the *Jianbai Lun* as a textual unit of its own, but identifies also Gongsun Long as its “author” and quotes one more apparently puzzling expression 「罪三皇非五帝」: Yang Liuqiao 杨柳桥 suggest that it is probably an excerpt of a logical passage in a broader argumentation which might have been integrant part of the *Jianbai Lun* at that time²⁸³, but the Chinese scholar sensationally fails to recognize a famous political claim which has been associated with another persuader’s political program, Tian Ba 田巴²⁸⁴.

²⁸¹ See Knechtges, 1982, p. 344, note LL. 49-50 to Shu Capital Rhapsody.

²⁸² *Poxielun* 破邪論 n. 2109, *juan* 1, T52, p0477a12-13, in Takakusu Junjirō 高楠順次郎 and Watanabe Kaikyoku 渡辺海旭 (eds), 1924-1932.

²⁸³ See Yang Liuqiao, 1988, p. 1.

²⁸⁴ The complete expression is 「罪三皇非五帝訾五伯」. Tian Ba was apparently a member of the Jixia Academy, who among others claimed the establishment of a brand new political system, freed from what

There is actually also another possible reference, an example of contamination regarding a speech that Gongsun Long addressed to the Lord of Pingyuan in the *Xinxu*, (「公孫龍謂平原君曰『臣居魯則聞下風。高先生之知,悅先生之行。』」)²⁸⁵, which seemingly has been partially quoted in the *Wenxuan juan* 39²⁸⁶ (『… …高下風之行,尤悅大王之義。』), even if there is no direct reference to Gongsun Long as the utterer of that sentence. Nevertheless, according to my opinion, there is no such blatant resemblance or self-evident connection between the two cases to justify enthusiastic speculations of the *Wenxuan* drawing from a supposed-to-be Gongsun Long's later minor saying, an hypothesis rather farfetched.

A stunning fact is, the *Gongsun Longzi* completely disappears in the *Suishu*, whose bibliographical section was compiled between 640 and 650²⁸⁷; the hypothesis according to which the *Gongsun Longzi* in this source would be recorded with a different name as *Shoubai Lun* – a title whose author is identified with Gongsun Long even by his disciples in the *Jifu* chapter – is broadly discussed below (see pp. 95-100).

Unfortunately, in the seventh century there is apparently no trace of the *Gongsun Longzi* at all, and the text appears again only in the late eight century Zhang Shoujie's 張守節 (*fl.* 725-735) *Shiji Zhenyi* 史記正義 annotation to the *Shiji* 史記 chapter 74 *Mengzi Xunqing liezhuan* 孟子荀卿列傳: here we find a direct quotation from the *Qian Hanshu* 前漢書, stating that the *Gongsun Longzi* is recorded in the bibliographical catalogue in 14 *pian* (「藝文志公孫龍子十四篇」).²⁸⁸

according to his opinion was the pernicious and anachronistic attempt of recreating the Golden Age of Sage rulers of antiquity and at the same time liberated from the tyranny (in the Greek sense of the word) of Egemons of his age. However, occurrences of this expression and anecdotes on the character are quite late (*Shiji Zhengyi* 史記正義 and *Taiping Yulan* 太平御覽), while there are no references in Masters Literature. See Liu Weihua 刘蔚华 and Mao Runtian 苗润田, 1992, pp. 234-239; see also Yang Jinguang, 1991, pp. 315-316.

²⁸⁵ See Liu Xiang, 1965a, *juan* 39/7a.

²⁸⁶ See *Wenxuan quanyi*, 1995, p. 2785, note 31 at page 2788.

²⁸⁷ See Wang Zhen-ping, 1991, p. 52: according to Creel, in 656 A.D. (Creel, 1970, p. 96).

²⁸⁸ Sima Qian, 1963, p. 2349. The Chinese scholar Yang Liuqiao argues that the received text should be dated to the Tang period, when individual mutilated Han manuscripts on bamboo were probably collected together by scholars as chapters of the articulated text known to us as *Gongsun Longzi*; though there is no material evidence, Yang's speculation of a fluid progressive textual construction sounds seductive. (See Yang Liuqiao, 1988, p. 3)

In the ninth century there is almost no mention of the text, even in the Japanese catalogue *Nihonkoku genzaisho mokuroku* 日本國現在書目錄²⁸⁹, compiled by Fujiwara Sukeyo 藤原左世 (d. 897/898 ?)²⁹⁰ short before 891, a sort of inventory of the books stored in Japan which survived the fire in 875²⁹¹. However, this is also no ultimate proof of the unequivocal vanishing of the *Gongsun Longzi*, as “the original catalogue is lost, and only a simplified version made sometime between the late twelfth and the early thirteen century still exists today”²⁹²; moreover Sukeyo seemingly used the *Suishu* bibliographical section as a reference²⁹³, where - as remarked above - the *Gongsun Longzi* for some inexplicable reason is already missing.

We happen to be more lucky since the Song period, as the *Gongsun Longzi* is mentioned in the *Taiping Yulan* 太平御覽 (completed in 982)²⁹⁴: it is a brief stereotyped presentation of the author, ascribed here to Huan Tan 桓譚’s *Xin Lun* 新論²⁹⁵, and a short explanation of the text main argument (*bai ma fei ma* 白馬非馬) which traces out parts of the opening sentence of the *Gongsun Longzi Jifu* chapter²⁹⁶:

²⁸⁹The catalogue is also known as *Honchou genzaisho mokuroku* 本朝國現在書目錄 or *Sukeyo mokuroku* 左世目錄.

²⁹⁰See Fujiwara Sukeyo, 1978; Loewe, 1993, p. 253; Pokora, 1975, p. xxxi.

²⁹¹See Pelliot 1902, p. 331; Hall et al., 1999, pp. 345-346.

²⁹²See Wang Zhen-ping, 1991, p. 47.

²⁹³See *Id.*

²⁹⁴“It was compiled in one thousand *chüan* by a team of sixteen scholars headed by Li Fang 李昉 (925-996) in response to an imperial mandate dated 977. Completed in 982, it took the emperor an entire year to read it (at the rate of three *chüan* a day). For this reason the original title, *T'ai-p'ing tsung-lei* 太平總類 (A General Classification Book of the T'ai-p'ing Reign Period) was changed to the present one.” (See Nienhauser, 1986, p. 745); for an analysis of the period and process of compilation see Haeger 1968. According to Graham, it should have been completed in 983 (*Id.*, 1986a, p. 171).

²⁹⁵[...] Thus, it is most likely that the *Hsin-lun* was presented (to the throne A/N), in 26 or 27 A.D., towards the end of Huan Tan’s life. Of course, work on the book must have begun much earlier.” (See Pokora, 1975, p. xxviii).

²⁹⁶公孫龍六國時辯士也，為守白之論。[...]假物取譬，[...]謂白馬為非馬也。白馬為非馬者，言白所以名色，言馬所以名形也；色非形，形非色也。I wish to draw your attention to the the expressions *shoubai* 守白(*Gongsun Longzi Jifu*)/ *jianbai* 堅白(*Xin Lun*): the scholar Yang Jinguang underlines that the *Jifu* 「守白之論」 becomes 「堅白之論」 in the *Xin Lun*, which is a later text in respect to the *Gongsun Longzi Jifu*, and should consequently quote from the former, but it is not the case. The author suggests that 守 would be a mistake for 堅, and uses this hypothesis to ground his opinion that Gongsun Long never wrote a *Shoubai Lun*, nor he ever was a member of a *shoubai* faction (守白派) among the dialecticians as believed by Fung Yulan, and anyway that the binomial “*shoubai*” should be referred to as a topic for discussion rather than a text. (See Yang Jinguang, 1991, pp. 148-149). The problem of Gongsun Long’s potential authorship of the *Shoubai Lun* will be discussed thoroughly in paragraph 2.4.2 at pp. 95-100.

桓譚 《新論》曰： 「公孫龍六國時辯士也，為堅白之論。」假物取譬，謂白馬為非馬者：言白所以名色馬所以名形也。色非形，形非色。²⁹⁷

Gongsun Long was a dialectician of the time of the Six States, who wrote an essay on hard and white. He formulated analogies subverting things, claiming that white horse is no horse: he said that “white” is what denotes the color, while “horse” is what denotes the shape. Color is not the same as shape, and shape is not the same as color.

Another interesting reference in the *Taiping Yulan* is to *jianbai* debates (*jianbai bian* 堅白辯) and to the *zang san er* 藏三耳 paradox, even if there is no explicit reference to Gongsun Long having been involved in discussing these topics.²⁹⁸

The *Gongsun Longzi* is quoted also in the *Wenyuan yinghua* 文苑英華²⁹⁹, whose compilation started in 982 and was accomplished in 986 by an équipe of scholars comprising also some of the literati that already took part in the compilation of the *Taiping Yulan*, such as Li Fang 李昉 (925-996) and Xu Xuan 徐鉉 (916-991). The text where the *Gongsun Longzi* is quoted, entitled *Ni Gongsun Longzi* 擬公孫龍子, was compiled by the Tang scholar Wang Mou 王某³⁰⁰ and has almost nothing to do with the *Gongsun Longzi* as we know it: it is a short chronicle on how and when (in the year 671 A.D., second year of the Tang Xianheng period 咸亨辛未) the author came into possession of a *Gongsun Longzi* in 6 *pian* tied up in 1 *juan*³⁰¹. Most important, as Graham states, “the unknown author of this essay also gives the titles of the six *pian*, which are those of the book as we know it. The ‘terminus ad quem’ for the composition of the *Gongsun Long tzyy* in its present form can therefore be fixed at 672.”³⁰²

Both in the *Jiu Tangshu* 舊唐書 (a) and in the *Xin Tangshu* 新唐書 (b) the *Gongsun Longzi* is recorded in 3 *juan* under the *mingjia* 名家 section, and there we find the first explicit references to two commentaries, which unfortunately went lost before the Song Dynasty: in 1 *juan* each, their authors are identified in Jia Dayin 賈大隱 (*fl.* 676) and Chen Sigu 陳嗣古:

²⁹⁷ See *Taiping Yulan*, 1968, 464.5a ; punctuation is mine.

²⁹⁸ See *Taiping Yulan* 1968, 464.7a.

²⁹⁹ See *Wenyuan yinghua*, 第五冊·卷七五八, pp. 3971-3973.

³⁰⁰ See Yang Junguang, 1991, p. 149.

³⁰¹ “La deuxième année de Hien-heng (671) ... un parent, M. Wang m’a montré son livre (de Kong-souen Long), en tout 6 chapitres, formant un rouleau.” (Kou Pao-Koh, 1953, p. 14).

³⁰² See Graham, 1957, p. 171. Also Kou Pao-Koh suggests the *textus receptus* to have acquired his actual form during the Tang dynasty (*Id.*, 1953, p. 14).

- a) 公孫龍子三卷 龍撰 又一卷 賈大隱注
又一卷 陳嗣古注³⁰³
- b) 公孫龍子三卷 陳嗣古注公孫龍子一卷 [...]
賈大隱注公孫龍子一卷³⁰⁴

As Graham notes, “the titles in the bibliography of the *Old T'ang History* were taken from the *Ku-chin shu-lu* 古今書錄, a lost abridgement of the lost *C'hün-shu ssü-pu* 群書四部 compiled in 722. The *New T'ang* gives the same three titles among the books which it says were catalogued during the Kai-yüan 開元 period (713-741).”³⁰⁵

In the Song period, the first evidence we have is in the *Daozang*, as the Song scholar Chen Jingyuan 陳景元 (1024-1094) inserted two chapters of the *Gongsun Longzi* text as we know it (*Baima Lun* and *Zhiwu Lun*) in his *Nanhua zhenjing yushi zalu* 南華真經餘事雜錄³⁰⁶, which is dated 1084³⁰⁷. The text bears an anonymous commentary, and both text and commentary show textual variants if compared to the *Daozang* official version of the complete *Gongsun Longzi*, which is not possible to date with precision.

The two commentaries to the *Gongsun Longzi* by Jia Dayin and Chen Sigu are quoted also by Zheng Qiao 鄭樵 (?1108/1104-?1162/1166) in his *Tongzhi – Yiwenlüe* 通志·藝文略 (1161), where it is stated that the *Gongsun Longzi* was in 1 *juan*, and that of the 14 original chapters only 6 were left³⁰⁸. What is most important, Zheng Qiao is the first one to talk explicitly of “lost chapters”.

Chao Gongwu 晁公武 (c.a. 1104 – 1183/1171?) in his *Junzhai dushu zhi* 郡齋讀書志³⁰⁹ also writes about the two commentaries:

³⁰³ See *Jiu Tangshu* *juan* 47 舊唐書卷四十七。

³⁰⁴ See *Xin Tangshu* *juan* 59 新唐書卷五十九。

³⁰⁵ Graham, 1986a, p. 151.

³⁰⁶ See *Nanhua zhenjing yushi zalu*, *juan shang*, in *Daozang*, 1988, vol. 15, pp. 959-961.

³⁰⁷ See also Graham, 1986a, p. 152.

³⁰⁸ See Yang Liuqiao, 1988, p.2.

³⁰⁹ See *Junzhai dushu zhi* 郡齋讀書志卷五上·諸子類 47a.

公孫龍子三卷。右唐藝文志列於名家。陳嗣古、賈大隱皆嘗為之註，今不辨矣。孔叢子第四卷有公孫龍子一卷。

The *Gongsun Longzi* is in three *juan*. The bibliographical catalogue of the *Tangshu* records it under the *Mingjia* category. Once Chen Sigu and Jia Dayin both wrote a commentary which cannot be identified today. In the fourth *juan* of the *Kongcongzi* there is a *Gongsun Longzi* in one *juan*.

Zhao Xibian 趙希弁 (1131-1162) in his appendix to Chao Gongwu's work *Junzhai dushu fuzhi* 郡齋讀書·附志³¹⁰, restates once more that:

陳嗣古、賈大隱皆嘗為之註，今不辨矣

Once Chen Sigu and Jia Dayin both wrote a commentary which cannot be identified today.

The *Gongsun Longzi* appears then in Chen Zhensun 陳振孫 (1190/1211? – 1249³¹¹)'s *Zhizhai shulu jieti* 直齋書錄解題, where it is recorded in 3 *juan*; the author states that Gongsun Long was a dialectician coming from the state of Zhao and dedicated to the “*bai ma fei ma*” and “*jianbai*” arguments, underlining also that the original text, according to the *Hanshu* bibliographical catalogue, was constituted by 14 *pian* but that in contemporary times only 6 chapters were left: (「趙人公孫龍。為白馬非馬堅白之辨者也[… …]漢志十四篇。今書六篇。」)³¹²

Finally, in the *Songshi* 宋史, the *Gongsun Longzi* is reported in 1 *juan* under the *mingjia* section, with brief annotation on Gongsun Long as a man from Zhao (「公孫龍子一卷 趙人」)³¹³.

In the Ming period the *Gongsun Longzi* is reported in Song Lian 宋濂 (1310-1381)'s *Zhuzi bian* 諸子辯 in 3 *juan* and 6 *pian*, with a complete list of the six chapters which compose the work as we know it³¹⁴; interestingly enough, the first chapter bears the

³¹⁰*Id.*

³¹¹According to Graham, fl. 1235. (Graham, 1986a, p. 151)

³¹²See Chen Zhensun, 1883, *juan* 10 卷十·名家類 2a/2b. Chen's statement is reported word-by-word also in Ma Duanlin 馬端臨(1254-1323)'s *Wenxian tongkao* 文獻通考 (See Ma Duanlin, 1963, *juan* 212 卷二百十二, p. 1740)

³¹³See *Songshi juan* 205 宋史卷二百五.

³¹⁴See Graham, 1986a, p. 151.

same character variant that appears in the *Gongsun Longzi Shuofu* edition³¹⁵: we have a *Shufu* 疏府 instead of a *Jifu*.

In the Ming Dynasty work *Baichuan shuzhi* 百川書志 by Gao Ru 高儒, accomplished in the 19th year of the Jiajing 嘉靖 era (1540), the *Gongsun Longzi* is described as a text in 6 chapters collected in 1 *juan*, with a commentary written by an unknown hand (「凡六篇, 未詳註人姓名」)³¹⁶.

Finally, it is included in the *Yishi* 釋史, edited by Ma Su 馬驢 (1621- 1673) in the Qing period; the *Yishi* contains the whole *Gongsun Longzi* text, ordering chapters in a slightly different sequence³¹⁷ from other editions and quotes also a wide selection of anecdotes³¹⁸ on Gongsun Long's life and teachings, introducing fundamental characters we have already encountered in the first chapter of the present work, such as his patron Zhao Sheng, Prince of Pingyuan, Wei Gongzi Mou, Prince of Zhongshan and the debaters Kong Chuan and Zou Yan.

According to the *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* 四庫全書總目提要³¹⁹ (compiled during the years 1773-1782), 8 of the original 14 *pian* went lost during the Song Dynasty³²⁰ and the same happened to the two Tang commentaries attributed to Jia Dayin and Chen Sigu; according to this source, a new commentary (supposedly the received one) and a

³¹⁵See paragraph 2.2 at page 70.

³¹⁶See Yang Liuqiao, 1988, p. 2.

³¹⁷See *Yishi juan* 147 釋史卷一百四十. About different chapter order see note 265 at page 82.

³¹⁸These miscellaneous anecdotes are taken precisely from: *Shiji juan* 76 – *Pingyuan jun yuqing liezhuan di shiliu* 史記卷七十六·平原君虞卿列傳第十六; *Shiji juan* 81 – *Lian polin xiangru liezhuan di ershiyi* 史記卷八十一·廉頗藺相如列傳第二十一; *Zhanguoce juan* 20, *juan* 21 and *juan* 28 戰國策 卷二十、卷二十一、卷二十八; *Kongcongzi juan xia* – *Rufu di shi'er*, *Gongsun Long di shiyi* and *Zhijie di shiqi* 孔叢子卷下·儒服第十二、公孫龍第十一、執節第十七 (quoted respectively according this order); *Lüshi Chunqiu* “*Shen ying lan di liu – Yinci*” 呂氏春秋審應覽第六·淫詞; *Huainanzi juan shi'er* “*Dao yin xun*” 淮南子卷十二·道應訓; *Liezi juan di si* “*Zhongni bian*” 列子卷第四·仲尼篇; *Zhuangzi waipian* “*Qiushui*” *di shiqi* and *zapien* “*Rang Wang*” *di ershiba* 莊子外篇·秋水第十七、雜篇·讓王第二十八。

³¹⁹See *Siku quanshu zongmu*, *juan* 117 卷一百十七·子部二十七·雜家類一。

³²⁰Xu Fuguan, 1982, p. 10; Wang Guan is even more precise, dating the vanishing of these 8 chapters before the Shaoxing 紹興 era of the Southern Song Dynasty (1131-1162), thesis that would be supported also by Zheng Qiao's *Tongzhi*; Wang remarks also that the preface attributed to Xie Xishen – presumably dated to the Yingzong 英宗 era (1032-1067) - quotes already only six chapters (See Wang Guan, 1992, p. 10). The hypothesis is supported also by Zheng Qiao's *Tongzhi*, Chen Zhensun's *Zhizhai shulu jieti* and Ma Duanlin's *Wenxian Tongkao*. Yang Jinguang on the contrary is convinced that the 8 chapters went lost during the Northern and Southern Dynasties (see Yang Jinguang, 1991, p. 154).

preface³²¹ in 1 *pian* were compiled by the Song scholar Xie Xishen 謝希深 (995-1039)³²².

2.4.1 A commentary written by...Xie Xishen 謝希身?

In fact, serious doubts arise on Xie Xishen's authorship of the commentary³²³, whose attribution is based mainly on the assertion made by the *Siku quanshu zongmu* 「宋謝希深所撰前有自序一篇」³²⁴, due to the following critical points:

- 1) First of all, there happens to be an unusual specification of the author's Dynasty preceding Xie Xishen's final signature; as Graham states, "the note at the end of the preface³²⁵ ascribing it to Hsieh Chiang [...] must have been added after the end of the Sung, since it mentions the dynasty"³²⁶
- 2) The author signs using Xie's *zi* 字 (Xishen 希深) instead of his *ming* 名 (Jiang 絳)
- 3) The use of the formula 「宋謝希身序」 at the end of the preface is in at least bizarre, and never seen before in classical texts³²⁷
- 4) Any reference to - or quotation of this commentary is absent in Xie Xishen's works³²⁸ and in the *Songshi* bibliographical catalogue
- 5) Most versions do not give any account of the commentary at all; when quoted, in many cases the commentary appears to be recorded as anonymous

³²¹ According to Wang Guan, the preface would have been written in the Yinzong 英宗 era (1032-1067); see Wang Guan, 1992, p. 10.

³²² Also the famous Qing scholar Sun Yirang 孫詒讓 (1848-1908) in his *Zhayi* 札迻 gives for granted that the author of the *Gongsun Longzi* commentary is Xie Xishen (See Sun Yirang, 1989, p.179). The ambiguous question of Xie Xishen's authorship as regarding commentary and preface will be further discussed below.

³²³ A full text translation of this commentary can be found in Perleberg, 1952.

³²⁴ See *Siku quanshu zongmu fulu jian* 117, 四庫全書總目附錄卷一百十七.

³²⁵ Max Perleberg provides also a translation of the preface attributed to Xie Xishen; see *Id.*, 1952, pp. 17-19.

³²⁶ See Graham, 1986a, p. 150.

³²⁷ See Wang Guan, 1992, pp. 11-12; Yang Jinguang, 1991, p. 154; Yang Liuqiao, 1988, p. 2.

³²⁸ See Yang Jinguang, 1991, p. 155.

- 6) There is a difference in tone between preface (critic) and the commentary (praising): actually, “the commentary accepts the value of Kung-sun Lung's arguments, and is therefore not from the same hand as the preface, which assumes a sceptical attitude towards them.”³²⁹

From these considerations we can easily argue that it is highly improbable that the received commentary was actually written by Xie Xishen in person, and that the commentary that appears in the *Daozang* and subsequent editions may be the result of the conflation of the two Tang commentaries by Jia Dayin and Chen Sigu, edited or rewritten by a later scholar in Xie Xishen's name³³⁰.

2.4.2 The Suishu 隋書 omission and the debate on the *Shoubai Lun* 《守白論》

We have already seen that in the *Suishu* there is no trace of the *Gongsun Longzi* as such, while the title reappears in the Tang dynastic histories; as it is easy to imagine, this abrupt omission – and the subsequent reappearance – gave scholars food for thought until finally an hypothesis was formulated, according to which during this period of “vacancy” the *Gongsun Longzi* would have not disappeared completely, but for some unexplicable reasons just be recorded under a different name .

According to the twentieth century scholars Luan Diaofu 樂調甫, Wang Fuyan³³¹ 汪馥炎, Sun Lu 孫祿³³², Y.P. Mei³³³ and Jean-Paul Reding³³⁴, the *Gongsun*

³²⁹Graham, 1986a, p. 150.

³³⁰See Wang Guan, 1992, p. 12. Graham goes even further, stating that “it may be concluded that the preface was added to the book in the Yüan dynasty or later, and that the anonymous commentary was henceforth assumed to have been written by the author of the preface” (Graham, 1986a, p. 150).

³³¹Wang Fuyan in his *Jianbai yingli bian* 堅白盈離辯 argues that the text original title should have been exactly *Shoubai Lun*, and that only during the Tang Dynasty it was changed into *Gongsun Longzi*. (See Wang Guan, 1992, p. 9).

Longzi would be recorded under the title “*Shoubai Lun*” 守白論 in the *Suishu* 隋書, this hypothesis drawing mainly on the *Gongsun Longzi Jifu* chapter itself, where Gongsun Long is said to be author of a “*shoubai zhi lun*” 「守白之論」).³³⁵.

As we have already seen³³⁶, in Huan Tan 桓譚’s *Xin Lun* 新論 version³³⁷ preserved in the *Taiping yulan* 太平御覽³³⁸, the same sentence quotes “*jianbai zhi lun*” 「堅白之論」, which is more coherent with the overall *Gongsun Longzi* content yet strange if compared with the *Jifu* chapter quotation, on which the later *Xin Lun* should have drawn. We find here a more logical and grounded expression instead, that attributes a *Jianbai Lun* to Gongsun Long³³⁹; it is hardly said whether *shou* 守 is a scribal error for *jian* 堅, as some scholars hint at, or if we are facing two different textual traditions, one of the two bearing later corruptions or an attempt of emendation in order to more easily classify Gongsun Long and the *Gongsun Longzi* assimilating it to the *shoubai pai* 守白派, having its focus in this anonymous *Shoubai Lun*.

Apart from the *Jifu* chapter, the Tang scholar Cheng Xuanying’s commentary to the *Zhuangzi Tianxia* chapter³⁴⁰ asserts without casting any doubt Gongsun Long’s

³³²See Yang Jinguang, 1991, pp. 148-149.

³³³See Y.P. Mei, 1953, pp. 407-409; in particular, page 409.

³³⁴Reding, 1985, pp. 387-388.

³³⁵Yang Jinguang, 1991, pp. 148-149.

³³⁶See anecdote at page 90.

³³⁷It must be reminded here that fragments supposed to come from the *Xin Lun* might be possible forgeries, as the text went lost “in either the tenth century (according to Yen) or the Southern Song (according to Sun)” [Yen is Yan Kejun 嚴可均 and Sun refers to Sun Pingyi 孫馮翼 N/A] (See Pokora, 1975, p. xxxi).

³³⁸*Taiping Yulan*, 1968, *juan* 464/5a: 「桓譚新論曰：公孫龍六國時辯士也，為堅白之論，假物取譬，謂白馬為非馬；非馬者言白所以名色，馬所以名形也，色非形，形非色。」 Translation of this brief quotes, supposed to come from *Xin Lun* ch. 11 *Lishi* 新論·離事, have been given by 1) Timotheus Pokora (See Pokora, 1975, p. 135): “Kung-sun Lung was a dialectician who lived at the time of the six Kingdoms. He wrote a treatise on ‘Hard and White’ and, to illustrate his theory, said that a white horse is not a horse. To show that a white horse is not a horse, he said that ‘white’ is that by which one names the color and ‘horse’ that by which one names the form. The color is not the form, and the form is not the color.”. 2) Angus C. Graham (See Graham, 1957, p. 175 and Id., 1964-65, p. 132; the latter version is partial, therefore I’m quoting here only the first more complete one, which I also find more convincing: “Gongsun Long was a dialectician of the time of the Six Kingdoms. He wrote an essay on ‘Hard and White’ and used things to illustrate his case, saying that a white horse is not a horse. To show that it is not a horse, he said that ‘white’ is that by which one names the colour, and ‘horse’ is that by which one names the form; the colour is not the form and the form is not the colour.”

³³⁹Similarly, Gongsun Long is remembered as author of a “*jianbai*” *zhi lun* 《堅白》之論 also in the *Lun Heng - Anshu pian* ch. 83 論衡·案書篇: 「公孫龍著堅白之論，析言陪剖辭，務折曲之言，無道理之較，無益於治。」 (See Wang Chong, 1966, *Anshu pian* 安書篇 ch. 83, *juan* 29, p. 2.).

³⁴⁰*Zhuangzi jijie*, 1948, p. 298; *Nanhua zhenjing zhushu*, 1988, vol. 16, p. 372.

paternity of a *Shoubai Lun*³⁴¹; similarly, Zhang Youchao 張游朝(? – 757 A.D.)’s work *Chongxu bai ma fei ma lun* 沖虛白馬非馬論 and Chen Jingyuan’s introduction to the *Baima Lun* and *Zhiwu Lun* in the *Nanhua zhenjing yushi zalu* would contribute to corroborate the [*Shoubai* = *Gongsun Longzi*] hypothesis, with the help of the cataloguing of this *Shoubai Lun* in one *juan* under the *Daojia* 道家 section of the *Suishu* bibliographical catalogue³⁴². Finally, also Bao Biao 鮑彪’s commentary (ca 1147, date which is reported in the preface)³⁴³ to the *Zhanguo ce* 戰國策 asserts that he authored a *Shoubai Lun*.³⁴⁴

In my opinion, the *Shoubai Lun* hypothesis is not at all convincing; in fact, scientifically reliable bibliographical evidence can be given that the *Shoubai Lun* could hardly have ever been a *Gongsun Longzi* “in disguise”: in fact, the *Shoubai Lun* disappears in the *Jiu Tangshu* and *Xin Tangshu* - where we do have the proper *Gongsun Longzi* - only to reappear in Zheng Qiao’s *Tongzhi*, where we find not only a *Shoubai Lun* in one *juan* under the *Daojia* section, but also a *Gongsun Longzi* properly catalogued under the *Mingjia* section! This suggests the idea that the two titles always referred to separate independent textual items, and that for some unknown reason the *Gongsun Longzi* was not classified in the *Suishu*, maybe because it disappeared, it was damaged or went temporarily lost. At a first glance, then, the two literary works seem to be unrelated texts with autonomous textual history and – most likely – individual original content.

To summarize the situation:

<i>Suishu</i>	<i>(Jiu-Xin)Tangshu</i>	<i>Tongzhi</i>
No <i>Gongsun Longzi</i>	<i>Gongsun Longzi</i>	<i>Gongsun Longzi</i>
<i>Shoubai Lun</i>	No <i>Shoubai Lun</i>	<i>Shoubai Lun</i>
under <i>Daojia</i> section	under <i>Mingjia</i> section	<i>Gongsun Longzi</i> under <i>Mingjia</i> section, <i>Shoubai Lun</i> under <i>Daojia</i> section

³⁴¹Cheng Xuanying’s statement is reported also in the Zhou Qi 周祈’s *Mingyi kao* 名義考 *juan* 8, dating back to the Ming dynasty (see <http://skqs.leidenuniv.nl/>).

³⁴²See Xu Fuguan, 1982, pp. 11-12. The Chinese scholar also finds ungrounded the hypothesis of the one-text-two-names.

³⁴³Graham, 1986a, p. 155.

³⁴⁴*Zhanguoce*, 1985, note 3, p. 700 (chapter *Zhao san Qin zheng ZhaoPingyuan jun shi ren qing jiu yu Wei* 趙三秦政趙平原君使人請救於魏)

Unfortunately, we cannot examine and crosscheck the *Shoubai Lun* as it went lost, the only surviving evidence of its existence and sample of its contents being a preface to the text, bearing a highly cryptical concise summary of the main topics treated, written by the Ming author Cheng Yunzhuang 程雲莊³⁴⁵. After several frustrating attempts³⁴⁶, I must admit I wasn't able to produce a definitive fluent and completely satisfying translation myself, as really too much is implied and omitted in this obscure preface; we must face the fact that the text is so elliptical it precludes an exhaustive logical reconstruction and a thorough comprehension of its original significance.

However, a few considerations can still be made about what seems to be the general meaning of the *Shoubai Lun*. What emerges from analysis is, first of all, an assonance with some formal and grammatical structures typical of the *Gongsun Longzi* and a few common lexical choices as far as technical terms are concerned, apparently employed by both the *Shoubai Lun* and the *Gongsun Longzi*. The predictable result is, we can identify entire strings of text that – hypothetically - could even be put in Gongsun Long's mouth. Here below are a few examples taken from the *Shoubai Lun*, paired with utterances attributed to Gongsun Long in other sources, showing a high compatibility rate especially with the “*zhiwu* 指物” kind of argumentation:

「指有不至, 至則不指, 不指之指是為真指」 *Shoubai Lun* preface³⁴⁷

「指不至, 至不絕」 *Zhuangzi Tianxia* ch.33³⁴⁸

「有指不至, 有物不盡」 *Liezi Zhongni* ch. 4³⁴⁹

「旨不至」 *Shishuo Xinyu* ch. 4.16³⁵⁰

³⁴⁵ Quan Zuwang 全祖望, 2003, pp. 807-809. Due to scarce availability, full-text Chinese version of the preface can be consulted in Appendix B at pages 177-178.

³⁴⁶ I am in debt to Burchardt Mansvelt Beck and Rafał Felbur for their irreplaceable help and useful suggestions in this thorny task.

³⁴⁷ See Appendix B, p. 177.

³⁴⁸ *Zhuangzi jijie* 莊子集解, 1948, p. 297.

³⁴⁹ *Liezi zhu – Zhongni pian* 列子註·仲尼篇, 1960

³⁵⁰ Liu Yiqing 劉義慶, 1982, p. 120.

「而指非指, 是為物指」 *Shoubai Lun* preface

「物莫非指, 而指非指」 *Gongsun Longzi Zhiwu Lun* ch.3³⁵¹

Notwithstanding these evident similarities, at the same time we cannot help notice the use the preface to the *Shoubai Lun* makes of a decidedly daoist jargon – with an almost alchemic flavour - using words such as *qinghuang zhi bai* 青黃之白³⁵², *zhenbai* 真白, *wanbian* 萬變, *xingming* 性命, *tiandi* 天地³⁵³, *shanshuo* 閃鑠³⁵⁴, *shen* 神³⁵⁵, *shenhua* 神化. Nowhere has Gongsun Long ever shown the slightest interest in such arcane science: could it be here that he finally explored even this virgin field of knowledge? We cannot tell for sure, but at the same time this is also a possibility we cannot deny at all, considering the multifaceted personality we are dealing with and the wide-spread eclecticism which characterizes the Warring States intelligenzia – as most recently unearthed manuscripts further testify.

Finally, we can draw a few conclusions about the preface to the *Shoubai Lun* and its hypothetical authorship by Gongsun Long:

- The *Shoubai Lun* and the *Gongsun Longzi*, according to their concurrent appearance in the *Tongzhi*, seem to be two different texts; at least, we might say that they probably deal with different topics.
- What's left on the *Shoubai Lun* has a daoist content (coherent with its classification under the *daoia* section in bibliographical catalogues), but shows

³⁵¹ See paragraph 3.6, p. 147.

³⁵² As we have already seen, there are two examples dealing with colors as such in the *Tongbian Lun*; I also previously tried to show that these examples are not to be interpreted in the light of the Five Phases (*wuxing* 五行) theory (see p. 64) nor – as the preface to the *Shoubai Lun* here might mistakenly suggest – are they an allusion to alchemic elements expressed in an encrypted language. If we assume for a moment the alchemic interpretation to be right, in that case *huang* should be interpreted as gold, *bai* silver, being *huangbai* a proper *waidan* 外丹 (outer alchemy) technique in the quest for immortality (Hu Xuechen 胡学琛, 1995, pp. 1359-1360); *qing* might stand for *cengqing* 曾青, that is laminar malachite (Peng et al., 2007, p. 37; Pregadio, 2006, p. 245) and *bi* for jasper or agate jasper (Bradley and Barnes, 1963, pp. 51, 102). This interpretation is quite factitious and in the end doesn't provide any illuminating solution to the interpretation of the text; it is much easier to consider colors simply as what they are, just pigments.

³⁵³ The *Gongsun Longzi* always uses *tianxia* 天下, never *tiandi*.

³⁵⁴ This term in particular demands attention, as it refers to the alchemic process of refinement and purification required in the distillation of an elixir.

³⁵⁵ Actually, there is one occurrence of *shen* in the *Jianbai Lun*, but in this particular context it assumes the meaning of “faculty of sight” (also in a compound with *jian* 見), like if *shen* was a kind of “eyesight daimon”. (See Appendix C, pp. 182-183).

resemblances with cryptical sentences potentially part of Gongsun Long's repertoire.

- Possibly, we can argue that the *Shoubai Lun* and the *Gongsun Longzi* might both contain arguments in which Gongsun Long was interested and/or potentially related to him or to the cultural entourage he belonged to.

CHAPTER 3

The “original chapters” :

Baima Lun 白馬論 and *Zhiwu Lun* 指物論

We will now proceed to analyse in a detailed and capillary way the two chapters that are rightly considered the more ancient core of the *Gongsun Longzi*, the *Baima Lun* 白馬論 and the *Zhiwu Lun* 指物論 (commonly known as chapter two and three of the whole *corpus*). Each chapter is considered as an independent unit, though conceptually related to the ideas and concepts treated by the other texts part of the *Gongsun Longzi* – especially the *Jianbai Lun* and the *Mingshi Lun* .

In support of the theory of these texts as being the more genuine and “original”³⁵⁶ product of those group of thinkers and persuaders we identified as Logicians, we can’t help notice that the concepts expressed in these two texts in particular seems to be somewhat consequential, or at least we can say that they share a common basic knowledge and present a similar interpretative approach, expression of a certain cultural sphere and intellectual *humus* from which the philosophical contents discussed here emerged and developed.

The two texts are taken into consideration from different points of view concerning inner structure, argumentative content, rhetorical tools and dialectical techniques employed. Finally, a commented translation considering the contribution given by the textual variants distinguishing the *Daozang* and *Shuofu* editions is provided.

³⁵⁶ “Original” of course is not meant to refer to the existence of the hypothetical (or, better say, utopical) existence of a *Urtext*, of which these two chapters would closely resemble – at least more than the other chapters. “Original” means here peculiar elaboration of a certain trend of thought that found its expression in such arguments like those debated in these two texts, which appear to be less corrupted and edited in respect to the other chapters collected in the *Gongsun Longzi*, therefore possibly more respectful of the starting formulation of the contents entailed and to the first assemblage they assumed as written transposition of what was mainly an oral teaching, entertaining cue or debating material.

3.1 Crossing the Gate... And a white horse is no more a horse

則說者多棘刺白馬之說³⁵⁷

According to Angus C. Graham, “the *Essay on the White Horse*³⁵⁸ existed in substantially its present form at least as early as the 1st century A.D.” and, what’s most important, in support of what we have already said, “it is to be noted that Chang Chan and the Shih-shuo hsin-yü refer to it as an independent essay, without mentioning any collection of Kung-sun L’ung’s writings.”³⁵⁹

The text usually appears as second chapter in the *Gongsun Longzi* collection, and reports a dialogue between two not better qualified fictional characters, a dialectical

³⁵⁷ *Hanfeizi Wachushuo zuo shang di sanshi'er* 韓非子外儲說左上第三十二 (*Hanfeizi jiji* 韓非子集解, 1998, p. 261).

³⁵⁸ The use of a ‘white’ horse as argumentative object aroused also a debate, as a few Chinese scholars claim that this may be not an occasional match but a deliberate and meditated authorial choice: in fact, in antiquity precise names distinguished horses according to their color, which determined also the appropriate occasion in which the animal should have been used. White horses in particular were considered as a very distinct kind and used also for high-ranking sacrifices, oaths and covenant ceremonies. It would have been easier and almost self-evident for the contemporary audience to think of a white horse as a kind apart from other horses due to its particular sacrificial connotation, and instinctively differentiate it from a common whatever-color horse, making it easier to follow Gongsun Long’s apparently puzzling reasoning and argumentation. The bold hypothesis is supported for instance by Pang Pu: 「古人对马的毛色十分注意, 各种纯色马, 杂色马[...]都各有自己的专名, 有些还各有特定的用途(如白马多用于盟誓和祭祀)。公孙龙以黄, 黑马不能充当白马的事实[...]或许有利用常识之意[...]」 (See Pang Pu, 1989, p. 9). Anyway, horse sacrifices were probably seldom performed as horses were highly valuable and difficult to purchase yet strongly demanded for (but not only) military purposes, even if they were still sporadically used as sacrificial victims; in particular, the ritual slaughter by drowning of these animals seems to be somehow related to the cult devoted to He Bo, or to river gods in general (Sterckx, 1996, p. 68; Lai, 1990, p. 337), and an interesting precedent for the sacrifice of a white horse – linked to the water cult - occurs in the *Hanshu* (See Sterckx, 1996, p. 68, note 76). However the hypothesis might sound fascinating, the scarce available information about frequency and ritual prescriptions of horse sacrifices don’t let it possible at the moment to outline the imagery aroused in the contemporaries by the dialectic stratagem of a horse with the hide of a particular color as exemplificative figure. Jean Levi even proposed a metaphorical reading of the “white horse”, which would also allude to the “talented man”, just because of this “arrière-fond symbolique qui s’attachent au cheval”: “la phrase renvoie immédiatement, par transformation lexicale et métaphorique, le cheval évoquant l’homme de talent (Levi, 1993, pp. 31-32).

³⁵⁹ Which means Graham correctly understood the *Baima Lun* as an single text with an individual textual history: to these considerations, we can add that it showed also a quite stable structure by the time it was recorded; see Graham, 1986a, p. 158.

couple constituted by an opponent and a persuader, the latter commonly identified with the figure of Gongsun Long.³⁶⁰

To those who, in approaching this text, try to say that we are not dealing here with a dialogue, confronted with the crystal-clear evidence given by the patent serial use of the particle *yue* 曰, I would simply reply with Drège's candid statement: “voire l'irruption de la langue parlée dans les manuscrits[.]avec notamment l'apparition des dialogues.”³⁶¹

The White Horse argument, even if broadly discussed and developed by Gongsun Long, was almost for sure not first elaborated by him in person. Hu Qu Yuan and Chen Jinkun even make an interesting attempt to show that the paradox was well known and already used as a topic for discussion about sixty years before the famous dialogue between Gongsun Long and Kong Chuan handed down by the tradition should have taken place³⁶². The argument is in fact used by the diplomat Su Qin 蘇秦 while discussing with the King of Qin in the *Zhanguo ce Zhao di' er - Qin gong Zhao Suzi weiwei Qin Wang* 戰國策趙第二 · 秦攻趙蘇子為謂秦王³⁶³; according to the tradition, Su Qin died in the first year of King Shenjing 慎靚 of Zhou 周, in 320 B.C., sixty years before the debate between Gongsun Long and Kong Chuan allegedly took place (approximately in the year 264 B.C.); according to these data, not only was Su Qin living in a previous period, but he also defined the paradox with nonchalance as a typical example of an argument common to the repertoire of a so called “*Xingming*”³⁶⁴

³⁶⁰ A more detailed analysis of structure and main features of the *Baima Lun* can be found below at paragraph 3.1.1. (See pp. 108-123).

³⁶¹ Drège, 1997, p. 250.

³⁶² See Hu Qu Yuan and Chen Jinkun, 1987, p. 20.

³⁶³ Zhang Qingchang 張清常 and Wang Yandong 王延棟, 1994, p. 459.

³⁶⁴ As Creel underlines about the *Zhanguo ce* passage, “this is the only passage[.]that speaks of either a ‘*HSING-ming* (形名) school’ or a ‘*hsing-ming* (刑名) school’, in such manner that it might be supposed to be that of the Dialecticians” (See Creel, 1970, p. 85, note 37); I would argue on this basis and on references to King Wen as a supporter of *xingming* in the *Hanshu*, that the binomial applied to a non-“Legalist” context, though uncommon, seems to have been evenly understood at least until Han times as referring to a shared underneath conceptual unit, and not expressing any “altered signification” in respect to “Legalist” thought as supported by Makeham (Makeham, 1990-91, p. 92). I also agree with Creel about the misuse of 刑 and 形 as perfectly interchangeable synonyms, and I find his rendering of ‘*xing*’ as ‘performance’ suitable though with a reservation, in the sense that “*Hsing-ming* is to use *ming* to demand *shih* [..]so that title (*ming*) and actual performance (*shih*) guarantee each other” (*id.*, pp. 82-83; see also p. 104), though as Makeham points out (Makeham, 1990-91, pp. 93-94, 106), it sounds far too simplistic to plainly juxtapose *hsing-ming* and *ming-shih* considering them equivalent (*id.*, p. 82). *Shih* form a certain point of view finds its correspondent of the polar duality in which it is involved in *hsing*, in the sense that names have to fit and to mean the corresponding actualities they do effectively name. Accordingly, titles

jia”: 「夫刑名之家，皆曰『白馬非馬』也。已如白馬實馬，乃使有白馬之為也。」， as if it was already part of a well-established *corpus* of literary *topoi* typically associated par excellence to the Logicians circle³⁶⁵. We must recall here that scholars doubts the historicity of the figure of Su Qin³⁶⁶, but anyway it doesn't really matter if

have to correspond to their actual particular incarnation in a determined person, who has the duty to perform them properly, externalizing through demeanour one's personal interpretation of the semantic universe evoked by their title; an attitude that has to be testified by unimpeachable actions, necessarily consistent – at least, on the ideal side - with ritual norms prescribed since antiquity. As Hu Shi states, “to rectify names is not to go back to their ideal meanings, nor to use names so ‘judiciously’ as always to imply ethical judgement[...], but to name things according to their actual individual characteristics” (Hu Shi, 1963, p. 127). In brief, following Makeham, deeds must match words, and in particular “*ming* does not refer to office but to the claim to possess a certain ability or competence” (Makeham, *id.*, pp. 96-97): “as regard the binding power of the verbal claim, this stems from its being a ‘performative utterance’” (*Id.*, p. 109). In this sense, Creel's assumption that *xingming* “was the practice of comparing an officer's title with his performance to determine whether they corresponded” (*id.*, p. 86) seems to fit perfectly in some specific cases, and is supported also by Kidder Smith (2003, p. 143); yet interpreting *xingming* **exclusively** as ‘performance and title’ as a criterion for assigning office and evaluating officials, as a “technique for personnel control” (*id.*, p. 91) is definitely too reductive and substantially mistaken. See Creel, *id.*, p. 85, Makeham's criticism (*id.*, pp. 96-97) and also Lau's review of Creel's work, who proved the latter's philological analysis at the basis of the “performance” interpretation to be somewhat faulty or at least lacking (Lau, 1973, pp. 122-123).

About *xing*, John Major already provided us with an accurate phonologic and etymologic analysis, based mainly on Karlgren's *Grammata Serica Recensa* (GSR in the quotation, N/A): “*Hsing* 刑 consists of *ching* 井 ‘well’ (GSR #819, **tsieng*) as phonetic, plus ‘knife’. It is phonetically identical to *hsing* 形. The usual meaning of *hsing* 刑 is ‘punishment’. [...] a secondary set of meanings for *hsing* involves the concept of criminal law in general, producing ‘model’, ‘imitate’, ‘behaviour’. (it is this last meaning that is stressed by Creel, 1970).” (Major, 1987, p. 282); this analysis can be further completed by Makeham's: “the ancestral form of *hsing* 刑 was *ching* 井, which, in bronze inscriptions, has as one of its basic meanings ‘law/pattern/standard/model’. [...] the *hsing* 形 graph [...] until some time in the Eastern Han did not exist and for this reason was always represented by *hsing* 刑.” (Makeham, *id.*, p. 102). Roger Ames, while analyzing occurrences of the binomial in the *Guanzi* and in the *Hanfeizi*, interprets “the political application of this ‘name and form’ abstraction as ‘accountability’[...]” (Ames, 1994, p. 47); let's have a closer look at his translation of a passage taken from *Hanfeizi* ch. 30, which quotes: “Those in high offices are promoted on the basis of name; when he [the sage N/A] is unsure about the name, he returns to check the performance. He matches performance against name and uses the results.[...]”. The correspondence between names and actual performance as a binding prerequisite of a sincere official devoted to his superior and as an evaluation standard is clearly expressed, yet nothing new, as Confucius had already advocated the same principles and values centuries before (on the pragmatism aspect of *zhengming* and its application to a socio-political context, see Levi, 1993). As far as the term “accountability” is concerned, I do not see any need for introducing a new technical term in the specific case: in my opinion, we are facing here a clear example of *zhengming tout court* as expressed in *Lunyu* 12.11, even if applied to a “legalist” context; this evidence seems to me just to testify the well-known fact that the urgent need for *zhengming* was a shared primary issue in most thinkers' agenda, regardless of their specific political and philosophical orientation. About the possibility of *xingming* as a contraction of *xingjia* 刑家 (= *fajia* 法家) and *mingjia* 名家, proposed by the Western Jin commentator Jin Zhuo 晉灼 (*fl.* ca. A.D. 208), I find it untenable because deeply indebted to Han literary categories, as we have already seen that the term *jia* meant anything but “school” before the Han (Makeham, 1990-91, p. 92).

³⁶⁵The term *xingming* 刑名 is used also by the commentator Zhang Zhan 張湛 in a note to the *Liezi Zhongni* chapter, while talking about Gongsun Long's non-conventional attitude and tendency to subvert teachings of established organized schools (*Ru* and *Mo*), to none of which he chose to belong. (See *Liezi zhu* 列子註, 1960).

³⁶⁶See Pokora, 1973, pp. 51-51 note 5, and Maspero, 1925.

we assume Su Qin was a historical figure or not³⁶⁷, or if it was he or somebody else instead to have pronounced these words: what really matters here is the fact that the paradox was given for granted, as ascertained topic for discussion, typical of a certain grouping of people sharing a common interest for language jokes, but not necessarily – and what’s most important, not exclusively – an intellectual property of Gongsun Long.

Liu Xiang’s *Bie lu* 別錄 quotes: 「公孫龍持白馬之論以度關。」³⁶⁸ and a fragment from Huan Tan 桓潭’s lost *Xin Lun* 新論 preserved in the *Baishi liu tie* 白氏六帖 quotes: 「公孫龍常爭論曰白馬非馬，人不能屈。后乘白馬，無符傳，欲出關，關史不聽。」³⁶⁹. The episode is reported also in *Lüshi Chunqiu Yinci*, commented by Gao You.

Here is a small table to sum up the versions in which it is Gongsun Long the horseman described in the anecdote:

Liu Xiang 劉向 (77-6 BC)	<i>Bie Lu</i> 別錄
Huan Tan 桓潭 (23 BC-50 AD)	<i>Xin Lun</i> 新論
Gao You 高誘 (fl. 205-212)	<i>Lüshi Chunqiu zhu</i> 呂氏春秋注
Luo Zhenyu 羅振玉 (1866-1940)	<i>Guji congcan Tang xie ben yu gu leishu di yi zhong</i> 古籍叢殘唐寫本古類書第一種

³⁶⁷ Reding considered this passage as a later interpolation; see *Id.*, 1985, note 44, p. 470.

³⁶⁸ Liu Xiang 劉向, 1965, *juan* 38/6b, p. 338; alike in the *Chuxue ji* 初學記 (Yang Jinguang, 1991, p. 140).

³⁶⁹ See Pang Pu, 1989, p. 7 and Xu Fuguan, 1982, p. 14; an interesting translation and study of fragments and anecdotes supposed to come from the *Xin Lun* has been accomplished by Timotheus Pokora, herein two anecdotes and a quotation on Gongsun Long are included, the one coming from the *Taiping Yulan* discussed at pp. 89-90 and the episode just quoted here about Gongsun Long insisting in crossing the gate without paying taxes, resorting to the white-horse-not-horse argument (Pokora, 1975, p. 124): “Kung-sun Lung often argued thus: “A white horse is not a horse”. People could not agree with this. Later, when riding a white horse, he wished to pass through the frontier pass without a warrant or a passport. But the frontier official would not accept his explanations, for it is hard for empty words to defeat reality”. An alternative translation is Harbsmeier’s: “Kungsun Lung kept arguing that a white horse was not a horse, but people would not agree with him. After this he rode a white horse and wanted to pass a customs point without a licence (enabling him to take a horse out). The custom official was unable to understand him [...]. This goes to show that empty words have a hard time removing facts.” (Harbsmeier, 1998, p 303).

Actually, in *Hanfeizi Wai chushuo zuoshang* 韓非子外儲說左上 ch. 32 the episode has Ni Yue³⁷⁰ as protagonist:

兒說，宋人，善辯者也。持白馬非馬也服齊稷下之辯者，乘白馬而過關，則顧白馬之賦。故籍之虛辭則能勝一國，考實按形不能謾於一人。³⁷¹

Ni Yüeh was a skilful dialectician among the Sung. Maintaining the argument that “the white horse is not the horse”, he overcame the debaters beneath the Grain Gate of the capital of Ch’i³⁷². Once when he rode a white horse and came to a pass, he had to pay the horse-tax³⁷³ for the white horse. Thus on playing with empty terms, he could triumph over the whole country, but on investigating facts and examining features he could not deceive anybody.³⁷⁴

³⁷⁰ Ni Yue, described as a skilful debater of the Jixia Academy in the *Hanfeizi*, is quoted also in the *Huainanzi Shuoshanxun* 淮南子·說山訓 ch. 16 and *Renjianxun* 人間訓 ch. 18 (*Huainan honglie jijie – shang xia ce* 淮南鴻烈集解·上下冊, 1989, respectively at p. 527 and pp. 618-619), in the *Lüshi Chunqiu Junshou pian* 呂氏春秋·君守篇 ch. 17.2.2 (Knoblock and Riegel, 2000, p. 217) and in the *Lun Heng Shizhi pian* 論衡·實知篇 *juan* 26 (*Lun Heng jiaoshi* 論衡校釋, 1990, pp. 1084-1085); in the first two sources he is followed by a host of disciples and in all these anecdotes he is actively involved in the debate of another paradox (*tuan jie we bu jie* 團結無不解); finally, he appears briefly in a line of the *Wenxuan di liu ce lun wu lianzhu – Lu Shiheng yanlianzhu wu shi shou* 文選第六冊論五連珠·陸士衡演連珠五十首, mentioned together with Hui Shi (*Wenxuan*, 1986, p. 2391). For a survey on the character see Liu Weihua 刘蔚华 and Miao Runtian 苗潤田, 1992, pp. 228-234. Guo Moruo 郭沫若 tried to demonstrate that Ni Yue and Mao Bian 貌辯 were one and the same person, providing that Mao Bian’s name in certain sources is written 昆辯 (Kun Bian): 昆 would be a mistake for 兒, similarity between 兒 and 兒 would be self evident, and finally 兒 would have been either mistaken for 昆, or changed into 貌 (See Guo Moruo, 1996, pp. 267-269; see also Reding, 1985, note 50, p. 471). I personally don’t find this explanation philologically sound and convincing but rather confused, as Liu and Miao also do (see *Id.*, p. 229). Also Kou Pao-koh quotes Guo Moruo’s hypothesis without giving to much weight to it: as he conveniently points out, what is really important here is not so much if we can identify Ni Yue as Mao Bian, but the fact that the “White Horse” was an argument for discussion already established, well-know and used also by other persuaders than Gongsun Long, possibly even before the latter became worldwide famous for his exposition of the paradox. See Kou, 1953, p. 110.

³⁷¹ *Hanfeizi jijie* 韓非子集解, 1998, p. 269.

³⁷² The famous Jixia Academy.

³⁷³ Reding specifies that horses were taxed because they were considered sacrificial animal (*Id.*, 1985, p. 479). See note 358 of the present study.

³⁷⁴ W. K. Liao, 1959, pp. 37-38. Check also Christoph Harbsmeier’s (partial) translation of the anecdote (*Id.*, 1989, p. 152) and Jean Levi’s French translation: “Ni Yue était un sophiste du Song particulièrement habile, il avait réussi à clore le bec à tous les philosophes de l’Académie Ki-hsia du Ts’ien démontrant qu’un cheval blanc n’est pas un cheval. Lorsque, monté sur un cheval blanc, il voulut passer la frontière, force lui fut d’aquitter au douanier les droits sur les cheveux. Tan qu’il rest sur le plan du discours, un rhéteur peut triompher de tout un pays; sitôt qu’il se trouve confronté à l’épreuve du réel il ne trompe plus personne.” (Levi, 1999, pp. 319-320).

This anecdote casts serious doubts on Gongsun Long's paternity of the White Horse argument, but also on the concrete possibility of identifying the real "original argument" – or better say an "original argument".

Actually, Gongsun Long himself was apparently more earnest than the later tradition: he is explicitly reported declaring to be **famous because of** the "White Horse" argument³⁷⁵, but never dared to claim himself to be its inventor, merely its most famous debater (!), as we can see in *Gongsun Longzi Jifu* ch. 1, where Gongsun Long is described while discussing the topic with Kong Chuan 孔穿 and later on with Zou Yan 鄒衍 at the court of Zhao Sheng 趙勝, Prince of Pingyuan 平原.

What we are dealing with here is clearly a topic for discussion, or better say "a "persuader's trope"³⁷⁶: a famous – or at least well known, and immediately recognizable as such to contemporaries - argumentative example which seemingly was not an exclusive of Gongsun Long himself, not even of the so-called Logicians. It was a wide-spread theme of common use in a certain kind of dialectical skirmishes and employed by a distinctive circle of persuaders, a flashy sentence probably derived from a shared cultural lore of anecdotes which was meant to be shocking or challenging enough to arise the public's interest in order to gain attention, and starting from which it was possible to build a whole structured argument. Gongsun Long himself didn't invent anything, he was a persuader who apparently drew from this cradle cauldron of examples, picking out the "white horse" one, finding it particularly congenial to his argumentative skills and techniques, enough to turn it into his forte.

³⁷⁵ "For nobody can really deny that Gongsun Long has made his name because of his well-known thesis 'White Horse Is Not Horse' (*Baima Fei Ma*).” (Cheng Chung-ying, 2007, p.463).

³⁷⁶ Crump, 1964, p. 39, 45, 62.

3.1.1 *Baima Lun*: structure and content

The *Baima Lun* has ever since bewildered scholars East and West; many attempts have been undertaken in order to provide a clear-cut logic account and explanation of the arguments discussed, and to unravel the reasoning of the puzzling paradox which gives name to this chapter.

The whole argument is about the claim that a white horse would be no horse, evidently discussed from two different points of view: that of the persuader, who is talking about the compound term “white horse” and playing on its double possible interpretation as a linguistic item or as a concrete object, and the opponent, who is talking of real horses and applying the law of inference deducing that a white horse necessarily is a horse.

The *Baima Lun* has a dialogical form and consists of seven question-and-answer exchanges³⁷⁷ between an opponent representing a commonsensical point of view and a persuader who supports an intriguing paradoxical interpretation of what was a commonly accepted truth, an acknowledged example in the Mohist Canons demonstration of the law of inference³⁷⁸, fact that predictably charges the argument of even a greater power of attraction because of this irreverent choice and subversive reading of the topic³⁷⁹.

The opponent poses questions and formulates counterarguments to the persuader’s argumentations and answers, though he gets stuck in the persuader’s web, an exemplary use of the argumentative technique of “induction”: “asking questions of

³⁷⁷ See Graham, 1986a, p. 169.

³⁷⁸ See these two quotations from the Mohist *Xiao Qu* 小取, respectively n. 14 and n. 17: 「白馬，馬也；乘白馬，乘馬也。驪馬，馬也；乘驪馬，乘馬也。」 “A white horse is a horse. To ride a white horse is to ride horses. A black horse is a horse. To ride a black horse is to ride horses.” 「乘馬不待周乘馬然後為乘馬也，有乘於馬因為乘馬矣。逮至不乘馬，待周不乘馬而後不乘馬。」 “ ‘He rides horses’ does not require him to ride all horses without exception before being deemed to ride horses: he rides some horses, and by this criterion is deemed to ride horses. On the other hand ‘He does not ride horses’ does require that he rides no horses at all; only then is he deemed not to ride horses.” (Graham, 1978, pp. 485, 491; for the Chinese text, see also Jin Shoushen, 1922, p. 5).

³⁷⁹ “We also assume that he has not departed so radically from ordinary use that his thesis loses its paradoxical relevance – that is, the belief must be one that is related enough to ordinary assertions to make it really puzzling and not just ‘entertainment’.” (Hansen, 2007, p. 477).

one's opponent, to lead him to agree to certain premises, after which one's argument becomes almost irrefutable".³⁸⁰

These seven give-and takes can be divided in five argumentative blocks³⁸¹, each comprehending one or more question-and-answer scheme, except for the last one that reports the persuader's final argumentation; the main topics discussed in each block are the following³⁸² (in brackets the number of the corresponding exchanges as found in the translation in paragraph 3.3 (pp. 126-137):

1. (1-2) What denotes shape is not the same as what denotes color
2. (3) Seeking white horse is not the same as seeking horse
3. (4) A horse with a specified color is no more just "horse"
4. (5-6) Equating horse with a certain color and horse would lead to the indiscernibility of horses of different colors
5. (7) A horse which picks out a color is not the same of a horse which doesn't pick out a color

Wang Guan correctly understands the whole main argument as an example of conditional syllogism³⁸³:

Major premise (*da qianti* 大前提) :

「命色者非命形也。」

Minor premise (*xiao qianti* 小前提) :

「馬者所以命形也。白者所以命色也。」

Conclusion (*duan'an* 斷案):

「故白馬非馬。」

In fact, if we assume that the whole White Horse dialogue plays on the application of *modus ponens* argumentative form, then we should reformulate the conditional syllogism in this terms:

³⁸⁰ Goldin, 1993, p. 15.

³⁸¹ Mou, 2007a, pp. 495-497.

³⁸² The summary is a revised version of Cheng Chung-ying's (1997, pp. 150-151).

³⁸³ Wang Guan, 1992, p. 18.

If a white horse is not a horse, then what denotes the shape is not what denotes the color
“horse” denotes the shape, while “white” denotes the color³⁸⁴

Therefore a white horse is not a horse

The objector then goes on answering by reverting the argument using the *modus tollens* device³⁸⁵, as we will see afterwards in the translation.

As Harbsmeier points out, “the ancient Chinese language [...] makes the sentence *bai ma fei ma* ambiguous between two interpretations: (a) A white horse is not a horse, and (b) ‘White horse’ is not (the same as) ‘horse’³⁸⁶. While the opponent would be furiously attacking the statement on interpretation (a) Gongsun Long would quietly persist in defending his statement under the interpretation (b)³⁸⁷. The opponent accuses the persuader of denying what is an incontrovertible fact testified by phenomenological experience – that is, that a white horse is a horse. But from the persuader’s words it is clear that he is not negating the obvious fact that a white horse is a horse; on the contrary, he himself at a certain point candidly admits and reinforces the statement that of course a (physical) white horse is a horse, and that all real horses need to have colors to be (real) horses. The persuader is just claiming that calling a white horse simply “horse” is improper because a white horse and whatever horse are not exactly the same thing, therefore their names are not perfectly interchangeable. As Zhou Yunzhi 周云之

³⁸⁴ In fact, for the persuader what denotes the shape is not what denotes the color.

³⁸⁵ See Harbsmeier, 1998, p. 305.

³⁸⁶ As Graham also remarked, “the sophist [...] allow that horses of all colours answer to the name ‘horse’, but it does not follow for him that a white horse is a horse unless their names are interchangeable.” (*Id.*, 1986a, p. 190).

³⁸⁷ Harbsmeier, 1989, p. 152). See Thompson, 1995, pp. 482-483 and Vierheller’s distinction between object-language (“the one used to speak about the world of objects”) and meta-language (“designating the set of properties the underlying concept implies”) (Vierheller, 1993; quotations at page 182). Actually, both arguments can be considered valid if considered in their respective field of reference; the persuader is talking on a linguistic level while the opponent on a concrete level : 公孫龍是從「名」上言白馬非馬，而難者則自「實」上言白馬是馬。(Cheng Guimiao, 1975, p. 15). See also Zhou Changzhong, 1991, pp. 72-75.

points out³⁸⁸, it is not a matter of having or not having color, but of having a specific color or having any possible color.³⁸⁹

In fact, in we reason in terms of concepts of “intension” (connotation, *neihan* 內涵) and “extension” (denotation, *waiyan* 外延), from the point of view of “intension” *baima* is richer in meaning, while from the point of view of “extension” *ma* has a broader scope.³⁹⁰ Therefore it is not possible to call *ma* a *baima*, since their intension and extension are different³⁹¹: “all names represent distinct entities and therefore are not identical in reference.”³⁹²

Also from a semiotic point of view, as Chang Han-liang remarks³⁹³, “if one follows de Man’s advice to read the sentence ‘literally’ (i.e., semiotically rather than semantically), then the statement is correct because white horse contains two signifiers and two signified, or, in Peircian terms, a qualisign plus a sinsign.”

What his opponent doesn’t get is, Gongsun Long is not subverting reality, he is just playing with language, talking in meta-language: his whole argumentation is about what can be said and made logically unassailable though absolutely contrary to commonsensical laws of inference and physical evidence in the real world. Substantially, what he wants to convey – and somehow criticise – is the fact that we can say almost anything and make it theoretically admissible though our words do not match reality! Therefore it is implied a need for *zhengming*: a revision of all appellations in order to make them fit their corresponding reality would be required, a urging task and quest for clarity that in the *Gongsun Longzi* finds its more accomplished expression in the *Mingshi Lun*: “this” must be called only by “this” name and “that” must be named with one and only name, “that”. The persuader in the dialogue seems to be fully aware of the implicit danger in the misuse of language, but there is also a cunning taste in the fact that if you don’t achieve a thorough comprehension and master

³⁸⁸ 并不是有色与无色的区别，而是一色与各色的区别。(Zhou Yunzhi, 1994, p. 64; see also pp. 60-66, 126).

³⁸⁹ Which means comprising in itself all possible colors, and entailing the possibility of expressing any of all these possible colors a particular thing – in this case a horse – can have.

³⁹⁰ Chen Xianyou, 1990, p. 5; Xu Fuguan 徐復觀, 1982, p. 8.

³⁹¹ Hu Quyuan and Chen Jinkun, 1987, pp. 7, 25.

³⁹² Cheng 1983, p. 349

³⁹³ Chang Han-liang, 1998, p. 12. Again still following a semiotic approach, “ ‘horse’ (without color) can exist no more than a pure concept, or a sign without any referent; but a white horse can be a particular object. So the signs ‘white’ and ‘horse’ put together can refer to a material object. Yet Gongsun Longzi reminds the inquirer that ‘white’ and ‘horse’ are separate, remaining two distinct signs.” (Chan Chi-ching, 1998, p. 35). See also Andrš, 1998.

a deep knowledge of the use of names³⁹⁴ and of what their scope and reference should be (or, better say, are meant and understood to be), in brief if you don't master names than you shall perish by the names, like the opponent that is fooled and outtalked in the *Baima*. If you master names you can win people, that is the shrewd outer pragmatic aspect of Gongsun Long's thought, so conceived in order to make it appealing and fascinating in sovereigns' and rulers' eyes; still the underneath goal is higher. What Gongsun Long is saying on the one side is "you see, I can make words signify what I want, I can make people be stunned by my reasoning and therefore there's nothing I can't obtain by only means of words, though deceptive and misleading". On the other side, he is more subtly conveying the feeling that there's something rotten in all this circus going on. Actually, the loose unrestricted usage of all these cunning words is a symptom of the moral corruption of contemporary society, where prevarication and deceit are tolerated and even admitted as long as they are effective, and traditional relationships and socio-political roles are subverted.

Fundamentally both the philosopher's (白馬非馬) and the opponent's (白馬馬也) thesis are true in their respective speculative sphere: while the philosopher is talking about what can be potentially said in abstract talking – that is, he is talking on a pure conceptual level - the opponent is speaking in concrete terms, as if there were a real horse made of flesh and bones and ready to be ridden in the very same place where the debate is taking place.³⁹⁵ White horses of course are horses in the real world, but at the same time we cannot deny that "white horse" somehow differ from the generic utterance "horse", which cannot give expression to the particular restricted color that "white horse" needs to express.

Moreover, for the persuader his opponent's thesis would be unsustainable anyway because in that case different actualities would correspond to the name *ma*, while the relationship *ming-shi* must and can be only unambiguous and exclusive.³⁹⁶

This text has been variously and colorfully interpreted in innumerable different ways, just to quote some of the most eminent examples it has been read by Graham as an argument about whole and part³⁹⁷; by Chad Hansen as a case of mass noun *versus*

³⁹⁴ "Le langage correct est synonyme d'une maîtrise [...] de la réalité [...]" (Reding, 1985, p. 492).

³⁹⁵ See also Zhou Changzhong, 1991, p. 72-75, 82; Chen Guimiao, pp. 14-16.

³⁹⁶ Chen Guimiao, 1975, p. 39.

³⁹⁷ Graham, 1986 and 1986a, which includes a reelaboration of the former.

mass product in his highly controversial mass-noun theory³⁹⁸; by Feng Youlan³⁹⁹ and Cheng Chung-ying⁴⁰⁰ in terms of abstract universals or by Chmielewski applying set theory⁴⁰¹. I will not dwell on an extensive summary and detailed explanation of the main interpretative trends⁴⁰² arisen around and about the *Baima* content, as my aim is not as much to criticize others, but to express my own point of view and possibly give a personal contribution and new insights useful for improving a further understanding of this fascinating text.

However, spending a few words on Chad Hansen's so highly controversial mass-noun hypothesis is unavoidable. The mass-noun hypothesis is based on Hansen's assumption that Classical Chinese nouns should work in general principle as mass nouns rather than as Indo-European count nouns. Thus all nouns should be "singular terms naming 'stuff'"⁴⁰³ scattered through space and time.

Moreover, working on the Mohist Canons, he postulates individual corporeal stuffs *ti* 體 and compounds of this stuffs *jian* 兼, and distinguishes two possible ways in which stuffs of different kind can be combined in a compound according to their very nature: mass sum and mass product. A mass sum is the sum of two corporeal *ti*, the result of which is the union of the two stuffs that do not compenetrates each other in the final resulting compound; a mass product is the intersection of two incorporeal stuffs, which cannot be properly called *ti*, and interpenetrate each other.⁴⁰⁴ According to him, the persuader in the *Baima Lun* would be applying the mass sum procedure to the compound *baima*.

First of all, on the linguistic level evidence that *ma* was ever considered as a mass noun are very scarce, since the use of proto-classifiers in pre-Qin Chinese – even if not systematic nor common – proves on the contrary that horses were definitely counted, using the classifier *pi* 匹 for individual horses⁴⁰⁵ and *si* 駟 or *sheng* 乘 for team

³⁹⁸ Hansen, 1976 and 1983.

³⁹⁹ Feng Youlan, 1952.

⁴⁰⁰ Cheng Chung-ying, 1983 and 2007a.

⁴⁰¹ See Chmielewski's articles published in the time span between 1962 and 1969 in the Polish review *Rocznik Orientalistyczny*.

⁴⁰² Such a survey can be found in Fung Yiu-ming, 2007, who provides also a summary of Hu Shi's interpretation.

⁴⁰³ Hansen, 1983, p. 148.

⁴⁰⁴ See Hansen, 1976, pp. 191-198 and 1983, in particular pp. 30-37, 148-171.

⁴⁰⁵ "There are five cases of *pi* with a numeral and *ma* 'horse', all in the *Zuo zhuan*, four of which being in the same passage (chapter *zhao* 6)." (Peyraube, 1998, p. 49; see also Harbsmeier, 1989, p. 158 and 1998,

of four horses⁴⁰⁶. Dan Robins suggests that classical Chinese nouns would be free to work whether as count nouns or as mass nouns depending on the context in which they are used⁴⁰⁷, and especially on the classifier they occur with⁴⁰⁸. This opinion is not shared by Harbsmeier, who at the same time seems to contradict himself in part, as he cannot deny the ambiguity characteristic of many classical Chinese nouns⁴⁰⁹ and is even forced to acknowledge at least one occurrence in the *Zhouli* 周禮 where “*ma* is indeed used generically”⁴¹⁰. However, Robins himself states that “when an adjective forces individuation on a noun, normally that noun functions as a count noun”⁴¹¹, fact that by nature would lead us to consider “white horse”’s “horse” as a count noun.

We can conclude there is no need nor valid and convincing proof for the sustainability of a mass-noun hypothesis applied to the interpretation of the *Baima Lun* in particular - and of Classical Chinese texts and thought in general. In particular, I don’t think Gongsun Long here is summing white-stuff and horse-stuff, but rather that the process of his reasonings resembles more polynomial decomposition, decomposing “white horse” in its basic component terms, “horse-like shape” and “white color”: 白馬 = 白色 + 馬形. The opponent considers the persuader guilty of ignoring the fundamental issue that the reference of individual terms uncombined must necessarily change accordingly to their new condition when they happen to be combined⁴¹².

Finally, I would like to add a few more words about the possibility of considering the whole *Baima Lun* as an example of analogical reasoning. I think the formal construction of the argument is much more complex and structured than it might

p. 315). There would be also one occurrence of *pi* in pre-nominal position in the *Mengzi* but its meaning is quite controversial. (Peyraube, 1998, p. 63, note 22).

⁴⁰⁶ Wang Lianqing, 1994, in particular see chapter III. See also Robins, 2000, p. 157.

⁴⁰⁷ In fact also Boltz opts for a “neutral charge” of Classical Chinese nouns in respect of the count noun/mass noun classification. (See Boltz, 1985, pp. 309-310).

⁴⁰⁸ “When a noun occurs with a classifier, it divides its reference according to a principle of individuation that is associated with the classifier, and not one that is associated with the noun. Thus, even though the noun’s reference is divided, the noun itself functions as a mass noun.” (Robins, 2000, p. 157; see also pp. 170-171).

⁴⁰⁹ It seems here Harbsmeier stubbornly denies the possibility of *ma* behaving ambiguously more to contradict Hansen out of sheer pig-headedness than to support a coherent opinion based on evidence. Otherwise it is not clear why he first agrees (1989, p. 160) and then against evidence refuses (1998, p. 317, 319) to understand the expression *liu ma* 六馬 occurring in the *Zhouli* 周禮 as “the six kinds of horses”, which is indeed the most plausible meaning in this case. See Yang Tianyu 杨天宇, 2004, p. 472 (section *Xiaguan sima di si - jiaoren* 夏官司馬第四·校人).

⁴¹⁰ See note 395; Harbsmeier, 1998, p. 319.

⁴¹¹ Robins, 2000, p. 180.

⁴¹² See also Harbsmeier, 1998, p. 308.

seem at a superficial look, and the reasoning is more sound than what would be the result of an analogical reasoning process; though both argumentative techniques share a common aspect in not ensuring the truth of the proposition in question but merely confirming its formal validity⁴¹³, this is not enough to support Reding's hypothesis of a *Baima Lun* that could be "read as one single, although very intricate, argumentative analogy"⁴¹⁴, which is rather the case in most persuading scenes - even involving the character of Gongsun Long himself - described by Masters' Literature. In fact, if we hypothetically admit just for a moment that the whole *Baima* is an example of analogical reasoning, then the question is what this supposed analogy would stand for⁴¹⁵: actually there is not even the slightest proof of an attempt of accomplished analogy-making, unless we suppose the corresponding term of this equation is missing⁴¹⁶ and that it was a sort of prelude preceding the part of text where the "White Horse" argument is developed that went lost. Of course we can speculate endlessly on what a possible parallel term could be suitable for substituting by analogy the "White Horse" example, though we have no evidence this was the author(s)'s intentions and, as our only source is the *Gongsun Longzi* as we know it, I am quite confident in rejecting this interpretation, opting for a reading of the "white horse" as topic of discussion or persuader's trope instead.

Though there is no explicit coherent exposition of an articulated structured theory in the *Gongsun Longzi*, no systematic treatment on a speculative level of the technical terminology involved and concerned, we can deduce that conceptually **qualities** (*shuxing* 屬性)⁴¹⁷ operate as concrete universals⁴¹⁸ and can be predicated of

⁴¹³ "An analogy cannot prove the truth of an argument. It can only show its formal validity. Any inference, to be correct, has to fulfil two conditions: its premises must be true, and the argument must be formally valid. Argumentative analogies only prove formal validity[...]" (Reding, 1986a, p. 48).

⁴¹⁴ Reding, *Id.*, p. 49.

⁴¹⁵ For an excellent treatment of the structure and procedure of analogical reasoning see Volkov. 1992.

⁴¹⁶ Usually in traditional classical literature the two terms involved in a process of analogical reasoning - if not explicit - are quite easily detectable from veiled allusions in the text; the persuader in question wants them to be understandable because his goal in most cases is imparting an ethical teaching or conveying a fundamental meaning: there's no point in keeping this interrelation obscure.

⁴¹⁷ Fung Yiu-ming remarks that, as far as the *Gongsun Longzi* is concerned, only simple terms are used to mean abstract entities (Fung Yiu-ming, 2007, p. 532); I do agree with him, though I interpret what he calls "abstract entities" in terms of "concrete universals" (See note below).

⁴¹⁸ "The intuitive idea of a concrete universal for a property is that it is in an object that has the property and has it in such a universal sense that all other objects with the property resemble or participate in that paradigmatic or archetypal instance." (Ellerman, 1988, pp. 415-416). The term "concrete universal" was first employed by Hegel, who discussed it in many of his writings as it is a cardinal concept in his thought; however, it is possible to find a more extensive treatment of this issue at the beginning of the

shi 實(actualities, *wu* 物 in action) in a way somewhat similar to Aristotelian categories⁴¹⁹.

Moreover, there happens to be also a fundamental difference between qualities⁴²⁰: color belongs to a kind of qualities that I would call “accidental”, which seems to pertain to perceptive qualities⁴²¹: as long as they qualify some thing they are also necessary, although we could admit, following a theoretical line of thought, that a horse without color (which, of course, in the real world is not possible) would still nevertheless be recognizable as a horse. On the contrary, it is the horse-like shape that makes a horse look like, be like and fundamentally **be** a horse. I think we all agree with Gongsun Long that a colorless horse (like a Murano glass transparent horse) would still be a horse in our eyes, while if we paint it black, blue or white, this doesn’t change it into a pig by magic: it’s still a horse. Therefore, I would distinguish shape as a quality belonging to a different kind of “structural” qualities, to be considered on an ontologic level different from⁴²² - and more essential⁴²³ than - the quality of color (or smell, or

second volume of the *Science of Logic*, dedicated to the Doctrine of the Notion. (Hegel, 2002, pp. 599-844; see in particular Section One - Subjectivity, Chapter 1 “The Notion”, pp. 599-622). Gongsun Long’s *shuxing* seem to share with Hegel’s concrete universal the same self-determining and self-defining activity of a unity that thinks itself, at the same time negating this very identity with itself by encompassing also the particularity, the possibility of all the exterior concrete manifestations in which it can appear enacted and embodied in reality. The only explicit formulation of this standpoint in the *Gongsun Longzi* can be found in the *Jianbai Lun*, where *jian* 堅 and *bai* 白 are not only preserved in the stone (the particular) but are also somehow preserved in themselves: 「有自藏也，非藏而藏也」. (See pp. 66-69 of the present study; Chinese full-text can be found at pp. 182-183). However, I’m conscious that this chapter is partially corrupted and thus cannot be considered an ultimate proof of the underlying line of thought which runs through this collection of texts, and might not necessarily reflect what was the original meaning of the composer of the *Gongsun Longzi*, especially if we consider each chapter as an individual unit. On the other hand, it is also true that the *Gongsun Longzi* is an edited version of these original individual texts, that might be the product of a systematizing intent whose effect are produced by the speculative efforts of editors and compilers through the ages, who might have desired to make it look more coherent by making concepts unexplained or unsaid explicit – or at least what they thought these concepts were - in the so-called original chapters). Moreover, as we have already seen (pp. 67-69), the “hard and white” non pervasiveness/pervasiveness argument is probably older, and in any case discussed not only in the *Gongsun Longzi*; it is a topic for discussion in its own right that reflects what was probably a major concern of its age. Eventually, I would just underline the fact that an interpretation in these terms is coherent also with the *Baima* content, and that even if a definition hinting explicitly to universals is nowhere provided in this text, we are still allowed to try to deduce at least what seems to be the logical functioning of these “qualities” on a theoretical – possibly even unaware - level.

⁴¹⁹ As Reding points out, “Aristotelian categories thus turn out to be types of predicate”. (See *Id.*, 1986, p. 358).

⁴²⁰ See Acton, 1936, pp. 424-425.

⁴²¹ Phenomenological qualities that can be perceived through senses; see also Cheng Chung-ying, 1997, pp. 159-160.

⁴²² See Zhou Changzhong, 1991, pp. 24-26. Im Manyul on the contrary strongly remarks the opinion that both color and shape “exist on the same level of abstraction” (see Im, 2007, p 171-172; quotation at page 172), and opposes any attempt of interpretation in terms of universals. I would like to stress here once

texture, or whatever else we can consider “accidental”)⁴²⁴. Following Cheng Chung-ying’s interpretation⁴²⁵, shape and color should be different kind of qualities of different and graded importance, as we have already pointed out, but he specifies also that they are perceivable at the same time⁴²⁶. In fact, we can agree that shape can be perceived through various senses: the sensory moment of a quality therefore coincides with that of shape, which can share the same sensory medium⁴²⁷. This important intuition would explain one of the dubious passages in the *Baima Lun*: at the end of the text, in the fifth block, the opponent (7) distinguishes two positions, 1) *li bai* 離白 and 2) *bu li* 不離, ascribing the second one to the persuader:

(7)曰:有白馬不可謂無馬者,離白之謂也。[SF是⁴²⁸/DZ不]離者,有白馬不可謂有馬也

more that the kind of universals I’m talking of are not Platonic universals, but concrete universals, and that I’m not accountable here of what the author of the text thinks all things – concrete and abstract - are, but only of the functioning of attributes (that is shape, color, etc.) that qualify things making them what they are.

⁴²³ Actually, as Mary Garrett points out, “knowledge tended to be regarded as a sequence of progressive acts of perception”, starting with “pattern recognition”. (Garrett, 1993, p. 114).

⁴²⁴ Graham was the first to have the intuition that “white is subordinate to horse” (*Id.*, 1986a, p. 209) and, as Harbsmeier (1998) had further elaborated, though not completely focused, “there is no symmetry between ‘white’ and ‘horse’. They are not construed as part of the same order” (p. 307) and “*pai* ‘white’ and *ma* ‘horse’ are not perceived as being of the same order” (p. 310, note 2; see also page 321); though I would rather draw a distinction between “white (color)” and “horse-like (shape)” than between “white” and “horse”. Finally, also Cheng Chung-ying recognizes a different status to different kind of qualities: “our use of language is such that some perceptual property is more stable and constant than others in comparison. For example, a horse can be white, black, yellow, and so on, and still remains in a horse shape [...]” (*Id.*, 2007a, p. 544). See also Reding: “Notons encore que la forme ‘xing’ [...] désigne une propriété inaliénable; la couleur ‘se’, par contre, une propriété indéterminée.” (Reding, 1985, p. 413).

⁴²⁵ See Cheng Chung-ying, 2007, p. 546.

⁴²⁶ “ ‘white’ and ‘horse’ are perceived to receive their meanings from perception of color and shape.” (Cheng Chung-ying, 1997, p. 155). Of course it’s not that *horse* doesn’t have any color, it’s just that horse doesn’t express any particular color so it comprises in itself the potential to express all colors.

⁴²⁷ Somebody might argue that, in considering the “white and hard stone” instead, we counted two constituent elements and not three including the stone-shape. This example involves a more complex unit than the “white horse”, because we have two qualities predicated of an only actuality. Both qualities refer to one same actuality, which therefore must be associated to both the two qualities when we decompose the actuality. As shape can be perceived at the same time as one other sensory quality, what we have in our decomposition is two different sensory moments, one tactile moment when we perceive “hard-texture” and “stone-shape” together, and one visual moment when we perceive “white-color” and “stone-shape”. Thus a “hard and white stone” should count for two, each unity further decomposable: a “hard stone” (hard-texture + stone-shape) and a “white stone” (white-color + stone-shape).

⁴²⁸ SF stand for the *Shuofu* variant, DZ for the *Daozang* variant.

- 1) *li bai* 離白: The first position, “separating white”⁴²⁹, seems to be a very simplified explanation of the law of inference supported by the opponent: “when having a white horse you can’t say you don’t have a horse”; as Graham remarks, the opponent now protest that [...] having a white horse is deemed having a horse by ‘separating off the white’.⁴³⁰ Therefore here *li bai* means affirming that if you have a white horse then you can deduce from this essential requirement that you indeed have a horse: you take away the white, and what you get – what’s left - is a horse: thus this position is called “separating white”.
- 2) *bu li* 不離: “not separating”; usually this expression represents the Mohist point of view of the mutual pervasiveness and inseparability of qualities in a single thing, such as the typical example of the “hard and white stone” (*jianbai shi*). However, in this case it describes the persuader’s position⁴³¹, who claims that you cannot deduce that a white horse is a horse⁴³², literally “when having a white horse you can’t say you have a horse”.⁴³³

If we assume that shape and color, though expressing qualities of different kind and level, still are perceived in the very same moment, then it would make sense for the persuader to be of the *bu li* position, while in the case of the “hard and white stone” as we have already seen, two different senses are involved, causing two different subsequent sensory moments⁴³⁴.

These considerations clarify why in this particular case it is the position of “not-separating (white and horse)” that is associated with the persuader, who should

⁴²⁹ I think Hansen misunderstood the passage in attributing the position *li bai* to the persuader; he was misled just by the fact that usually the two positions are inverted (see Hansen, 1983, p. 167).

⁴³⁰ Graham, 1986a, p. 206.

⁴³¹ Also according to Tan Jiefu the position “*bu li*” 不離 is held here by Gongsun Long, though he interprets “*li*” 離 as “to appear, be manifest”, and then remarks that according to the *Jianbai lun*, *bai* would be *zang*, “preserved”, latent, but not permanently perceivable at a subject’s eyes. (Tan Jiefu, 2006, p. 148)

⁴³² “ ‘White Horse is not Horse’ [...] Kung-sun Lung in fact did *anything but separate* White and Horse.” (Lai, 1997, p. 55).

⁴³³ The idea is that White Horses, ‘combining color and shape’, are in the sort, say, ‘color-shape’, while Horses, ‘described by shape only’, are in a different sort, say, ‘shape’. Because there is no combination, no ‘pervasion’ of color and shape, we have to distinguish those sorts.” (Lucas, 2005, p. 362).

⁴³⁴ See p. 68 of the present study.

normally support the contrary position, however understood with a substantially different meaning⁴³⁵. In addition to this, as we will see below, in this specific case we are confident in choosing the *Daozang* textual variant: in fact, the *Daozang* lesson not only is specular to the first part of the sentence proposing the definition of the position *li bai*, but it is more coherent for the second position would be opposite and contrary to the first one.

Graham was partially right in saying that “in Chinese philosophy things are generally conceived not as being their shapes, but as ‘having shape and colour’ (*yu hsing yu se* 有形有色). What they ‘have’ (*yu*) might in principle be either outside them or inside; but the former alternative (which in the Western tradition contracts the thing to a ‘substance’ from which the ‘attributes’ can be peeled off) has non place in pre-Han philosophy. Colour as much as shape is conceived as inside the thing [...]”⁴³⁶.

However, I would make a few adjustments to this statement: first of all, things necessarily have shape, but apart from color they can have also scent, texture etc.: saying that things are considered as only having ‘shape and color’ is reductive. Moreover, color is not a necessary quality characterizing every thing: glass and water are colorless unless we add some pigment, like certain gases which smell but are invisible. Secondly, as we have already seen when summarizing the *Jianbai Lun* content at pages 66-69, in the *Gongsun Longzi* attributes are considered at the same time particularized inside a thing and preserving their existence in themselves, so they might somehow exist **both** outside and inside: hence my interpretation in terms of concrete universals.

What actually disturbs our understanding of the “white horse” is the horse-like shape, which is not clearly identifiable as a “proper” shape, like for instance a pyramid or a sphere. Let’s make another similar example to understand how the compound term “white horse” functions in the text we are examining, for instance: “red ball”. In “red ball” we can identify a red color and sphere shape which qualify the ball. Of course the color is “accidental” (a ball can be of whatever color), while the sphere shape is

⁴³⁵ It must be underlined once more that “not-separating” here doesn’t refer to the non-pervasiveness of different qualities.

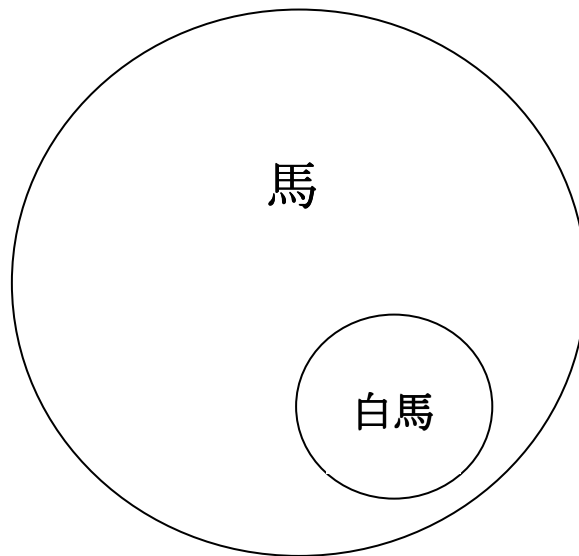
⁴³⁶ Graham, 1986, p. 100. In particular, when talking of the White Horse argument Graham clarifies that “‘a white horse is white’ affirms not that it is the part which is the colour but merely that it ‘has the colour’ (*yu se* 有色)[..]. Nor is it denied that a white horse has the shape of a horse, only that it *is* the shape. (Graham, 1986a, pp. 210-202).

necessary and sufficient condition for a ball to be a ball. Comparing it with the “white horse” we will have:

“red ball” : [red color + sphere shape]

“white horse: [white color + horse shape]

Even if it sounds odd to think of a horse-like shape, making an effort we can compare it to a cake mould with a horse shape, which is a kind of bone-structure for the horse. Therefore a more coherent graphical representation is not the classical one⁴³⁷, in which the “white horse” would be identified by the shared area where two sets of equal status – one symbolizing “white” and the other identifying “horse” – are secant and interpenetrate each other, but rather the picture below, which suggest the fact that “horse” is an extension of “white horse”⁴³⁸:



While the horse-shape is a necessary attribute so that a horse can be recognizable as horse and properly called as such, the white color is just an accidental quality, therefore belonging to a subsidiary category of attributes.

⁴³⁷See for instance Zhou Yunzhi, 1994, p. 94; Hu Qu Yuan and Chen Jinkun, 1987, p. 27.

⁴³⁸Hu Shi, 1968, p. 978 and 1994, p. 175; Wang Guan, 1992, p. 41.

All things can work as qualities, and when working as qualities they seem to operate as concrete universals⁴³⁹. While it is intuitive for us to recognize what in Indo-European languages we call adjectives as qualities, it is less natural to remember that even what we consider nouns can qualify things in Classical Chinese without any apparent morphological modification, for instance “horse”; therefore, in order to try to clarify this point, I am formulating an example as close as possible to the functioning of Classical Chinese, using an adjective derived from a noun: “dog bone-biscuit”. “Dog” in this case doesn’t fix a dog-like shape but for what the biscuit is made for, therefore being of secondary importance and of a different level than the bone-like shape, which is a fundamental constituent element of the biscuit.

I am not trying here to give a definition of what things are for Gongsun Long, as he himself never makes the necessary step further to define them theoretically; all that we know is that what fills in these shapes, the flesh-and-bone, the “stuff” – to use a term dear to Chad Hansen – of which shapes are the bearing structures are *shi*, actualizations of *wu*. The temptation to read them as “substances”⁴⁴⁰ is quite strong, and Harbsmeier makes a seductive association with the term *zhi* 質; still he accurately clarifies that Gongsun Long himself never uses this terminology⁴⁴¹. What we can tell for sure is the thought expressed in the *Gongsun Longzi* represents the preliminary stage and the first step on the way to the subsequent theoretical elaboration of the concept of substance.

Now a warning is necessary: the *Baima Lun* as such is not – and never had the claim to be the accomplished exposition of a structured theory or of the thought of Gongsun Long - or whoever shared the general line of thought and understanding of qualities and things expressed in the collection of texts that were assembled in the *Gongsun Longzi*, and that therefore we can reasonably suppose and expect to have had at least something in common at their editor(s)’ eyes. As underestimating the

⁴³⁹ See Zhou Changzhong, 1991, p. 32; the Chinese scholar underlines the fact that there would be no relationship of subordination between what he calls substances (individual *shi*) and categories (what I call more generically “qualities”). However, Zhou distinguishes a sort of universal abstract categories from those who are concretized and embodied in objects, in a sort of Platonic dualism (*Id.*, p. 39).

⁴⁴⁰ Cheng Chung-ying, 2007a, p. 545.

⁴⁴¹“Compare the following passage from a possibly +3rd-century source: ‘ Naming the colour first and thereafter the substance (*chih* 質), that is something that applies to all things, and it is a practice which the sages have consistently followed.’ That which would fix what is declared white is a word for a substance (*chih*) like ‘horse’, as in ‘white horse’. This is important evidence on early Chinese grammatical sensibilities, but we hasten to add that Kungsun Lung himself never uses the term *chih* ‘substance’.” (Harbsmeier, 1998, p. 310).

philosophical value of the text considering it just a nonsensical joke is a mistake, taking it too seriously trying to read it as a theoretical treaty is equally a misreading. The persuader is not mistakenly or naively supporting a theory apparently denying the law of inference and fighting against the strict logical mental process of his opponent. The paradox is just a paradox. The persuader is mocking his opponent, showing that with a cunning use of word anybody – even the most skilled thinker, supporting the most reasonable point of view – can be mocked. The persuader doesn't state a truth, and is perfectly conscious of being supporting something absolutely outrageous: he is just proving that he can utter something amazing, contrary to common sense and logic, and playing with metalanguage still make it sound reasonable enough to trouble his opponent and make him even contradict himself, though it is clear that it is his opponent to be right. It is obvious the *bai ma* argument wouldn't stand the test of a closer and attentive analysis, but as long as the two characters speak on different levels (the persuader talking about language and non-identity of two different terms, the opponent talking about concrete objects in the real world) it is just impossible to solve the paradox, and the debate turns to a sort of theatrical pantomime, still not from philosophical meanings. This is to say that Gongsun Long is not “confusing the scope of names when compounded”⁴⁴², unable to “distinguish between subclasses and members”⁴⁴³ nor “guilty of an elementary confusion of class membership with identity”⁴⁴⁴: he is perfectly aware that “the paradoxical conclusion is false”⁴⁴⁵ even before getting started! Though he couldn't find any opponent smart enough to logically prove wrong what the occasional opponent – as also probably the public at court - intuitively perceived as false.

In the end, the *Baima Lun* is not about language in itself, not even about what can – or cannot – be said; it's all about the relationship between what can be said and its verification in reality, the expressive potentiality and power of language; on a speculative ground we can postulate propositions that are logically admissible with an unassailable reasoning, though they cannot stand the test in the real world, where they would be discarded by concrete experience. A smart persuader can say almost anything

⁴⁴² Hansen, 1976, p. 193.

⁴⁴³ Hansen quoting Chmielewski, 1983, p. 162.

⁴⁴⁴ Graham, 1986a, p. 196.

⁴⁴⁵ Hansen, 1976, p. 163.

and demonstrate it to be true at words, catching us unprepared with a smooth reasoning, subverting traditional categories of thought and shifting the discourse on a different level, from concrete to purely speculative, an art difficult to master yet effective and vital in government.

3.2 Translating the “original chapters”: a premise

Corrections, and judgements about ‘intended’ or ‘right-and-wrong’ characters should be recorded as part of the critical apparatus, either in notes separate from the transcription or inserted within an edited version of the text [...]. To include such decisions in the transcription itself, that is, by changing the characters from what the manuscript actually has to what an editor thinks the manuscript intends, deprives every other reader and scholar who must rely on that transcription of the chance to decide independently what the manuscript actually says.⁴⁴⁶

Before getting started with the translation of the *Baima Lun*, I would like to spend a few preliminary words on the choice I made in selecting the version to translate here. First of all, I do agree with Harbsmeier that “the text of Kungsun Lung makes reasonably good sense as it stands and does not need textual surgery to become interpretable”⁴⁴⁷: missing parts (if ever) would still be missing even if we “shuffle cards”, and Graham’s attempt of reassemblage based mainly on number of characters *per* bamboo-strip clearly fail the test in the light of recently unearthed discoveries, turning out to be not quite attainable and too speculative since we have no proves the individual strips composing the text bore exactly 40 characters each, and there is no evidence that the text didn’t undergo previous damage and corruption even before

⁴⁴⁶ See Boltz, 1999, pp. 596-597; even if here Boltz is clearly talking about the transcription process of bamboo manuscripts, I still find his strong claim for the preservation of textual integrity valid also for corrupted texts in general.

⁴⁴⁷ Harbsmeier, 1998, p. 311.

having been copied on paper – as Graham argues⁴⁴⁸, when it was still written on bamboo⁴⁴⁹. Therefore, I rather prefer to take into exam the text as it is, respecting the pericope order in which the *textus receptus* present itself. As far as emendations are concerned, I already exposed before I systematically integrated the *Shuofu* and *Daozang* versions, a task nobody has undertaken before⁴⁵⁰; however, the two versions show little semantic differences at least as far as the “original chapters” are concerned; we are talking here mostly of stylistic differences, or possibly “regional”⁴⁵¹ uses. Apart from this, I proposed only minimal modifications in order to respect as much as possible the text as we know it, and not to run the risk of modifying it in order to make it correspond to my personal view and interpretation of the text itself. Finally, I reduced punctuation to the minimum – essentially full stops and quotation marks - in order to avoid as much as possible what Berman defines as “deforming tendencies”, in particular “rationalisation” and “destruction of rhythms”⁴⁵².

The difficulty of understanding, interpreting and translating the *Gongsun Longzi* is no secret, and we are probably not far from truth in saying that there are as many suggestions for emendation as there are stars in the sky; practically every scholar who was seduced by the idea of translating the text and dealt with the text somehow felt authorized to manipulate it, integrating at his/her own please the Chinese original so

⁴⁴⁸ Graham suggest that the text was mutilated between the 7th and the 11th centuries, due to discrepancies emerging by comparing the *Daozang* text and commentary: see *Id.*, 1986a, pp. 176-177.

⁴⁴⁹ Which is most probable instead; I personally doubt that the text was in perfect conditions when it was copied on paper, it is most likely that it was already damaged and that the scribe who copied it had to deal with individual fragmentary slips the strings tying which were already gone rotten. Graham’s ideal scenario of perfectly preserved yet unbound strips is not too realistic (Graham, 1986a, p. 177).

⁴⁵⁰ The only translation that occasionally quotes also the *Shuofu* edition is that by Kou Pao-koh (1953), though it doesn’t quotes all textual variant occurrences as I did.

⁴⁵¹ Karlgren (*Id.*, 1929-30, pp. 178-183) has suggested these supposed-to-be stylistic variants to be proof of the existence of a bulk of ancient dialects showing different articulated grammatical structures, as would be evident by a closer analysis of classical Masters Literature. Chad Hansen seems to think along the same line of thought, stating that “there appear to have been different Chinese languages in ancient times as in modern times. It is plausible to suppose that, like modern Cantonese and Mandarin, they had significant differences in grammar” (Hansen, 1989a, p. 78). As my knowledge of phonology doesn’t allow me to speculate further here whether his theory was effectively sustainable, I will limit myself to a brief quotation of this intriguing yet challenging hypothesis, which might deserve further analysis.

⁴⁵² Berman’s “dephorming tendencies” in translation are described in Berman, 1999, pp. 52-68. The scholar talks about “rationalization” in these terms: “La rationalisation porte au premier chef sur les structures syntaxiques de l’original, ainsi que sur cet élément délicat du texte en prose qu’est sa ponctuation. La rationalisation re-compose les phrases et séquences de phrases de manière à les arranger selon une certaine idée de l’ *ordre* d’un discours.” (*Id.*, p. 53). About “destruction of rhythms”, again stress is put on punctuation: “la déformation peut affecter considérablement la rythmique, par exemple en s’attaquant à la ponctuation. [...] le morcellement de la phrase opéré ‘scientifiquement’ par les auteurs rompt le rythme mimique de la phrase[.]” (*Id.*, p. 61).

that it would make sense by force – even in those passages where there are clear signs of later interpolations or missing pericopes, rendering themselves guilty of voluntary textual corruption⁴⁵³, at best case scenario still irreparably altering the original meaning. Assuming to be able not only to guess which were the compiler’s true intentions but also to reconstruct entire missing passages only by intuition without solid philological grounds – mainly relying on personal feelings - is truly *hybris*.

In my opinion, what we have to deal with is the text in itself, whatever its state of preservation – be it exceptionally good or, as in our case, corrupted – and not a revised edition forged *ad hoc* to support our personal opinion, even if perhaps motivated by good intentions. I basically agree with Hansen and Boltz, who remark that so often “reliable” criterion for emendation is just personal inclination, “no more than a particular person’s *opinion* about what the text ‘ought’ to mean, often based on no more than her or his own philosophical and linguistic predispositions.”⁴⁵⁴

⁴⁵³ As Thierry Lucas candidly pointed out, “it would be foolish to expect every detail of sometimes uncertain texts to fit into the reconstruction” (*Id.*, 2005, p. 351).

⁴⁵⁴ Boltz, 1985, p. 311; see also Hansen, 1983, p. 103.

3.3 *Baima Lun*: Translation

A short premise must be made, as the whole dialogue can be correctly interpreted if two technical key-words are correctly understood in the peculiar meaning they assume in the *Gongsun Longzi*:

Fei 非: “not equivalent to, not the same as, different from” (不等於,有別,有異)⁴⁵⁵

Ke 可: “logically admissible”⁴⁵⁶, “acceptable”⁴⁵⁷

Abbreviations:

O = Objector

P = Persuader

SF = *Shuofu* edition

DZ = *Daozang* edition

[] = variants; when underlined, they indicate the textual version chosen

∅ = absence of a corresponding variant in one of the two editions

{ } = modifications to the original text

⁴⁵⁵ In particular, as Boltz underlined, what’s most important is the difference between *fei* 非 and *bu* 不: “the former negates verbal predicates, the latter negates nouns or what are sometimes called noun predicates. [...] when a noun follows a *bu* 不 it functions as a verbal predicate; when nouns function as ‘verbs’ (intransitively) the general meaning is to behave or act in the way the noun in question typically behaves, or is expected to behave.” (Boltz, 2000, p. 221). For an analysis of the different uses of *fei* and its employment with the above mentioned meaning see Chen Guimiao 陳癸淼, 1975, pp. 16-17; Chen Xianyou 陈宪猷, 1990, p. 6; Graham, 1978, pp. 120-123.

⁴⁵⁶ Chad Hansen confuses the correct and fundamental meaning of *ke*, translating it throughout his texts and articles as “assertable”, “acceptable” and “admissible”(see for instance the emblematic case Hansen, 1989a, p. 103, but also 1976, p. 195, 200 and 1983; even after criticism, he still keeps on using “assertable” in 2007, pp. 475-476, respectively note 7 and 10, p. 487 note 36) in an almost indifferentiated way; it seems that for him something which is simply assertable is also admissible/acceptable, misunderstanding the fact that almost any utterance grammatically permitted by the language in which we express ourselves is “assertable”, while “admissible” and “acceptable” both imply the possibility to logically argument, support and demonstrate a statement. See also Harbsmeier, 1989, pp. 135-136.

⁴⁵⁷ “Note that what everybody calls ‘acceptable’ (*ke*) is a form of words, sentence or claim. And the same thing is said to be not necessarily *ran* ‘objectively so’. (Harbsmeier, 1989, p. 131)

Block 1

(1)O(曰)⁴⁵⁸:「白馬非馬可乎。」

(1)P曰:「可。」

(2)O曰:「何哉。」

(2)P曰:「馬者所以命⁴⁵⁹形也。白者所以命色也。命色者非命形也故曰白馬非馬⁴⁶⁰。」

Translation

(1) O: “To say that ‘white horse is no horse’, is that admissible?”

(1) P: “It is admissible.”

(2) O: “How can it ever be?”

(2) P: “ ‘Horse’ denotes shape, ‘white’ denotes color; what denotes color is not what denotes shape⁴⁶¹, therefore I say that ‘white horse’ is no ‘horse’.”

Comment

The dialogue opens with the opponent questioning the admissibility of what in his opinion is a truly outrageous statement, contrary to good sense. The whole *Baima Lun* is structured like this, with the persuader answering or arguing from the starting point of a topic introduced by the opponent’s questions or scandalized replies. The core issue of the whole dialogue finds its expression here, in the first exchange: these few lines focus the persuader’s opinion - that is it possible to support the statement that white horse is no horse under certain conditions- , and reveals on which ground he is able to maintain such a bizarre position and how he will proceed arguing it. It must be remarked the particular meaning the verb *fei* assumes in the persuader’s eyes, “not so, not the same

⁴⁵⁸ The *yue* we would expect to open the dialogue and introduce the first question is missing; as all the other lines are introduced by *yue* we can add it with confidence.

⁴⁵⁹ “ ‘denote’ [...] means a name referring to things that meet what its associated *descriptive* content specifies.” (Mou, 2007, p. 499). Actually Bo Mou, drawing on Russell, doesn’t apply this definition to the term *ming*, which he translates as “signify” instead, but I do still think that “denote” suits the term *ming* best.

⁴⁶⁰ 「白馬是屬於馬又異於馬」 (Zhou Yunzhi, 1994, p. 128).

⁴⁶¹ See Tan Jiefu, 2006, p. 26: 「白馬者即白色與馬形合也... …。」

as”, so that the sentence 白馬非馬 not only doesn’t mean 白馬不是馬 , but is also compatible with admitting that in the real world 白馬是馬. This fact allows the persuader to change continuously perspective – from the realm of thought to reality - thus mocking and confusing the opponent even more.

I would like to draw attention to my use of brackets, which tries to account for the fundamental difference in the two characters’ approach; in fact, the opponent takes into consideration a whole sentence as if it was a statement of a matter of fact regarding a real concrete horse (‘white horse is no horse’), see (1)O), while the persuader’s reasoning is more subtle and tricky: he is talking of words and word use, not of concrete objects. More precisely, the persuader is drawing distinctions between correct and incorrect definitions: ‘white horse’ is a more specific and defined term in respect to the generic ‘horse’, therefore it is not possible to equate the two terms, which clearly are not superimposable nor perfectly interchangeable, because ‘white horse’ expresses an additional informative content which ‘horse’ does potentially and theoretically include but doesn’t concretely express in language practice: white horse expresses shape and color, while horse doesn’t provide any information on color, therefore they are not the same.

Block 2

(3)O曰：「有白馬不可謂無馬也。不可謂無馬者非馬也⁴⁶²。有白馬為有[SF白馬/DZ馬白]之非馬何也。」

(3)P曰：「求馬黃黑馬皆可致。求白馬黃黑馬不可致。使白馬乃馬也是所求一也。

所求一者白者不異馬也。所求不異如黃黑馬有可有不可何也。可與不可其相非明

。故黃黑馬一也而可以應有馬，而不可以應有白馬。是白馬之非馬審矣。」

Translation

⁴⁶² Following Yu Yue’s emendation (Tan Jiefu, 2006, p. 25), Kou Pao-koh (1953, p. 30, note 3), Perleberg (1952, p. 85), Johnston (2004, p. 273), Y. P. Mei (1953, p. 421), Qian Mu (1934, p. 48), Pang Pu (1979, p. 13), Wang Guan (1992, p. 42) and others all consider *ye* 也 as a loan word for *ye* 耶, treating the sentence as a question (see also Harbsmeier, 1998, p. 307, note 2), but personally I agree with Graham doubting that the two particles were interchangeable (see *Id.*, 1986a, pp. 190-191); following Graham, I translate it accordingly as a statement (see below).

(3) O: “There being a white horse one cannot say there is no horse. About what cannot be said there not being horse you say is no horse⁴⁶³. There being a white horse is deemed there being a horse, how can it be that a white one is no horse?”

(3) P: “If you were looking for a horse, both a black or brown horse could be brought; if you were looking for a white horse, a black or brown horse couldn’t be brought. If a white horse on the contrary⁴⁶⁴ is a horse, what you were looking for would be one and the same thing; if what you were looking for was one and the same thing, white wouldn’t be different from horse⁴⁶⁵. If what you were looking for was not different, it would be like the case of the black horse and the brown horse that are admissible in one instance and inadmissible in the other, how can it be? It is clear that admissible and inadmissible mutually exclude each other: therefore black and brown horse are the same as they can correspond to there being a horse, but cannot correspond to there being a white horse. Indeed it is true that “white horse” is no “horse”.

Comment

The opponent is applying the law of inference to the statement since the very beginning; it is quite clear from his reply by *modus tollens*, as he makes a concrete example and deduces that a white horse must be a horse because if there is a concrete living creature, a white horse here just in front of us, then it is impossible to say there is no horse. “It is deemed so” means that this is an accepted and shared truth and the common logical way of interpreting reality, a matter of fact the evidence of which nobody can deny – or at least the opponent thinks so. However, the persuader continues by *modus tollens*, arguing on a concrete level, but without admitting explicitly that the opponent is actually right. The persuader ingeniously shifts the argument, and takes a long logical

⁴⁶³ The first two lines of the opponent’s reply show a very thorny construction of the argument, which can be more smoothly formulated like this: “if there’s a white horse necessarily there’s a horse; of what necessarily is a horse you say is no horse.”

⁴⁶⁴ Keeping in mind that the persuader is explaining which would be the consequences of the opponent’s reasoning if we deem a white horse to be a horse, I consider here *nai* to have an adversative meaning. Graham translates it as “after all” (1986a, p. 190) and Harbsmeier as “other” (1998, p. 305).

⁴⁶⁵ I agree with Tan Jiefu’s interpretation (2006, p. 26) and with Perleberg’s translation, which considers the sentence meaning that “white” and “horse” would be the same thing, and that the white horse being white would not make it differ from horse, literally “‘White’ would not make it different from ‘Horse’.” (Perleberg, 1952, p. 85). See persuader’s argument 7.1, where he explains that those who hold the position that ‘white horse’ is not ‘horse’ maintain that if there would be no difference at all between “white horse” and “horse”, if white horses and horses would be called without distinction by the same name, than “white” would also be the same as “horse”.

detour, forcing the challenger to admit that looking for a horse of a specific color is not the same as just asking for whatever horse. Without specifying any color, it must be supposed that a horse of whatever color would be fine, while on the contrary if somebody is looking for a horse of that very color, only a horse with the hide of that color would be fine: unless we admit that all horses are the same and that color is indifferent, but then how to explain that in one case only a horse of a particular color would satisfy the request? In Fung Yiu-ming's words, "the argument embedded in the paragraph can be naturally elaborated as follows: (1) If a white-horse is horse, it would be no difference between yellow-horse (or black horse) in response to seeking white-horse and seeking horse. (2) There is a difference. (3) Therefore, white horse is not horse."⁴⁶⁶. The opponent is forced in self-contradiction, because the persuader's reasoning is incontrovertible.

Block 3

(4)O曰:「以馬之有色為非馬。天下非有無色之馬也。天下無馬可乎。」

(4)P曰:「馬固有色故有白馬。使馬無色有馬如⁴⁶⁷已耳安取白馬。故白者非馬也。白馬者馬與白也。馬與白{非}⁴⁶⁸馬也。故曰白馬非馬也。」

Translation

(4) O: "You deem a horse with color not a horse! But there are no colorless horses in the world, is it admissible (to say that) there are no horses in the world?"

(4) P: "Horses necessarily have colors, that's why there can be white horses. If horses didn't have colors, there would be mere horses: how could then we pick out white horses? Therefore 'white' is not the same as 'horse'. 'White horse' is 'horse' and 'white' combined; 'horse' and 'white' combined is no 'horse', Therefore I say that 'white horse' is no 'horse'.

⁴⁶⁶ Fung Yiu-ming, 2007, p. 530.

⁴⁶⁷ 如= 而, see *Daozang* commentary, *Daozang*, 1988, vol. 27, p. 170; Wang Guan, 1992, p. 12 note 2; Tan Jiefu, 2006, p. 26; Graham, 1986a, p. 188. Xu Fuguan on the contrary keeps *ru* 如 on the assumption that the following character would be *ji* 己 and not *yi* 已, the syntagm) meaning "horses as such"; but examining the *Daozang* version in particular it is quite clear that the intended character is *yi* 已, therefore it is more coherent to follow the commentary and consider it as 而已. (Xu Fuguan, 1982, p. 9).

⁴⁶⁸ Following Qian Mu (1934, p. 49) and Chen Zhu (1937, p. 65), I add a *fei* before *ma* in order to make sense of this sentence, though there's a high probability that the sentence is mutilated and that a few characters are missing (see Graham, 1986a, p. 188, Kou Pao-koh, 1953, p. 33 note 3).

Comment

The opponent fails to notice where the argument expressed by his adversary in the preceding exchange in Block 2 is faulty and misleading, losing the opportunity for an effective counterargument: in fact, “even granted that [...] seeking white horse is not seeking (any) horse, white horse nevertheless is horse.”⁴⁶⁹ So he looks for a way out and shifts the topic on an absurdity⁴⁷⁰ that – he is sure – even the persuader can’t say to be true, that the consequence of denying a white horse to be horse would be negating the existence of horses at all, since he accuses the persuader of claiming that only horses without color would be horses.

However the persuader candidly replies that of course horses have color; if they wouldn’t, it could not be possible to talk about white horses; then he goes on, but on the linguistic level, distinguishing “white” from “horse”, and adding that “white horse” is a combination of both the two elements, therefore it is not the same as horse as such. As Harbsmeier points out, “here the sophist uses the rather subtle argumentative device of showing that the conclusion he wishes to demonstrate is actually implicit in what his opponent is saying”⁴⁷¹, a strategy as we will see the persuader will be using again just below in the next exchange.

Block 4

(5)O曰：「馬未與白為馬。白未與馬為白。合馬與白復名⁴⁷²白馬是相與以不相與為名。未可。故曰白馬非馬未可。」

(5)P曰：「以有白馬為有馬。謂有白馬為有黃馬可乎。」

(6)O曰：「未可。」

(6)P曰：「以有馬為異有黃馬是異黃馬於馬也。異黃馬於馬是以黃馬為非馬[SF也/

DZ Ø]。以黃馬為非馬而以白馬為有馬。此飛者入池而棺槨異處⁴⁷³。此天下之悖

⁴⁶⁹ Cheng Chung-ying, 1997, p. 152.

⁴⁷⁰ A case of *reductio ad absurdum*. See also Harbsmeier, 1998, pp. 306-307.

⁴⁷¹ Harbsmeier, 1998, p. 307.

⁴⁷² *Fuming* 復名 is a compound name; see Yu Yue’s definition: 「復名，謂兼名也」 and Yang Liang 楊倞’s commentary to *Xunzi zhengming* 荀子正名 chapter 22 : 「兼，復明也」 (both quoted in Tan Jiefu, 2006, p. 28 and Wang Guan, 1992, pp. 24-25). See also Graham, 1978, pp. 187-188.

言亂辭也。」

Translation

(5) O: “You deem horse not yet⁴⁷⁴ combined with white ‘horse’, and white not yet combined with horse ‘white’. To call by the compound ‘white horse’⁴⁷⁵ the union of horse and white combined is to call them by their names when uncombined when they are combined: it is inadmissible! Therefore I say that ‘white horse is no horse’ is inadmissible.”

(5) P: “If there being a white horse is deemed there being a horse, is it admissible to say that there being a white horse is deemed there having a brown horse ?”

(6) O: “It is inadmissible.”

(6) P: “To deem there being a horse different from there being a brown horse is to differentiate brown horse from horse. To differentiate brown horse from horse is deeming ‘brown horse’ to be no ‘horse. To deem ‘brown horse’ to be no ‘horse’ and at the same time to deem ‘white horse’ to be ‘horse’! this is like flying creatures diving in a pond and inner and outer coffin in different places! These are the most perverse and confused words in the world

Comment

The opponent tries to have the better of the persuader on his own linguistic ground, accusing him now of form a new compound term using a combination of the same names the individual components had before becoming part of the compound, substantially contravene the *zhengming* principle. In fact, in becoming part of a new compound the component parts undergo a change in respect to their former individual status, therefore a new name must be appropriately chosen to name the compound in order to respect and correctly interpret the very nature of the new form they assume.

The persuader distracts the opponent once more by changing again topic and turning back abruptly to reality. First he asks the opponent an obvious question, making him

⁴⁷³ “The sophist gives a triumphantly flowery rhetorical picture of the inconsistency in which he feels the objector would involve himself. The stylistic flourish is rather important, because it shows that the dialogue as we have it is [...] related to a real situation at court.” (Harbsmeier, 1998, p. 309).

⁴⁷⁴ Graham, 1986a, p. 188.

⁴⁷⁵ “To compound the name ‘white horse’ for horse and white joined together is to give them when combined their names when uncombined” (Graham, 1964-65, p. 146).

admit that though still deeming that a white horse is a horse, a white horse is not the same as a horse of another color, in this case a brown one; then he goes on using this very same answer against him. The persuader builds his deceptive argument with mastery as a sort of *sorites*, using a *reductio ad absurdum* technique: if a brown horse is not a white horse, but the white horse before was a horse, then the brown horse is not a horse, and round we go that differentiating a brown horse from a horse and at the same time assimilating a white horse to a horse is a plain contradiction! The persuader concludes with a couple of picturesque metaphors⁴⁷⁶ to underline the complete absurdity the opponent got stuck in.

Block 5

Before getting started with block five, I want to clarify that I agree with Harbsmeier on these last sentences, that also in my opinion are clearly the persuader's final argumentation, thus the use of *yue* 曰 here doesn't mean a change of character in the dialogue, but just the continuation and further development of the previous argument.⁴⁷⁷

(7.1)P⁴⁷⁸曰：「有白馬不可謂無馬者離白之謂也。[SF是/DZ不]離者有白馬不可謂有馬也。故所以為有馬者獨以馬為有馬耳。非有白馬為有馬。故其為有馬也⁴⁷⁹不可以[SF為/DZ謂]馬馬也。」

Translation

(7.1) P: “When there being a white horse one cannot say there is no horse, it is called ‘separating⁴⁸⁰ white’. ‘Not separating’ is when there being a white horse one cannot say there is a horse. The reason why it is considered “there being a horse” is because of the

⁴⁷⁶ Harbsmeier remarks the importance of this only apparently frivolous “triumphantly flowery rhetorical picture”, suggesting that “the stylistic flourish is rather important, because it shows that the dialogue as we have it is not entirely thought of as an algebraic disputation but as related to a real situation at court.” (Harbsmeier, 1998, p. 309).

⁴⁷⁷ See also See Kou Pao-koh, 1953, pp. 34-35. On the contrary, Graham considers these passage to be the opponent's words. (See Graham, 1986a, p. 206)

⁴⁷⁸ See Kou Pao-koh, 1953, pp. 34-35.

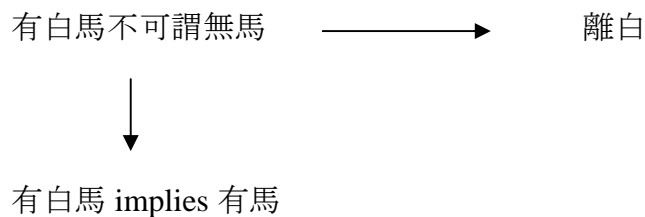
⁴⁷⁹ Graham thinks the passage here is corrupted and that a few characters are missing; see Graham, 1986a, p. 191.

⁴⁸⁰ The meaning here is “leaving aside”, “not considering”.

sole “horse” that is considered as there being a horse. It is not because there being a white horse that you considered it there being a horse. Therefore what is deemed there being a horse that cannot be deemed ‘horse’ is horse⁴⁸¹.

Comment

Those who hold the position *li bai* 離白 and separate off the white think that if there is a horse of whatever color you can deduce that it is a horse indeed and therefore call it “horse” and say “there is a horse”, notwithstanding the color. It is because they consider the word “horse” not as having the double reference of horse-*shi* 實 and at the same time of horse-shape, but they superimpose the two meanings, thus saying that “horse” (indifferentiated) can be used to name a horse of whatever color without any further qualification and specification. If you have a horse of whatever color, according to this position you will have a horse anyway, and you are allowed to call it generically “horse” and still be in the right.



Those who hold the position *bu li* 不離 and don’t separate off the white deem that if there’s a white horse – if we are aware of its color, or are in the position of physically perceiving the color and realizing it’s white - there’s not “horse”, because only horse

⁴⁸¹ An alternative translation is, following Tan Jiefu (2006, pp. 29-30), that “there being a horse cannot be called ‘horse-horse’”, choosing the *Daozang* variant and considering the term horse-horse as a kind of double reference (shape-shape) which of course cannot be used to name a horse, while white horse is characterized by two different qualities (color and shape). See Tan Jiefu: 「蓋白馬為色形二指，馬馬為形形二指。」 (*Id.*, 2006, p. 29). We can also interpret it according to the fact that if white horse is the same as horse, then white is not different from horse, or that white and horse interpenetrate each other, therefore white is not separable from horse as each horse-part is also white; by substitution white horse would be equal to a horse-horse, as the whole white horse would be horse, and the horse in the compound white horse would also be horse (see Pang Pu, 1989, p. 52 note 1; Wang Guan, 1992, p. 46; see also Graham’s private communication with Jen-Paul Reding: “The white component of the horse can’t be a horse, because then ‘white horse’ would be a ‘horse-horse’.” (Reding, 1985, p. 407). Finally, this kind of reasoning might even bring us back to the *Jianbai Lun* and *Tongbian Lun* way of counting, summing constituent parts to individuals; accordingly, white horse would be “horse” twice and count for two: horse as a sort of countable unit of measure and a horse as physical animal (See pp. 14-15 note 69 of the present work; see also Qian Mu, 1934, p. 51 note 1).

alone would correspond to the name “horse”. They deem there being a horse as the perfect identity of horse-*shi* 實 and horse-shape, which cannot of course be called “horse/horse” or horsey horse, therefore by convention it is called just “horse”.

有白馬不可謂有馬 → 不離
↓
有白馬 doesn't imply 有馬

The final passage ending with *ma ma ye* 馬馬也 is highly controversial; personally, I find no existing translation satisfactory. We can consider various hypothesis that, due to the evident difficulty of the text, might all be valid. For instance, the second *ma* character at the very end of the sentence could be a copying mistake, a repetition; in that case I would rather choose the *Daozang* version, the meaning being that “ ‘there being a horse’ cannot be called ‘horse’ . Or we can consider the former character in this *ma-ma* couple a mistake for *bai* – thus the final sentence of the pericope would be a sort of redundant assertion of the persuader’s assumption concluding the first part of his final closing speech. Another hypothesis is that the text is corrupted and a few characters – nineteen according to Graham’s reconstruction - must be missing⁴⁸². I personally tried to make sense of the sentence as it is, which is definitely no easy task, though I think its meaning as it stands is a sort of reformulation of the one-name-one-thing theory: the persuader seemingly even arrives to the point of admitting that tautology theoretically would be the only kind of admissible predication, as only one name can be predicated of one single corresponding actuality without breaking the rules of *zhengming*. Moreover, if we keep in consideration my attempt of translation, the persuader underlines the fact that a concrete horse cannot be treated – both theoretically and pragmatically – as its name ‘horse’, because clearly the two have different properties, and the flesh-and-bone horse is exactly that thing that can’t be reduced to ‘horse’.

⁴⁸² See Graham, 1986a, p. 191.

(7.2)P曰：「白者不定所白。忘之而可也。白馬者言白定所白也。定所白者非白也。馬者無去取[SF于/DZ於]色故黃黑皆所以應。白馬者有去取[SF于/DZ於]色。黃黑馬皆所以色去。故唯⁴⁸³白馬獨可以應耳。無去者非有去也。故曰白馬非馬。」

Translation

(7.2) P: “White is not fixed to what it makes white, and so it can be put aside. In “white horse”, White is fixed to what is white, but what is fixed to what is white is not White. ‘Horse’ doesn’t pick out any color, therefore a brown or a black horse both can correspond to it; ‘white horse’ picks out a color, (therefore) brown or black horse are both excluded because of their color. This is the reason why it is white horse alone that can correspond to it. What doesn’t pick out a color is not what picks out a color, therefore I say that ‘white horse’ is no ‘horse’.”

Comment

Two key concepts are exposed in this passage by the persuader: first of all, qualities such as colors present themselves in two forms, an unchanging theoretical entity and its concrete realization in the real world⁴⁸⁴.

The absolute “White” in its purest and indifferentiated form is of course not attached to any specific concrete thing, nor it is because it is manifested that it becomes what it is; its existence is prior to its manifestation, which is perceived as quality in an actuality. “White” remains and is preserved apart from an any material being it might be linked to, though it can be concretized in individual objects; in its particular accidental manifestations, what is reified and appear to our sense is not the “White”, but expresses itself as “white”, its transitory accidental aspect.

⁴⁸³ Pulleyblank has underlined the peculiar use of *wei* 唯 as the affirmative form of *fei*, in that case having the grammatical function of copula (see Pulleyblank, 1959, pp. 179-180), and in particular its use “to mark off a noun or noun phrase which is then the subject” (*Id.*, p. 182). Accordingly, since in the sentence the exclusive correspondence of white horse to what is asked for is already signalled by the presence of *du* 獨 I translate it as a marked structure treating *wei* as copula, strenghtening the fact that it is just the white horse that can correspond and not any other. On the use of *wei* see also von der Gabelentz, 1953, pp. 313-315 and Schindler, 1936, pp. 575-584.

⁴⁸⁴ What Stevenson calls “particularized applications of this universal concept”, see Stevenson, 1991, p. 301.

Secondly, the persuader resumes the topic of the previous exchange in block 2⁴⁸⁵, that what expresses a particular color cannot be equated to something that can potentially express any color but practically doesn't manifest any in particular⁴⁸⁶: while looking for a white horse, our request could be satisfied exclusively by a white animal, when looking for a more generic horse than we could be equally feel contented also with a black or brown horse as we didn't manifest any particular request regarding the color of its hide. Thus it is improper to say that a white horse is exactly the same as a horse.

3.4 The paradox is not a paradox...?

Final considerations on the White Horse argument

Though it is generally accepted that the *baima* argument is structured as a paradox, recently its authenticity as such has been put to question by Fung Yiu-ming, who suggests that the "white horse" wouldn't be a paradox at all⁴⁸⁷, but rather an exemplary argument for discussion.

Chen Guimiao suggests that, as the persuader and his opponent develop their reasoning starting from two different points of view, both their arguments are potentially valid and true, and not even in contradiction⁴⁸⁸: "the question is whether it (the *baima* argument N/A) is logically acceptable, whether one can make a logical case for it"⁴⁸⁹, not that it corresponds to truth. In order to clarify this point and also to dispel Fung Yiu-ming's claim, first of all it is necessary to correctly identify the whole paradox, in its complete form: the sentence in question is not that "white horse is no

⁴⁸⁵ See Tan Jiefu, 2006, p. 30.

⁴⁸⁶ "Horse as such is indeterminate with regard to color and hence is not the same as horse as fixed on the white color." (Cheng Chung-ying, 1997, p. 151).

⁴⁸⁷ Fung Yiu-ming considers the *baima* argument as a persuader's trope, as a "paradigmatic example" but not a real paradox. See *Id.*, 2006, pp. 17-18.

⁴⁸⁸ Cheng Guimiao, 1975, pp. 14-16.

⁴⁸⁹ Harbsmeier, 1989, p. 136.

horse” as most scholars mistook it to be, but that “ ‘white horse is no horse’ is admissible”! Therefore, Chen Guimiao is right in stating that no principle of truth is involved. Applying Thierry Lucas’ informal classification of “paradoxes”, would still lead us to classify the *baima* at least as a “paradoxical argument”⁴⁹⁰ for discussion: a paradigmatic example indeed, as Fung Yiu-ming correctly states⁴⁹¹, to which it is nevertheless impossible to deny a certain aura of whimsical puzzling effect – a reaction typically aroused by paradoxes⁴⁹² - and eventually even an underlying delight of the persuader in playing with words, enchanting an audience in astonishment.

Finally, if we examine the *baima* argument in the light of von Quine’s perspective and confronting it with his formal classification of paradoxes⁴⁹³, we can conclude that – being the paradox in question “ ‘white horse is no horse’ is admissible” – it is a case of veridical paradox⁴⁹⁴. In fact, the statement is not true, as it would contradict the law of inference, but still it is logically admissible if we consider it an exercise of metalanguage instead of a matter of class/membership: as the persuader sets to demonstrate, uttering “white horse” is not the same as saying “horse”, as “horse as such is indeterminate with regard to color and hence is not the same as horse fixed on the white color”⁴⁹⁵. Indeed we can’t deny that extension and intension of the two terms are different, thus under this conditions it is admissible to say that “white horse” is no “horse”. Therefore we can assume that the paradox is a paradox indeed.

⁴⁹⁰ Lucas, 1993, p. 216. Lucas, though not providing a systematic analysis, distinguishes four types of “paradoxes”; 1) “in a restricted sense of a word, a paradox is an argument which looks correct but which leads to contradiction”; 2) “in a slightly extended sense of the word, a paradox is an argument which looks correct but which leads to a conclusion which hurts common sense”; 3) “in a more extended sense, we can speak of paradoxical argument [...] not a downright contradiction, it does not hurt common sense, yet the argument looks very tricky and it is the argument itself, not its conclusion, which hurts our habits of thought”; 4) “in a very loose sense of the word, a paradox is any surprising assertion, any puzzle which pretends to make sense, which is not supported by arguments but which requires our close attention to be understood.” Lucas further argues that the *baima* would be of the third kind.

⁴⁹¹ Fung yiu-ming, 2006, p. 18.

⁴⁹² “Wherein is it paradoxical? Merely in its initial air of absurdity. [...] May we say in general, then, that a paradox is just any conclusion that at first sounds absurd but that has an argument to sustain it? In the end I think this account stands up pretty well.” (von Quine, 1966, p. 3).

⁴⁹³ Von Quine, 1966, pp. 3-20.

⁴⁹⁴ *Id.*, p. 5.

⁴⁹⁵ Cheng Chung-ying, 1997, p. 151.

3.5 Pointing at things is no pointing: the originality of the *Zhiwu Lun* in the *Gongsun Longzi* corpus

Whenever you find a contradiction, distinguish two different meanings.⁴⁹⁶

The *Zhiwu Lun* is usually numbered as the third chapter in the *Gongsun Longzi* collection; the text has a distinctive feature, a structural characteristic that distinguishes it from the others included in the *Gongsun Longzi*: in fact, it is the only one – together with the *Mingshi Lun*, which however due to its nature of programmatic ‘preface’ needs to be considered in different terms and doesn’t constitute a case of proper exception – which has a narrative formulation instead of the expected dialogic one, assuming a treaty-like structure and the form of an essay, and in particular of an “essay on designation”⁴⁹⁷. Though the fact is quite self-evident – showed by the intricate textual construction, full of inner cross-references, which suggests rather an uninterrupted exposition of a concept in a narrative style, and the complete absence of any sign of explicit quotation of direct speech (if not why omit it, while all the other chapters are constellated by *yue*?) – still Perleberg⁴⁹⁸, Pang Pu⁴⁹⁹ and Chen Lanfu 陳蘭甫⁵⁰⁰ astonishingly treat the *Zhiwu Lun* as a dialogue between persuader and opponent, dismembering the text in individual units more or less corresponding to what in his opinion would be the lines assigned to two characters; nor is it any better to separate it in blocks corresponding to hypothetical theses and antitheses as Forke and Mei⁵⁰¹ do. The predictable disastrous result of these highly invasive methods is to completely misunderstand the meaning of the whole text⁵⁰².

The *Zhiwu Lun* presents itself as a closed unit, an individual text in its own right which presents a complete and exhaustive treatment of the main issue: that things

⁴⁹⁶ Lucas 2005, p. 354.

⁴⁹⁷ Rieman, 1980, p. 305.

⁴⁹⁸ Perleberg, 1952.

⁴⁹⁹ Pang Pu, 1979, pp. 20-26.

⁵⁰⁰ Comment on the *Zhiwu Lun* quoted in Wang Guan, 1992, pp. 53-54.

⁵⁰¹ Forke 1901-1902 and Mei 1953.

⁵⁰² See also Graham’s negative comments on this way of treating the *Zhiwu Lun*. (Graham, 1955, p. 296).

necessary have to be pointees in order to be called ‘things’, and at the same time the act of pointing *per se* is not the same as the process in action of pointing at things. As we will see later on, due to its structural characteristic the *Zhiwu Lun* can be also considered an example of what Dirk Meyer recently defined “argument-based texts”⁵⁰³, that is to say texts whose framework is consciously structured in order to generate argumentative force starting from a semantic web of interrelations and correlations generated by the very disposition of textual building blocks, and not appealing to - or drawing from - any other external established authoritative source in order to gain attention and consideration. This issue will be further analysed in detail in paragraph 3.6.1, where an accurate reconstruction of the inner structure is provided.

The text employs – and plays with - a very limited vocabulary and its awkwardness is aroused just by the use of the term *zhi*, which evidently assumes different meanings and nuances according to the particular occurrence. This is the challenge and the task we have to face and accomplish if we want to deal successfully with this astonishing text.

The term *zhi* 指⁵⁰⁴ literally means “finger”⁵⁰⁵ and accordingly “to point, to indicate”. As we have already seen⁵⁰⁶, paradoxical expression including *zhi* similar as form and construction are concerned to the famous *er zhi fei zhi* 而指非指 paradox - part of the opening sentence with which the *Zhiwu Lun* welcomes us - are to be found in the *Liezi Zhongni* as one of the seven paradoxes ascribed to the Logicians, similar in the *Zhuangzi Tianxia* chapter among the so-called “21 thesis” also considered part of the *mingjia* repertoire and finally in the *Shishuo Xinyu*; this fact clearly qualifies the topic in all respects as a typical argument for discussion common in the cultural sphere gravitating around the Logicians’ circle.

Almost every scholar who confronted himself with this text developed a proper interpretation of *zhi*, translations of which are consequently innumerable; personally, I

⁵⁰³ “Argument-based texts develop [...] semiotic webs in their attempt to construct meaning.” (Meyer, 2008, p. 38); in these kind of texts, meaning is constructed by relating the different building blocks with each other.” (*Id.*, p. 82). See in particular Part 2, chapter 6.1.

⁵⁰⁴ A sample of different definitions of *zhi* by various Western scholars is provided by Reding, 2002, p. 190 and Graham, 1955, p. 282; a summary of Chinese scholars’ interpretation can be found in Yang Janguang, 1991, p. 193 and Cheng Guimiao, 1975, pp. 42-43.

⁵⁰⁵ The *Shuowen Jiezi* 說文解字 defines *zhi* as 「指，手指也。」. See *Shuowen Jiezi*, 1981, p. 607 (十二篇上593下).

⁵⁰⁶ See pp. 98-99 of the present study.

am inclined to keep close to the etymological meaning, “to point”. As we have already said, not only is the interpretation of this term highly controversial, but also it is extremely difficult to detach and identify the different meaning it acquires in the diverse occurrences throughout the text. The trick to solve the puzzle and give sense to the otherwise non-sensical⁵⁰⁷ *Zhiwu Lun* fundamentally is to distinguish three different meanings and uses of *zhi*⁵⁰⁸; these three aspects of *zhi* are:

- 指： the theoretical act of pointing, pointing as such, as an object of thought; potential pointing, or the “act of reference”⁵⁰⁹;
- 指物： pointees; things pointed at, that are object of the concrete act of pointing in action, or “objects of reference”⁵¹⁰; the modification produced in *wu* after having been reached effectively by *zhi*;
- 物指： the denomination attached to things which is the result of the pointing coming in contact with things.⁵¹¹

I would like to add one more clarification and to draw attention on a fundamental issue that has been so long overlooked, that is the fundamental difference between *zhi* and *zhi* in action. In fact, *zhi* as such, as the act of pointing in itself, can be a conceptual object, so it exists in the world and can be pointed at⁵¹², though it is not a concrete tangible

⁵⁰⁷ Reding defines the text “paradoxical” and its structure “dilemmatic” (Reding, 2002, p. 190). Personally I don’t find any clue that could lead to consider the essay *in toto* as a paradox; the author(s) of the *Zhiwu Lun* display language jokes playing on all the possible meanings *zhi* can assume, making fun of the reader. However, I am afraid these text seems more paradoxical to a Western reader’s eyes than to a Chinese mother-tongue’s, who can more easily and naturally solve the riddles while reading; though we can acknowledge the status of paradox to *er zhi fei zhi* 而指非指. Moreover, I don’t find convincing Reding’s hypothesis of the *Zhiwu Lun* core issue being whether pointing at non existing things is pointing or not (see Reding 2002). It seems to me that it is Reding himself to build an even more complicated paradox in which he gets almost lost.

⁵⁰⁸ Cheng Chung-ying distinguishes “the symbol or name used to refer to a thing (物指), the act or process of reference (指) and the object of reference (指物).” (Cheng Chung-ying, 1997, pp. 169-168;). Also Chan Chi-ching identified corresponding different aspects of *zhi*, though interpreting them in saussurean words, calling the three *zhi* respectively sign (指), signifier (指物) and signified (物指). (See Chan Chi-ching, 1998, p. 36. Characters in brackets are mine). See also Kou Pao-koh distinction between “signe”, “signifié” and “signifiant”. (Kou Pao-koh, 1953, pp. 37-43, in particular note 1, p. 39).

⁵⁰⁹ Cheng and Swain, 1970, p. 138.

⁵¹⁰ *Ibidem*.

⁵¹¹ 「指是未與物結合而自離自藏的屬性存在。物是未與結合而單獨表現的材料存在。指與物結合，就成為[物指]。」 (Wang Dianji 汪奠基, 1979, p. 193).

⁵¹² See also Cheng and Swain, 1970, p. 142.

object⁵¹³. However, there remains something obscure about the very nature of the act of *zhi* as such: though theoretically it can be an object of reference, at the same time it is still different somehow from other things as seemingly it cannot point to itself⁵¹⁴, which means that potentially it can acquire the status of object of reference, but in reality it cannot since it can't be pointed at. This sounds like Russel's famous paradox of the barber who shaves anybody in the village who doesn't shave himself!⁵¹⁵

In the moment in which *zhi* is activated by the mental gnoseologic process, while it is in action though not yet attached to things – so not a “pointing” in the sense of what denotes things, nor the pure act of pointing as such – as act-in-action according to the *Zhiwu Lun* is what does **not** exist in the world⁵¹⁶: Thierry Lucas states, “chih are and are not in the world.[.] chih are always chih of some objects”⁵¹⁷. That means I am operating one more distinction, between *zhi*-as-such and *zhi*-in-action, which is not the same as *wuzhi*, the temporary denotations things receive after having been pointed at and not having been named yet. The meaning of *zhi* we have to keep in mind in my opinion are four and not three, of which one is a particular state of being of one of the basic meanings. This is for sure one of the sources of confusion and greatest difficulties of the text when we have to translate it.

Since the very first sentences, the text introduces the two fundamental polar terms of discussion, that is *zhi* together with *wu*, which, we are told, is all that exists in the world. *Wu* is the set of all potential actualities, which at the beginning present themselves in an indifferentiated and amorphous state⁵¹⁸, a sort of scattered *quiddity*: this is what appears to our senses, that are able to elaborate these data only through the action of the mind, which activates *zhi*, the “faculty that discriminates the boundaries of the substances or stuffs referred to by names”⁵¹⁹, and concretely operates on reality in

⁵¹³ Since “a name can point to an abstract entity as well as a concrete physical reality”. (Kao and Obenchain, 1975, p. 286).

⁵¹⁴ 「此作用係指向於物而並非指向於其自身 … … 其活動亦非指向於指之自身。」 Xu Fuguan, 1982, pp. 16-17; see also p. 18.

⁵¹⁵ See von Quine, 1966, p. 4, 13-14; Russel, 1986, pp. 227-228.

⁵¹⁶ “As a concrete action the act of reference is not an object of reference” (Cheng and Swain, 1970, p. 141; see also pp. 144-145). Cheng and Swain distinguish between “act-of-reference-as-pure-act” (what I call “pointing as such”), and “act-of-reference-as-the-act-which-concretizes” (“pointing in action”). (*Id.*)

⁵¹⁷ Lucas, 1993, p. 249.

⁵¹⁸ This is truly what Graham calls “the experience of the undifferentiated world which precedes language.”; though he was talking about Zhuangzi, his definition fits conveniently also here. (Graham, 1967, p. 25).

⁵¹⁹ Hansen, 1983, p. 30.

order to make it understandable for us. Only after having been individualized⁵²⁰ in concrete delimited objects with clearly defined borders *wu* become *shi*, actualities, “phenomena”, all the actual reified particular manifestations of *tianxia* in action (*xianshi* 現實), things-for-us, intelligible for our understanding and use.⁵²¹ *Wu* represent all possible manifestations of *tianxia* in potency (*qianzai* 潛在), while *shi* are all actual manifestations of *tianxia* in action (*qianzai* 潛在)⁵²²: the whole phenomonic world is given by all the possible *wu* and all those *wu* that became *shi*⁵²³.

Actualities are nothing else than an elaborated version of *wu*, *wu* in action and no more only in potency, they are concretized things and thus things-for-us, in a relationship with us through the indispensable “pointing” first, and then naming in a second moment. In fact, *zhi* acts as a principle of individuation⁵²⁴: in the indifferenced mass of *wu* (things) it cuts out the borders of *shi* (actualities), thus transforming *wu* in knowledgeable and understandable objects of our intellectual discourse⁵²⁵. *Zhi* is a performative operative device in the process through which we identify actualities: by the act of pointing at things (*zhi*) one produces references to the things (*wu zhi*) that become individual in the moment in which they are pointed at (*zhi wu*). *Zhiwu* undergo the gnoseologic judgement of the subject, mediated by senses; potential objects (*wu*) have to be pointed at and individualized by the act of *zhi*⁵²⁶ so that they can be introduced in the sphere of subjective knowledge through the act of pointing that makes them things-for-us.

Still this is not the final stage of our gnoseologic process. Actually, the passage from *wu* (and *zhiwu*) to *shi* is not straightforward, there is still one intermediate stage, a sort of membrane *zhiwu* have to be filtrated through before they can become *shi*. Here we have one more final question to answer and possibly one dichotomy to solve: which is the relationship between *wuzhi* and *ming*? Are they in the end one and the

⁵²⁰ Zhou Changzhong, 1991, p. 32.

⁵²¹ Zhou Changzhong, 1991, pp. 25-27.

⁵²² See also Zhou Changzhong, 1991, p. 25-27, 32.

⁵²³ Zhou Changzhong, 1991, p. 57.

⁵²⁴ See also Cheng and Swain, 1970, p. 139.

⁵²⁵ 「天下之物皆由指定而生。」 Wang Guan, 1992, p. 50.

⁵²⁶ Xu Fuguan, pp. 13-18, 48-49; still I would not arrive at the point of talking of the formation of “images” in the subjective conscience, as the author does. Gongsun Long is for sure not applying a Kantian model.

same or is there a basic difference? There is difference indeed⁵²⁷, as Cheng and Swain strongly remark, “naming is not the act of reference”⁵²⁸. Solving this nevralgic issue will lead to disclose the intermediate stage in the gnoseologic process we just talked about⁵²⁹.

In fact, to acquire a proper knowledge of things, to understand them and consciously fill them with meaning they have to pass through our sense organs and be interpreted and reelaborated in order to be defined as concrete and concretized “actualities” (*shi*) with the decisive act of naming⁵³⁰. If “names could be seen as signs we use to mark our understanding of things via perception and conception”⁵³¹, then they are the result of the subsequent level of understanding, interiorizing and conveying reality through our own sensory experience and conceptual activity: names are a conscious human product, the “embodiment of sign and sense”⁵³², that is the further elaboration, consequent to the act of pointing and its result – the denotation of things (*wuzhi*), which turns them in individual - and thus manageable - knowledgeable objects - into a corresponding articulated system of naming conventions⁵³³. Of course naming is not the same as designating things by pointing at them, where with designation we mean “using linguistic terms to point to or call attention to certain aspects of physical reality, and especially to things”⁵³⁴; naming instead actively involves our mind in a creative process⁵³⁵ interacting with things and not only defining their borders by simply pointing at them. Below is a graphic representation of the whole process as described in the *Zhiwu Lun*:

⁵²⁷ Substantially that identified also by Kao and Obenchain, respectively between the “referring-identifying role” and the “predicative-assertive role”. (See Kao and Obenchain, 1975; see in particular pp. 285, 298-300).

⁵²⁸ Cheng and Swain, 1970, p. 141.

⁵²⁹ Note that Cheng and Swain are evidently right in complaining that the greatest fault of the *Zhiwu Lun* is that it doesn't explain how and why the act of reference occurs (see *Id.*, 1970, p. 152). My following considerations and hypothesis are based also on the overall picture I could reconstruct for myself from vital information on the gnoseologic process scattered through the *Gongsun Longzi* and provided also by other chapters, in particular for the role of senses see *Jianbai Lun*; on naming see *Mingshi Lun*. Anyway, the *Gongsun Longzi* never explains the seemingly positive role played by the human mind as activator of the gnoseologic process, so we can only suppose that it does necessarily play a fundamental role on the basis of available data.

⁵³⁰ 「物各有指，亦各有名。」 Tan Jiefu, 2006, p. 21.

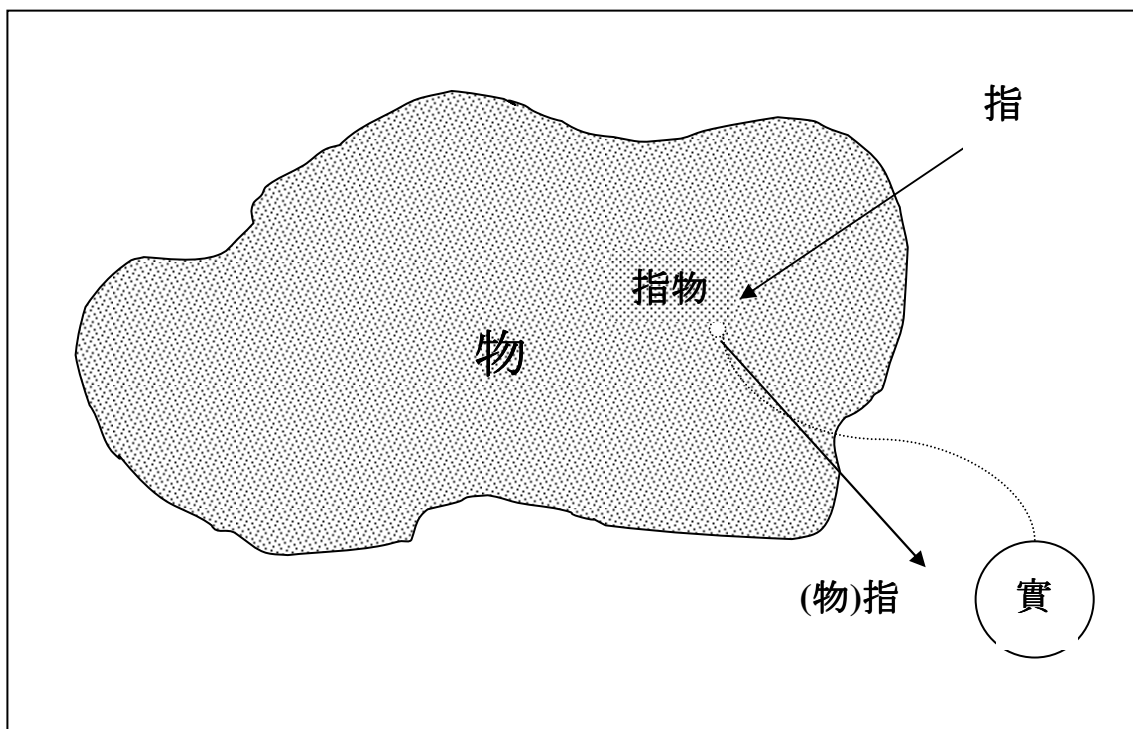
⁵³¹ Cheng Chung-ying, 1997, pp. 169-168.

⁵³² Bao Zhiming, 1987, p. 436.

⁵³³ “For Kung-sun a designation is an act involving an intentional relationship between a person, a noun and a thing.” (Rieman, 1977, p. 187).

⁵³⁴ Rieman, 1980, p. 305.

⁵³⁵ *Id.*, p. 314.



3.6 *Zhiwu Lun*: Translation

Due to its particularly cryptic nature and its concise formulaic statements, the *Zhiwu Lun* lends itself well to be reduced in an inextricable jungle of symbols by formal logic. As I have already stated, I can see no particular improvement for a further or better understanding of the text in the attempt to schematize it with the help of predicate logic⁵³⁶ – on the contrary; those who tried it couldn't provide a more consistent or coherent translation than more or less any other scholar. It is undoubtedly a precious work of mental engineering but doesn't help even a little with translating the text at all. Therefore I am proposing a classical translation, maybe a bit old-fashioned but still effective, and I doubt our fourth-century B.C. persuader – for sure no expert in predicate *calculus* - would have anything to argue against it.

In translating I think we must repeat ourselves as a mantra the rules Graham formulated for himself before getting started with the *Zhiwu Lun*:

- i. Each key word or phrase must be given the same meaning throughout [..]
- ii. The same grammatical construction must be given the same function in consecutive or parallel sentences. [..]
- iii. The way in which each sentence in the original follows on to the preceding sentence must be respected.[..]⁵³⁷

Now we are ready to start. I tried not to modify the text at all unless where truly necessary; though due to the difficulty of the text, I divided it in individual numbered sentences and employed punctuation at least in order to coordinate constituent part of sentences. Colors are required by the inescapable necessity of isolating individual building blocks that recur in parallel in the text, highlighting the characteristic of its

⁵³⁶ See for instance Rieman 1980; Kao and Obenchain (1975)'s semantic analysis in terms of "nenerative complex" doesn't provide more encouraging results.

⁵³⁷ See Graham , 1955, p. 295.

highly symmetrical formal structure. As usual, in brackets are highlighted textual variants existing between the *Daozang* and *Shuofu* editions. Here is the legend:

Abbreviations:

SF = *Shuofu* edition

DZ = *Daozang* edition

[] = variants; when underlined, they indicate the textual version chosen

{ } = modifications to the original text

1) 物莫非⁵³⁸指, 而指非指。

Translation

No thing is not the same as its pointee, and pointing as such is no pointing (at things).

Comment

In order to become a “thing”, the indifferentiated mass of things must undergo our process of pointing, as only after having been pointed at - and out - and individualized, can we talk of *a* thing: in our mind every thing correspond to a thing-for-us, since it is the only form *wu* can assume that we can understand and know; thus for us *wu* are always *zhiwu*, pointees, things pointed at. As far as the second half of the sentence is concerned, as we know already the act of pointing as such is not the same as when it is activated and is no more an object but a process in motion involving also a relationship with *wu*.⁵³⁹

⁵³⁸ *Fei* negates nominal constructions, not verbal: it “is the negative proper to the non-verbal sentence [...] that specializes in negating nouns and nominal constructions” (Sian, 1971, pp. 409-410); therefore every translation that treats *fei* as *bu*, and translates accordingly that “there is no thing which is not pointed at” or alike is grammatically wrong (see for instance Perleberg, 1952, p. 93; Zhou Yunzhi, 1994, p. 49; Pang Pu, 1989;). To misunderstand the role and the meaning of *fei* since the very beginning can seriously hinder any attempt of translation and interpretation of the text, in which terminology – and especially proper understanding and correct use of it – is absolutely fundamental. On the use of *fei* see also Pulleyblank 1959 and 1978.

⁵³⁹ There is also another possible coherent translation and interpretation of this last part of the sentence, which occurs also below in sentence 12, considering the first *zhi* as the act of pointing in action, and the second *zhi* in terms of pointee (*zhiwu*) like Cheng and Swain (1970) and Kao and Obenchain (1975) and also Kou Pao-koh (1953) do. However, they don’t seem to keep in consideration the specific meaning *fei* has in particular in the *Gongsun Longzi*, using it simply as a whatever negation. Moreover if we follow

2) 天下無指,⁵⁴⁰物無可以謂物。

Translation

If in the world there was no pointing, things couldn't be called so.

Comment

Pointing is the act of individuation that, when activated, gives birth to the process through which we cut the borders of things out from the indistinct mass of things, thus if there was no pointing we wouldn't be able to call things "things", since they would be not pointed at, not individualized and so beyond our comprehension.

3) 非指者, 天下⁵⁴¹而物可謂指乎。

Translation

If there was no pointing as such, could world and things be called pointing?

Comment

The question is if all that exists in the world would be able to point and thus to make the things pointees in case there was no pointing as such anymore. This question is fundamental, since it is the starting point of the whole argument that follows.

my interpretation of the circular structure of the *Zhiwu Lun* (see below pp. 157-162), considering the opening sentence of the chapter as the answer to the last rhetorical question which closes the text, then Cheng and Swain's translation doesn't seem to fit. Personally I find the attempt to negate what would be an identity assumption of obvious self-evidence just playing with words – saying that "pointing is no pointing" – exactly the kind of paradox Logicians were fond of, though also the other interpretation can be valid.

⁵⁴⁰ On the punctuation of this sentence, see Perleberg, 1953, p. 94.

⁵⁴¹ Wang Guan shifts here the positions of the comma; see Wang Guan, 1992, p.49.

4) 指也者，天下之所無也。

5) 物也者，天下之所有也。

Conclusion

6) 以天下之所有為天下之所無未可⁵⁴²。

Translation (4 – 5 - 6)

4) Pointing (at things) is what there isn't in the world.

5) Things are what there is in the world.

6) To deem what there is in the word as what there isn't in the world is not admissible.

Comment

The author(s) now answers the rhetorical question postulated in sentence 3 and explains why it is not possible for things to point at themselves and be pointees in absence of pointing; the answer is rather simple, as things are what concretely exists in the world while the action of pointing doesn't exist (remember that pointing does exist only as a pure act, but not when it is in action). Therefore we cannot treat things and pointing in the same way: *wu* cannot be pointing and cannot play the same role pointing has.

7) 天下無指，而物不可謂指也。

Translation

There is no pointing (at things) in the world and things cannot be called pointing.

Comment

⁵⁴² Note the close parallelism of the polar terms *wu* 無 and *you* 有, both recurring in the final conclusive statement that synthesizes the first two strictly corresponding definitions of *zhi* 指 and *wu* 物.

In the world there exists nothing like pointing-in-action (which, as we have already seen in sentence 4, is what doesn't exist in the world), things do not point at anything and cannot be considered as the act of pointing.

8) 不可謂指者, 非指也。

Translation

What cannot be called pointing is no pointing.

Comment

What cannot be called pointing, that is to say things (as it was just underlined in sentence 7), of course cannot be the same as pointing. If it was pointing, then of course it could also be called pointing indeed.

9) 非指者, 物莫非指也。

Translation

It is no pointing, and no thing is not the same as its pointee.

Comment

This sentence works as a sort of closure for the textual block formed by sentences 7 – 8 – 9; at the same time it recalls the final syntagm of sentence 8 above, reconnecting us to the very beginning of the text, to a statement we are clearly invited never to forget once more, that is that things are their pointees.

10) 天下無指, 而物不可謂指者。

Translation

There is no pointing (at things) in the world and things cannot be called pointing.

Comment

This is a sort of reprise, a refrain identical with sentence 7 that at the same time recalls the opening of sentence 4, creating a ternary rhythm : [4 (5-6) 7 (8-9) 10]. It serves the purpose to sum up the textual block above and remind the reader the important standpoint which is the result of the previous reasoning, in order to prepare him to face the following step in the argumentation.

11) 非⁵⁴³有非指者, 物莫非指也。

Translation

It is not the case that there is no pointing as such, and no thing is not the same as its pointee.

Comment

Actually, we know there must necessarily be pointing; if not, there would be no things intelligible to us. But there is pointing indeed, and it is proved by the fact that we can tell there are things, which to be things for us must have been pointed at and to be pointees. If pointing as such would not exist, than also things couldn't be the same as their pointees. But things are their pointees, so indeed there must exist some pointing, though the process in action of pointing at things is a mental action that does not concretely exist in the world.

12) 物莫非指者, 而指非指也。

Translation

(It is the case that) no thing is not the same as its pointee, and pointing as such is no pointing (at things).

⁵⁴³ “When *fei* occurs at the beginning of a verbal sentence, frequently we have a structure in which the whole verbal sentence is nominalized, and serves as the nominal predicate of the sentence. What we have then is a copular sentence where *fei* negates the nominal predicate composed of the nominalized verbal sentence.” (Sian, 1971, p. 411).

Comment

This sentence, the very same we first encountered at the beginning, marks a whole new textual sequence or “canto”, as we will see in the next paragraph; thus it is perfectly coherent that it opens also the first line of a new (almost) parallel textual block.

13) 天下無指者，

14) 生[SF于/DZ 於]物之各有名，不為指也。

15) 不為指而謂之指，是兼不為指。

16) 以有 不為指 之 {emend with 為}⁵⁴⁴ 無 不為指 未可。

17) 且指者，天下之所兼。

Translation (13 – 14 – 15 – 16 - 17)

13) There is no pointing (at things) in the world.

14) Each thing has a name which is not deemed pointing.

15) To call “pointing” what is not deemed pointing is assigning a double reference⁵⁴⁵ to what is not considering pointing.

16) To deem there being what is not deemed pointing as there not being what is not deemed pointing is not admissible.

17) Moreover pointing is what has a double reference in the world.

⁵⁴⁴ I introduce this emendation by *usus scribendi*; see the almost parallel construction in sentence 6.

⁵⁴⁵ I don't agree with Wang Guan's explanation of *jian* as the sum of 「指」 and 「不為指」. (Wang Guan, 1992, p. 51).

Comment

Again this new block starts with the refrain that there exists no pointing as process in action in the world, but what should call our attention is the fact that here the author(s) underlines a fundamental issue, clarifying what might have been a bit confusing until this point, that is the role of names in the whole process of pointing. What we discover is, first if all, that all things have names, and, what's most important, that names of things are not the same as their "pointings"⁵⁴⁶: *ming* is different from *wuzhi*! Then the text goes on building his argument in the same way he did with the block comprehending sentences 4, 5 and 6; though the structure lacks an element to be perfectly parallel, it is formally highly resemblant, concluding the argument with a *yi* 以... ..為 structure, one of the *Gongsun Longzi* favourite, followed by a statement that share the very same structure with sentence 6. The lack of symmetry might even be intentional since, according to Dirk Meyer, it is a quite common argumentative trick to employ a structure which revolves around what apparently seems just a out-of-tune parallel line, in order to gain the reader's attention and introduce a new topic⁵⁴⁷, which is actually what happens here with *jian* (double reference). It is the *Zhiwu Lun* itself to tell us that *zhi* is what constitutionally has a double reference: in fact, it is at the same time the act of pointing as such and the pointing at things or pointing in action.

18) 天下無指者,物不可謂無指也。

Translation

There is no pointing (at things) in the world, and things cannot be said to be without pointing of things.

Comment

A new block starts, still with the same refrain, weaving a subtle web of inner cross-references and helping to beat the rhythm of the text; the second syntagm fundamentally stresses the fact that things cannot be without pointing (interpreted in the sense of

⁵⁴⁶ See also Cheng and Swain, 1970, p. 141; Kao and Obenchain, 1975, p. 291.

⁵⁴⁷ See Meyer, 2008, pp. 78, 138.

wuzhi), which is quite obvious as in the moment in which we can call them “things”, they must have been pointed at. As we will see just below, the whole block of sentences 18 – 19 - 20 doesn’t add anything really new to the discussion, but rather further clarifies the main results of the preceding argumentations.

19) 不可謂無指者, 非有非指也。

Translation

They cannot be said to be without pointing of things (*wuzhi*), and it is not the case there is no pointing as such.

Comment

The whole block is a chain of the same block in a “fishbone” scheme: reprise of the last part of the previous sentence (things cannot be such for us without pointings, understood in the sense of *wuzhi*; therefore they cannot be without pointing at all), and then reprise of a previous argument that sends us back and preludes to and introduces the conclusive statement of the textual block, which is also the last of the three blocks structured in this way.

20) 非有非指者, 物莫非指⁵⁴⁸。

Translation

It is not the case that there is no pointing as such, and no thing is not the same as its pointee.

Comment

⁵⁴⁸ Following Graham, both Rieman and Cheng and Swain completely overlook sentence 20, which in my opinion is a mistake: this is an inescapable block in the pericope – and in the text overall – parallelism, as will be clear observing the scheme in the next paragraph at page 157.

Here is the final statement of this second macro-sequence or “canto”, which is exactly the same that closed the first sequence in sentence 11, and starts with the final syntagm of the previous sentence thus building a web of cross-references. As we have already seen, there must be pointing as in the moment in which things can be identified as such, they must have been involved by pointing and identified as a pointee, which is the result of pointing in action.

21) 指非非指也，指與物非指也。

Translation

Pointing at things is not the same as what is no pointing, and pointing and things combined are not the same as the act of pointing.

Comment

The first syntagm has a really complex formulation, but it just means that pointing in action is not the same as things; moreover, pointing combined with things is also not pointing, which is clear enough: pointing at things and things together (whose final result are *zhiwu*) cannot be the same as the pure act of pointing, also because pointing as such cannot point at itself.

22) 使天下無物指，誰徑謂非指。

23) 天下無物，誰徑謂指。

24) 天下有指無物指，誰徑謂非指，徑謂無物非指。

Translation (22 – 23 – 24)

22) If in the world there were no pointings of things, who in the end would say what is no pointing?

23) If in the world there were no things, who in the end would say what is pointing as such?

24) If in the world there was pointing as such but no pointings of things, who in the end would say what is no pointing, and that there are no thing which are not their pointees?

Comment

This portion of text presents three rhetorical questions in a row whose meaning can be paraphrased as follows: 22) if there were no denotations of things deriving from the action of pointing, there would be no sense in talking about what is no pointing - that is things - because without this denotations we wouldn't be able to obtain pointed things (things to which is attached a denotation), which are the only we are able to deal with; 23) if there were no things at all, there would make no sense talking about pointing⁵⁴⁹, as its exclusive object of reference are things; 24) if there was the act of pointing as such, but not its progressive manifestation in action, it also would be useless to talk of things and pointees because without *zhi* as pointing in action we wouldn't be able to individuate things in the mass of all *wu*⁵⁵⁰.

25) 且夫指[SF故/DZ 固⁵⁵¹]自為非指，奚待⁵⁵²[SF于/DZ 於]物而乃與為指。

Translation

Moreover if the pointing inherently in itself is deemed no pointing at things, how come that it depends on things and in the moment in which it is combined with them it is deemed pointing at things?

Comment

This final rhetorical question brings us back to the first instance, which is also in all respects the correct answer to it, thus building a circular argument; moreover, if we considered also a possible didactic intent implied in the development of the argumentation exposed in the *Zhiwu Lun*: arrived at this point the reader has been given

⁵⁴⁹ 「若天下無物，則天下無指。」 Tan Jiefu, 2006, p. 19; see also p. 23.

⁵⁵⁰ See also Cheng and Swain, 1970, pp. 142-143.

⁵⁵¹ See Graham's definition and analysis of the term in Graham, 1978, pp. 187-188.

⁵⁵² *Dai* 待 is a technical term employed also in the Mohist Canons; it is quite rare to be found alone as usually is used together with *bi* 必 (*bidai* 必待); when it occurs alone, it means "wait on, depend on". See Graham, 1978, p. 202.

all the necessary tools and notions in order to be able to articulate an appropriate answer and argument a coherent explanation. The contradiction in the statement is only apparent, since we know already that *zhi* as the act of pointing as such and *zhi* as pointing at things have two very different status and range, so it is easy now to elaborate an argument as answer to this question, which functions a sort of “teaser”: it challenges the reader to build a brand new original argumentation himself, starting from and inspired to the example of the “facsimile”, the complete exemplificative argumentation just given.

3.6.1 Structure and parallelism in the *Zhiwu Lun*

Structure is undoubtedly a fundamental issue that cannot be overlooked when dealing with the *Zhiwu Lun*; even a careless reader should have noticed that the text is full of repeated portions of text, even entire sentences, but it is not possible to have a clear and complete perception of how important and consistent the use of symmetrical and parallel constructions is in this essay. Therefore a graphic representation that allow an appropriate analysis of these issues is required. In facing this task, the recent work by Dirk Meyer on argument-construction in what he defines “argument-based texts” and “authority-based texts”⁵⁵³ is definitely inescapable.

Vladimir Spirin had already developed a somewhat similar approach, taking into primary consideration the structural composition of texts, basing his analysis and graphic schematization of texts in particular on the feature of parallelism or ‘parallélisme structurel’⁵⁵⁴; however, the very limit of this method is underlined by the author himself, who remarks that only a canonized text, what can be considered a ‘canon’ or *jing*, can be described by his formal representation comprehending nine elements disposed in a square⁵⁵⁵. As the *Gongsun Longzi* of course cannot be

⁵⁵³ See Meyer, 2008.

⁵⁵⁴ Spirin, 1991, p. 39.

⁵⁵⁵ “L’examen de multiples exemples de schémas complets de texte amène à la constatation suivante: ils comportent en général neuf éléments. [...] une telle organisation a été mise en oeuvre consciemment et [...]”

considered a “canon”, any attempt to apply this scheme to its content is doomed to fail, as – we discover when trying to inscribe the pericopes in a nine-element square – it rather works in groups of four or six parallel elements, no more. This would further corroborate the hypothesis that the *Zhiwu Lun* due to his highly complex interwoven structure, articulated in three different parts rich in intratextual quotations and inner cross-references, can be qualified as what Dirk Meyer defines “argument-based text”, in which “author(s) [...] develop complex systematic analysis of a given philosophic topic by combining these units into larger meaningful entities, that is, the pericope, the sub-canto, canto and finally the text overall [...]. The building block of the argument-based text thus does not represent an isolated unit, but in the truest sense of the word, it is a building block of a larger whole.”⁵⁵⁶

The scheme below is a graphic representation of the *Zhiwu Lun*, where each letter corresponds to a syntagm and indexed letters indicate parallel syntagms; when in brackets, syntagms are not properly parallel though showing high resemblance with other syntagms marked by corresponding letters. Letters or group of letters (which correspond respectively to individual syntagms, or sentences composed by two syntagms) are framed and linked by lines when parallel. On the left part of the scheme are reported the numbers assigned to the sentences in the translation given in paragraph 3.6. As we will see, the inner structure of the *Zhiwu Lun* follows the scheme below:

Section One

“Hinge”

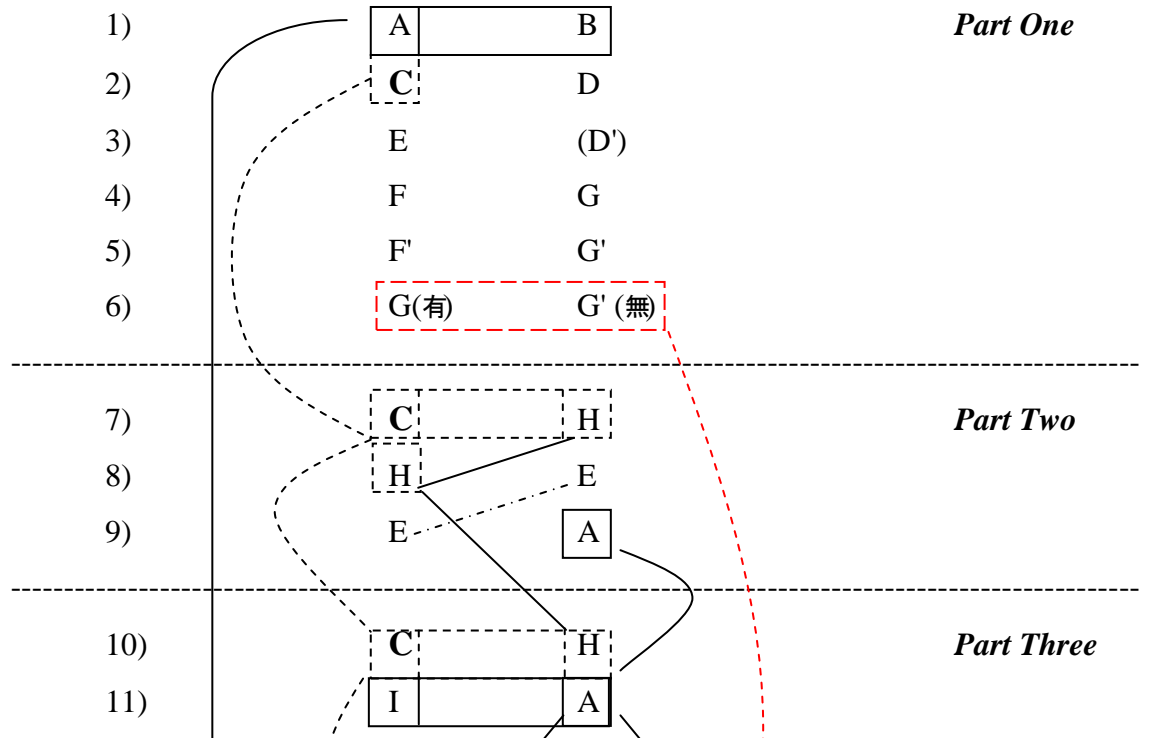
Section Two (specular to Section One)

Conclusion

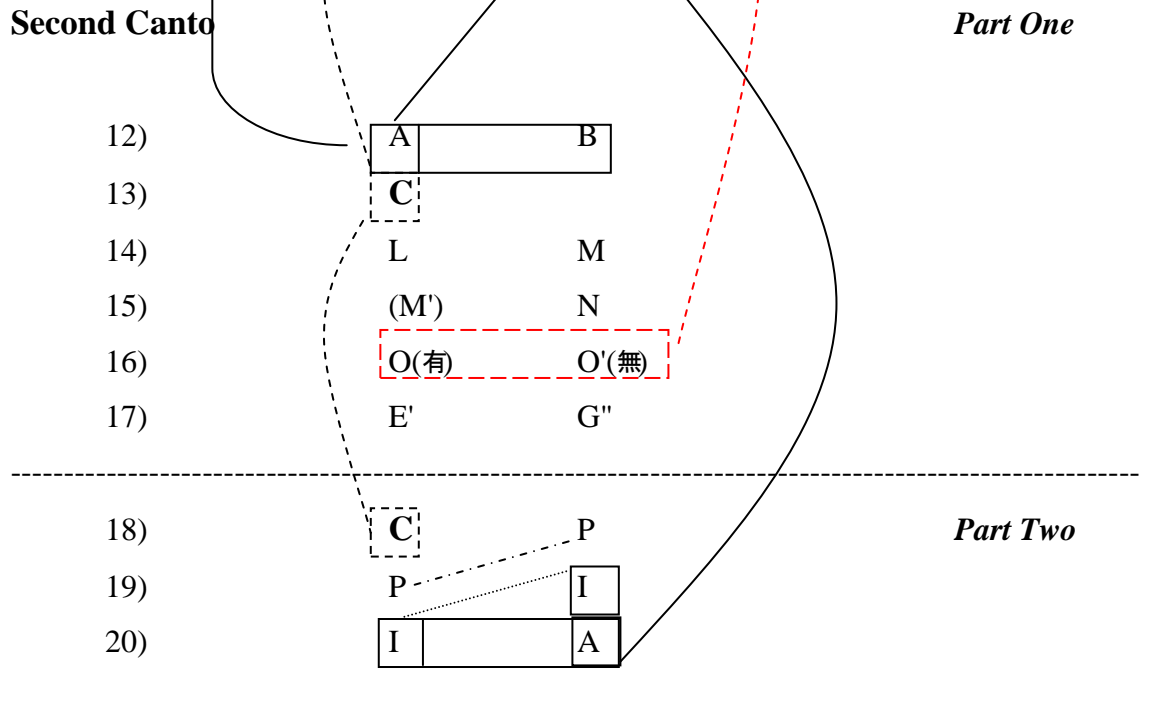
c’est par référence à son utilisation qu’on a recouru au terme de ‘canon’ (*jing*). [...] Réciproquement, un texte qui par schématisation s’inscrivait dans un tel modèle est un texte canonisé.” (Spirin, 1991, pp. 42-43). A more articulated exposition of Spirin’s method of graphic representation can be found in Spirin, 1976.

⁵⁵⁶ Meyer, 2008, p. 251.

First Canto



Second Canto



Conclusion

21)	Q	R	
22)	}	T	
23)		S'	T'
24)		S''	T''
25)	U	(R')	

The first striking feature that stuns the reader after checking the scheme is the incredible specularity and regularity that seem to rule over the development of the whole argument, and its almost architectonic construction. The text can be divided in three parts or macro-sequences, two specular “cantos” and a conclusion. Both cantos starts with the very same sentence, which marks the beginning of each Part One (the A-B sequence), followed short after by C. The sentence corresponding to C in the scheme is the refrain we talked about before⁵⁵⁷ (*tianxia wu zhi* 「天下無指」), a sort of reprise that reinforces the concept and help keeping in mind concepts through the musicality of the text, which has almost a riddle-like rhythm, enhanced by the short strings of text constituted by parallel units. It opens the second sentence of each canto, thus establishing an A-B-C fixed block, and then marks the first part of the opening sentence in Part Two (both) and Three. Actually, as we will see, we should rather consider Part Three as a sort of bridge between the two cantos and not properly a part of the First Canto.

The First Canto appears divided in three parts, corresponding to the two parts in which the Second Canto is organized, except for this third part, the *coda* of the First Canto, a few lines that only apparently break the symmetry between the two macro-sequences. In fact, this third part is no mistake, but most probably has been consciously build up this way, formulated in these terms and especially inserted at this very same

⁵⁵⁷ See p. 151, 153 of the present study.

point of the text. Part three has a pivotal role in the argument construction⁵⁵⁸, since it reports the first assumption of part two, shading light on it, and at the same time discloses what will be the final conclusion of the Second Canto. It is the key for understanding the two cantos, a sort of hinge around which they are articulated and unravel the reasoning since this focal point. At one time, Part Three clarifies what has been said and foretells what we are going to read and the topics discussed, focusing the reader's attention on what is really important, which are the key terms and the arguments discussed, while the other groups of sentences aim at disclosing the argumentation of the reasoning and may be labelled as necessary intermediate passages, "mechanical" parts of the demonstration.

The symmetry between the two cantos is further underlined by the fact that Part One of both cantos ends with parallel sentences, a symmetrical couple at the end of the First Canto and another similar one at the end of the Second Canto. Each of these sentences plays on the polarity between *wu* 無 and *you* 有, shares the same grammatical structure (a *yi* *wei* 以... .. 為 construction) and the same expression in order to introduce in the First Canto – and to clarify in the Second Canto - the terms object of the *yi*..... *wei* construction: *tianxia zhi suo* 「天下之所」. Part Two in both cantos is almost specular, though one element is missing in the Part Two of the Second Canto in order to have a perfectly regular structure, the hypothetical counterpart of C; thus, we might suppose two scenarios: 1) the text is not corrupted, nothing is missing and the argument was intentionally build this way in order to gain attention thank to this lack of symmetry that strikes for sure the trained reader's eye; 2) the text is corrupted and one syntagm is missing; we would expect that the correct reconstructed sequence should be C-H, thus perfectly identical with the beginning of both Part Two and Three in the First Canto. Both the *Shuofu* and *Daozang* editions lack a counterbalance to sentence C occurring here, so this might tell us the *Zhiwu Lun* had been transmitted in its actual form after having – or having not - undergone corruption between the 4th and 6th century⁵⁵⁹: we cannot tell if the text reads just like this or if one sentence is missing, anyhow the reasoning can go on even without an element coupling with C.

⁵⁵⁸ Applying Meyer's terminology, what would be called a synthesizing element (see Meyer, 2008, p. 106, 109).

⁵⁵⁹ See note 15, p. 13.

Though this apparent “hole” in Part Two of the Second Canto, we can still appreciate the “fishbone” cross-reference structure of identical building blocks, which characterizes the last two sections of each canto (precisely, sentences 7 – 8 – 9 and 18 – 19 – 20) and inscribes them in an argumentative chain⁵⁶⁰.

The conclusion has also a strictly regular structure, with a central body constituted by three rhetorical questions in a row, similar in wording and phrasing. As I have already disclosed, my hypothesis is this rhetorical question is a sort of “teaser” for the reader, challenging him to try to make his point starting from the knowledge he has acquired by reading the text until the end, and that the correct answer would be the first one (A – B), in a sort of circular structure.

Finally after this analysis having a look at the graphic schematization of the text, I think that beyond any doubt the *Zhiwu Lun* qualifies as a text in which “the compositional structure [...] is consciously designed to mimic the so-called ‘logical’ structure of the argument.”⁵⁶¹

⁵⁶⁰ Note however that, as Cheng and Swain remarked, “it is interesting, in view of past discussions of chain sorites in Chinese philosophy, to see that although there are some examples of this form in the *Chih Wu Lun*, the *Chih Wu Lun* as a whole is much closer to an axiomatic system than a chain.” (Cheng and Swain, 1970, p. 146).

⁵⁶¹ Meyer, 2008, p. 84.

CONCLUSIONS

I would like now to draw a few final speculative conclusions on the *Gongsun Longzi*, but with a particular attention devoted to the *Baima Lun* and the *Zhiwu Lun*, exposing some considerations I came up to after having undertaken the systematic study of these texts. My final remarks deal mainly on the kind of origins and evolutionary process we can postulate for such arguments – and the corresponding texts in which these arguments are expounded – how they were conceived and developed. As there are no explicit descriptions on how persuaders were trained in order to acquire the necessary dialectical skills to pursue their career, no illuminating clue on the methods of teaching employed or the subjects taught, no “rhetoric primer” left for us to study, all we can do is try our very best to read through the texts we have, trying to deduce which could have been the dynamics of teaching, learning and practicing rhetoric and dialectics in the Warring States period.

I would distinguish two hypothetical scenarios⁵⁶², corresponding to “political and educational arenas”⁵⁶³: the “teaching scene” and the “public debate” (mainly at court). Moreover, I would further divide the “public debate” scenario into two possible occasions, the dialectical skirmish and the court entertainment.

In the “teaching scene”, we should expect a master involving his disciples in the study of an argument at large, essentially an oral exchange, taking “the shape of didactic conversation”⁵⁶⁴, but probably supported also by a written draft which should help the student to memorize and internalize the various passages of the argumentation and to study it more closely. This sort of draft might have given birth to a dialectical exercise,

⁵⁶² My hypothesis is a further elaboration of Lu Xing’s: “The first (setting) was the political realm where you shui or bian shi served as advisers to the kings. [...] the second arena for rhetorical activities was the realm of education where intellectuals taught their students various subjects using a lecture and discursive format.” (Lu Xing, 1998, pp. 64-65). Lu Xing postulates a third possible scenario, that is the Jixia “Academy”; however, due to consistent doubts raised by Nathan Sivin on the existence of a proper structured institution recognizable as an “Academy” in the Qi capital, I prefer to leave it aside as possible scenario (see Sivin 1991 and 1995). On debates held in public at court or in private settings, see also Kroll, 1985-86, in particular p. 121; Crump, 1964.

⁵⁶³ Lu Xing, 1998, p. 2.

⁵⁶⁴ Crump, 1964, p. 36.

thus working as a guideline or framework of reference: a sort of *canovaccio*⁵⁶⁵, a sort of repository of ideas, arguments and – what’s most important - counterarguments in order to learn how to defend even the most undefendable position; with these drafts disciples were trained and motivated to enact simulated dialectic exchanges in similar situation set *ad hoc* by their masters in order to test their improvement in the application and practice of their rhetorical skills. In my opinion, this hypothetical draft or *canovaccio* would represent just a first nearly extemporaneous compilation, and not the final polished formulation and neat organization of the arguments as we read them today in the received text. In fact, these kind of more refined texts belong to a later stage in the evolution of the topic, which in the meantime should have acquired a certain notoriety; at the same time, a tradition in the development of the argument along set of established focal passages– even though not necessarily appearing in a fixed order - and touching a certain number of key terms and crucial core issues should have been already developed

The *Baima Lun* is probably a typical case of an argument “born oral” as a funny anecdote though not deprived of a deeper philosophical meaning, an example of what Lewis identifies as “oral sayings employed for teaching”⁵⁶⁶; it was most probably written down in a second moment, possibly as a sort of “suasoriae”⁵⁶⁷, a rhetorical exercise for didactical use, and as a kind of *canovaccio* for practicing argumentation in debate simulations.

This argument apparently became famous “worldwide” due to its great appeal and thus entered rightfully – though not exclusively - in the repertoire of the Logicians; in parallel to the oral diffusion of the argument, there developed a written tradition in which the didactic drafts used for teaching would represent a first rough formulation, that later evolved in more refined and polished versions⁵⁶⁸, supposed to be coherent on general rules: therefore, it is now clear enough that most texts recorded in the *Gongsun Longzi* – though mainly dialogic in nature - are not exact transcriptions of actual

⁵⁶⁵ A schematic outline or draft given to actors and used as a cue in 16th century Italian improvised drama, the *Commedia dell’Arte* (“Italian Comedy”, or more literally “Comedy of Art”).

⁵⁶⁶ Lewis, 1999, p. 6.

⁵⁶⁷ “The exercise of writing fictitious speeches for historical characters involved in actual, usually well-documented, situations.”(Goldin, 1993, p. 9).

⁵⁶⁸ See Kroll, 1985-86, p. 122.

debates⁵⁶⁹, nor even extemporaneous sketches, but meditated products of intellectual thought and samples of artistry through words.

Though there is no ingenuity, no naïvety in these final editions, whose argument construction and formal structure is for sure not left to chance, still I would read the *Baima Lun* not as the aseptic and predetermined exposition from top to toe of the of the argument *tout court*, as it would happen with a text which is conceived since the very beginning as a written product, but considering also the influences given by its improvisational character which necessarily must have got into the written text, thus making it assume also a polymorphic nature.

The somewhat uncomfortable dislocation of questions and answers in the *textus receptus* is probably the clear sign of a later rearrangement by editors who had to deal to a bundle of bamboo strips in disarray. Still, individual building blocks seem to show extreme cohesiveness and little variation, which let us suppose, as we have already said, a high level of textual stability, hinting to a solid text with a history.

Written drafts were most probably used also by masters themselves when preparing a debate – similarly as accountants preparing a harangue⁵⁷⁰. Here we come to the first type of hypothetical “public debate”⁵⁷¹, which often took place at the court of the various sovereigns, mainly because persuaders were usually making a living serving as officials or living as retainers at the local kings’ and princes’ courts. Thus the court would be the most obvious location of these “dialectical skirmishes”, in which usually one persuader challenges another one on a certain argument. Being capable of defending one’s theses and outtalking the opponent was not only a matter of intellectual prestige, as most often winning a debate also meant preserving the patronage of the local lord, protecting one’s position at court and one’s office⁵⁷²: see the case of Gonsun

⁵⁶⁹ Crump, 1964; in particular p. 77.

⁵⁷⁰ This opinion is shared also by Harbsmeier: “what we have of Kungsun Lung’s dialogue on the white horse is not a transcript of an actual discussion. Rather it seems to be a paradigmatic summary of the ways in which Kungsun Lung was prepared to argue his outrageous thesis. None the less, this summary is a unique piece of direct evidence on the argumentative practice of the Chinese sophists.” (Harbsmeier 1998, p. 304).

⁵⁷¹ I disagree with Sivin, who claims that “philosophers rarely carried on oral debates with living rivals.” (Sivin, 1991, p. 21). Though we can assume that most – if not even all – literary characters are often fictitious, still we should admit at least that the one-to-one dialogue and debate format, of which the received literature abounds, should somewhat describe what was a common contemporary phenomenon happening at court, involving real flesh and bones debaters, though not necessarily the legendary figures traded down by the tradition.

⁵⁷² See Kroll, 1985-86, p. 121.

Long, who, defeated by Zou Yan, was promptly dismissed without regrets by the fickle Lord of Pingyuan after many years of honoured service.

The last possible stage for these debates to take place is still the court, but involved in a different kind of activity, that is “entertainment”. The practice of playing jokes or telling funny tales to delight kings and their guests was a common activity in courts, however when carried on by professional persuaders I would not consider it as a simple example of *divertissement tout court*, as I still see a hidden intent in what seems just a foolish non-sense. As we have already seen, paradoxes were often used to express truths and convey meanings in a disguised way, as a sort of indirect criticism or persuasive discourse in order to avoid the sovereign’s wrath but still trying to impart a teaching or suggesting food for thought to the public: the hope was to find somebody receptive to the disclosure of this deeper significance reading through the lines of these bizarre proofs of dialectical ability. Actually, according to the sources Gongsun Long himself never employs paradoxes just for fun: he usually contextualizes them, applying them to the solution of delicate diplomatic issues or in dialectical challenges, but he never embodies the role of the jester as such.

However, it is undeniable that debates between persuaders sounded fascinating and weird, so there is still an entertaining component in their taking place at court, which must not be underestimated. Moreover, public debates were also the best form of advertising for a persuader, who could display his sharp tongue and show off his skills in order to gain a lord’s attention, who might be intrigued enough to decide to employ the persuader in the political practice of his state’s administration.

From this point of view, I definitely agree with Kern’s idea of “textual performance”⁵⁷³, rather than accepting a static nature of the written text and a passive role of a mute reader. I would rather argue for a living text, that is alive and is lived and experienced through its frequentation and practice, brought back to a new life in a slightly different actualization each time it is performed, a fluid composite unity which is ready to be moulded and to undergo change according to individual interpretation and occasional realization.

However, a necessary distinction must be made between texts with a dialogic structure included in the *Gongsun Longzi* collection – such as the *Baima Lun* - and the

⁵⁷³ Kern, 2005a, p. xviii.

Zhiwu Lun. As we have already seen, this particular essay presents itself as an argument-based text, thus needs to be considered under a different point a view. In fact, argument-based texts gain their argumentative force from the formal organization and disposition of the arguments treated, and the inner cross-references build between elements of different pericopes thanks to structural features and rhetorical devices which let the reader elaborate immediate links to other constitutive part of the argument. Consequently, this typology of texts without any doubts is the conscious cultural product of a meditated plan of exposition of a certain topic which leaves nothing to chance, thus is “written in nature”⁵⁷⁴ and should be considered a text to be read – and possibly discussed – but not as approximate draft for practical use.

Though the originality of the formulation of the *Zhiwu Lun* structure, its contents are not detached from the general line of thought running through all the texts included in the *Gongsun Longzi*: the main issue is still the necessary relationship between names and actualities, and the process through which this inescapable relationship happens.

Finally, keeping in mind these considerations, we can dare to postulate the *Gongsun Longzi* as a “handbook of dialectic”⁵⁷⁵ or “textbook on logic”⁵⁷⁶ though not in the Western sense of the word. In fact, it is not a proper manual or primer as we would expect it to be: it doesn’t provide precise definitions and extensive descriptions of rhetorical techniques and dialectical tropes; instead it formulates arguments and counterarguments, expounding almost complete debates in order to provide a concrete sample of how a thesis can be developed in oratorical practice, and – what’s most important - from both sides of the coin - showing how it is possible to treat a topic from opposite points of view still discussing it in a sound and coherent way⁵⁷⁷.

Finally, who was Gongsun Long then? A fictitious character without any doubts, an authoritative figure used to legitimate the writings and the episodes associated with him, though possibly inspired to a real flesh-and-bones man living in the Warring States period, who came to populate a few tasty anecdotes and inspire an entire collection of dialectical writings named after him; a politician and official who was fond of – and

⁵⁷⁴ Meyer, 2008, p. 311.

⁵⁷⁵ Reding, 1986, p. 369; though this smart definition is employed by Reding with reference to the Mohists, nevertheless in my opinion it fits perfectly also the very nature of the *Gongsun Longzi*.

⁵⁷⁶ Volkov applies this term to “Chinese logical treaties in the form of collections of examples” (Volkov 1992, p. 3).

⁵⁷⁷ See Crump, 1964, p. 118, 120.

extremely skilled in – debate and argumentation; a shrewd diplomat and refined scholar with an almost unreachable ability in playing with language and turning situations to his own advantage by weaving a web of cunning words: a true “maître de rhétorique”⁵⁷⁸, as Kou Pao-koh defines him. In fact, he was for sure not only a jester or a minor character animating the Lord of Pingyuan’s court: he is described as a proper *bianshi*, a debater who didn’t belong to any particular grouping or “school”, an independent thinker serving at court capable of logical subtleties useful in diplomatic practice, sharing a far-seeing and cautious political vision.

Though I am conscious of the enormous limits and unfaithfulness of comparative thinking, still it is undeniable that if we closely examine with an unprejudiced look Freeman’s definition of Gorgias, we will find many intriguing similarities with our persuader’s own condition as described until now: “he was not only an ambassador, but a consummate speaker as well [...] his speeches written as exercises, probably as models for his pupils”⁵⁷⁹. Keeping in mind the obvious peculiarities and necessary differences between the two particular socio-political and cultural situations of ancient Greece and early China⁵⁸⁰, a framework of reference highlighting a highly compatibility rate of a somewhat similar scenario, showing at least a few evident common points in the processes of transmission and tradition of knowledge – oral and written - cannot be completely ignored.

⁵⁷⁸ Kou Pao-koh, 1953, p. 131.

⁵⁷⁹ Freeman, 1953, p. 359; see also Crump. 1964, p. 98.

⁵⁸⁰ Lu Xing, 1998, p. 5, 42.

APPENDIX A: Additional translations

Gongsun Longzi : translation of *Jifu* 跡府 chapter 1

Chapter 1 – Anthology of deeds⁵⁸¹

Gongsun Long was a dialectician of the time of the Six States: since he was dissatisfied with the confusion about names and their actualities, thanks to his great talent he elaborated the theory of “preserving White”. He formulated analogies subverting things, in order to support the theory of “preserving White”. He said: “White horse is no horse. White horse is no horse because “white” is what denotes the color, while “horse” is what denotes the shape. Color is not the same as shape, and shape is not the same as color. Therefore, if I’m talking about color, combining shape with it is not appropriate, vice versa if I’m talking about shape, it is not suitable for color to follow. Now, to combine these two element to form one thing is wrong. If you are looking for a white horse in a stable and there is none, but on the contrary there is a black one, still it cannot correspond to there being a white horse. And if it cannot correspond to there being a white horse, than it means that there is not what I am looking for, and if there is not what I’m looking for then in the end a white horse is no horse.” He put forth this distinction in order to rectify the relationship between names and actualities and, in doing so, changing the world.

Gongsun Long and Kong Chuan met at the court of the Prince of Pingyuan of Zhao. Chuan said: “I always heard it said that you are a righteous man, and it’s been long since I desired to become Your disciple; however, I do not accept that You deem a white horse not a horse. I beg You to disown such an artifice, so that I could ask You to accept me as disciple.”

⁵⁸¹ See also Harbsmeier’s and Reding’s partial translations (Harbsmeier, 1989, pp. 152-153 and Reding, 1985, pp. 430-432).

Gongsun Long answered: “What you said is absurd. What I am famous for is just the “white horse” theory; now if you make me dismiss it, then I have nothing more to teach you. Moreover, he who wants to get himself a master does so because his knowledge and his learning are inferior to the master’s. Now you make me dismiss my theory: this is teaching me first and then taking me as a master; to teach somebody first and then take him as master is absurd. Moreover that “white horse” is no “horse” is a statement accepted even by Confucius. I heard that the King of Chu stretched his bow Fanruo and fixed a Wanggui arrow to shot alligators and rhinoceros in the Yunmeng⁵⁸² park, but lost his weapon. The Ministers of the Left and the Right gave the order to look for it, but the King said: “Halt! The King of Chu lost his bow, a man of Chu will get it, why still looking for it?”. Confucius heard this and commented: “The King of Chu is human and righteous but not accomplished yet. He said that a man lost his bow, and that another man would have found it, must he necessarily be a man of Chu?”. In this way Confucius distinguished a man of Chu from what is called a man. The fact that you accept that Confucius distinguished “man of Chu” from “man” and you don’t accept that I distinguish “white horse” from “horse” is absurd. You cultivate the Confucian doctrine but refuse what Confucius himself accepted; if you want to study with me but you make me dismiss my teachings, then even if I could multiply myself for a hundred times, I couldn’t be worth as before.”

Kong Chuan kept silent.

Gongsun Long was a guest at the court of the Prince of Pingyuan of Zhao; Kong Chuan was a descendant of Confucius. Kong Chuan met Gongsun Long and said: “I am from Lu, and I heard of Your wisdom and Your noble conduct. It’s been long since I desired to become Your disciple, now finally I could meet You. There is only one thing among Your teachings that I cannot accept, that is that You consider a white horse to be not a horse. I beg You to dismiss the teaching that white horse is no horse so that I can ask You to become Your disciple.”

Gongsun Long answered: “What you said doesn’t make sense. My teaching consists in deeming a white horse no horse. If you make me dismiss this theory, then I have nothing to teach. To leave me without anything to teach and then study with me is absurd. One who wants to study with me must consider his wisdom and knowledge

⁵⁸² Lake area in contemporary Hubei province.

inferior to mine; now asking me to dismiss the theory that white horse is no horse means demanding to teach me first and then taking me as master; to teach me first and then taking me as master is absurd. This situation in which you want to teach me reminds me of when the King of Qi questioned Yin Wen. The King of Qi asked Yin Wen: “I keep scholars⁵⁸³ in great esteem, how can it ever be that there is none in the State of Qi?”

Yin Wen replied: “I would like to know what Your Majesty means with ‘scholar’.” The King of Qi didn’t answer. Yin Wen asked: “Now if there was such a man - loyal in serving his prince, filial towards his parents, faithful to friends, agreeable with neighbours – putting into practice these four kinds of exemplary behaviour could he be said to be a scholar?” The King of Qi answered: “Excellent! This is exactly what I mean by ‘scholar’.” Yin Wen then asked: “If Your Majesty had such a man at his service, would You promote him to the rank of official?” The King answered : “This is just what I want but cannot get.” At that time the King of Qi greatly esteemed courage. Thus Yin Wen inquired: “If there was a man that, in the middle of the crowd of your court, would be insulted but in the end wouldn’t dare to react, would Your Majesty anyway promote him to the rank of official?” The King answered: “He is a great man indeed, but not to react to an insult would be a dishonour! If he is dishonoured I would not promote him to the rank of official.” Yin Wen replied: “This man, even if he doesn’t react to the offences suffered, didn’t fail to honour the four kinds of exemplary behaviour for which he was deemed a scholar. If Your Majesty in one instance would promote him and in the other wouldn’t, then is it the case that he who was said to be a scholar in the end is not so?” The King of Qi didn’t answer. Yin Wen continued: “If now we consider a sovereign that wants to govern his reign in such a way that who is guilty is punished and but who is innocent alike, that who is deserving is rewarded but who is not alike, and then he complains that people are ungovernable, is he right in thinking so?” The King of Qi answered: “No.” Yin Wen said: “I see that this is the way in which Your subordinates govern the state of Qi.” The King answered: “Admitting that I govern my state this way, trusting your words, then though people are unreasonable I should not dare to complain, isn’t this what you are saying?” Yin Wen replied: “I said so, should I dare to not to speak? Your orders say murderers must be put

⁵⁸³ *Shi* 士 in the Chinese text.

to death and offenders must be punished. A man who fears Your orders and that, been insulted, did not dare to react completely respects Your will. But you said that he who is insulted and doesn't dare to react is a dishonoured man; calling him dishonoured you punish him though he is innocent; he is innocent but nevertheless Your Majesty punishes him, crossing his name out from the list of officials and not promoting him. Thus in doing so you punish him. This man is innocent and Your Majesty punish him. If you consider dishonoured he who doesn't react to an insult, then you should consider honourable he who reacts, and if You considers him honourable, You should also promote him to the rank of official; in promoting him You reward him. Thus doing so Your Majesty rewards him without him deserving it. The one You reward is the one Your subordinates would put to death. What is accepted in the higher ranks is forbidden by law. Reward and punishment, true and false are all four confused, and even if a man was worth ten times the Yellow Emperor he will not be able to govern this country.” The king did not answer. For this reason I compare your words to those of the King of Qi: you know how to criticize my theory that white horse is no horse but you don't even know how to justify your criticism. This is like the case of he who pays lip service when praising scholars, but is incapable of distinguishing those who are really so.

Kongcongzi - Gongsun Long di shi'er 孔叢子·公孫龍 第十二

The text is reported, bearing minimal differences, in the *Wanwei bie zang* 宛委別藏 or *Siku weishou shumu* 四庫未收書目 by Ruan Yuan 阮元 (1764-1849), edited in 1822.

Gongsun Long was a guest at the court of the Prince of Pingyuan; he kept in great consideration forms and names and considered white horse no horse. Someone said to Zi Gao: “This man talks petty words but greatly causes harm to the Great Dao, why don’t you go to him and set him right?” Zi Gao answered: “The flow of the Great Dao manifests itself in the world, why should I worry about that?” The other one replied: “Even if things are this way, you have to do it since you belong to this world.” Zi Gao went to Zhao, where he met Gongsun Long at the court of the Prince of Pingyuan, and he told him: “I am from Lu, and I heard of Your wisdom and Your noble conduct; it’s been long since I desired to become Your disciple. Things being so, there is only one teaching among Yours that I cannot accept, that is that you consider white horse to be not a white⁵⁸⁴ horse. If You will truly dismiss the teaching that is “not horse” then I can ask You to accept me as Your disciple.” Gongsun Long replied: “What you said doesn’t make sense. My teaching consists in deeming white horse no white⁵⁸⁵ horse. If you make me dismiss this theory, then I have nothing to teach. To leave me without anything to teach and then study with me, isn’t it absurd? One who wants to study with me must consider his wisdom and knowledge inferior to mine; now to teach me to disown that white horse is no white⁵⁸⁶ horse means demanding to teach me first and then taking me as master: this is not admissible. This situation in which you want to teach me reminds me of when the King of Qi questioned Yin Wen. The King of Qi asked: “I keep scholars in great esteem, however there are none in the State of Qi.” Yin Wen replied: ““Now if there was such a man - loyal in serving his prince, filial towards his parents, faithful to friends, agreeable with neighbours – putting into practice

⁵⁸⁴ This is a clear mistake in the formulation of the famous paradox on the white horse, most probably a later interpolation.

⁵⁸⁵ *Id.*

⁵⁸⁶ *Id.*

these four kinds of exemplary behaviour could he be said to be a scholar?" The King said: "Excellent! This is exactly what I mean by 'scholar'!" Yin Wen asked: "If Your Majesty had such a man at his service, would You promote him to the rank of official?" The King answered: "This is just what I want but cannot get."

Yin Wen continued: "If this man in the middle of the crowd of your court would be insulted but in the end wouldn't dare to react, would Your Majesty anyway promote him to the rank of official?" The King replied: "If a scholar would be insulted and didn't dare to react he would be dishonoured. I wouldn't promote him to the rank of official." Yin Wen replied: "Even if he didn't dare to react to the offences suffered, he hasn't lost those qualities for which he was deemed a scholar. Thus if your Majesty wouldn't promote him then he who was considered a scholar before might be no scholar in the end? Your decrees provide for murderers to be put to death and for offenders to be punished. People fear your orders for this reason; therefore he who suffered an offence and didn't dare to react completely respects Your laws, but Your Majesty doesn't promote him to the rank of official: this means punishing him. Moreover if You consider dishonoured who doesn't react to an offence, then you should consider honourable he who reacts; the one you reward is the one your subordinates would put to death. What is accepted in the higher ranks is forbidden by law. Reward and punishment, true and false are mixed up and confused, and even if a man was worth ten times the Yellow Emperor he will not be able to govern this country." The King of Qi didn't answer. Moreover that white horse is no white⁵⁸⁷ horse was accepted even by your forefather Confucius. I heard that the King of Chu stretched his bow Fanruo and cocked a Wangui arrow to shot alligators and rhinoceros in the Yunmeng⁵⁸⁸ park, but lost his weapon. The Ministers of the Left and the Right gave the order to look for it, but the King said: "Halt! The King of Chu lost his bow, a man of Chu will get it, why still looking for it?" Confucius heard this and commented: "The King of Chu is human and righteous but not accomplished yet. Just say that a man will find it and that's all, must he necessarily be a man of Chu?" If it is so, then Confucius distinguished a man of Chu from what is called "man". The fact that you accept that Confucius distinguished "man of Chu" from "man" and you don't accept that I distinguish "white horse" from

⁵⁸⁷ Again the same mistake in the formulation of the paradox.

⁵⁸⁸ Lake area in contemporary Hubei province.

“horse”⁵⁸⁹ is absurd. You cultivate the Confucian doctrine but refuse what Confucius himself accepted; if you want to study with me but you make me dismiss my teachings, then even if I could multiply myself for a hundred times, I couldn’t be worth as before.” Zi Gao didn’t say a word, he withdrew and announced: “His words are cunning and flawed, seductive but irrational; this is the reason why I didn’t answer.” Another day the Prince of Pingyuan gathered a crowd of guests and invited Zi Gao. The Prince of Pingyuan said: “Sir, You are the descendant of a sage, you didn’t consider a distance of a thousand *li* too much to come on a visit with the intent of making Gongsun Long dismiss his teaching of the “white horse”. However, even if it has not been decided yet if it’s right or wrong, you want to go back, how can it be?” Zi Gao replied: “When a principle reaches its purest form, that it is self-evident. How could it ever stand in my departure!” The Prince of Pingyuan asked: “Can I hear about this doctrine of the “purest form”?” Zi Gao answered: “This doctrine draws completely on the Classics and the Commentaries, I do not dare to consider it an idea of mine. The *Chunqiu* records that six fish-hawks took off. At a first glance they are six, but at a closer look You realize they are fish-hawks. “Fish-hawk” is like “horse”, “six” is like “white”, thus You see its being white but after checking you know it’s a horse. Color is distinguished by a name, essence manifests itself in outer appearance. In uttering “white horse”, name and actuality fit each other. It is like women-dyers dying silk and linen black, white, blue and yellow; even if the names of the colors are different, the substance is the same. This is the reason why the *Shi* have “white silk”, and not “silk white”. The *Liji* has “black robe”, and not “robe black”. Think of “black ox”, or “dark warrior”: of this kind of examples there are plenty. First you pick the color, then you name their substance. What pools together all things is what the sage recognizes as constant. A perfected man’s speech values the correspondence between things and principles, not complicated argumentations. It is like Yin Wen, who subverted the King of Qi’s words, because they weren’t coherent with his laws. What I said to Gongsun Long is, I greatly esteem his wisdom and rejoice in his conduct. Even if he would dismiss the “white horse” teaching, his wisdom and his conduct would remain unchanged. If it is so, then I wouldn’t have made him lose what he has to teach. But he persists in predicating so, to the point that principles went lost. Of those words the King of Chu said about a man of

⁵⁸⁹ Here the paradox is correct, thus providing evidence for the previous wrong occurrences as later interpolations.

Chu who lost his bow and the fact that a man of Chu would have got it, my forefather Confucius investigated the basic idea: the King wanted to show his open-mindedness but in fact in saying so he narrowed them. This is the reason why the Master said it would have been better just to claim that a man would have found it and that's all. Thus in what the King said he made a distinction in respect to "Chu" and not to "man". If you use this argument as analogy then it clashes sharply with the former one. In saying simply "man" we mean a generic man, like when we say "horse" we mean a generic horse. Chu in itself is a state, white in itself is a color. If one wants to broaden the meaning of "man", it is appropriate to leave out "Chu"; if one wants to rectify name and color, it is not the case it is appropriate to leave out "white". If You truly examine these principles, then the distinctions drawn by Gongsun Long are disproved." The Lord of Pingyuan said: "Sir, Your words are excellent in terms of principles indeed." Then he turned to the crowd of guests and said: "Can Gongsun Long answer to this?" Shi You, a guest from Yan, replied: "As far as rhetorical arguments are concerned, he will; but when it comes to principles he won't."

Gongsun Long discussed again with Zi Gao at the court of the Prince of Pingyuan. They debated about principles arriving at the point of discussing that "three (components) are preserved"⁵⁹⁰. In debating so Gongsun Long reached the top in eloquence and analytical acumen. Zi Gao didn't answer and abruptly withdrew. The day after they met again. The Prince of Pingyuan said: "What Gongsun Long formerly argued is a true example of eloquence. Sir, what do You actually think about it?" Zi Gao answered: "It is, indeed. He was able to prove that "three (components) are preserved"⁵⁹¹, however difficult. I would like to ask Your Majesty another question. Now to make the three (components) to be preserved is extremely difficult and actually wrong. To say that two (components) are preserved is extremely easy and actually true. I don't know if Your Majesty would rather comply with what is easy and right or what is difficult and wrong." The Lord of Pingyuan couldn't answer. The day after, he told Gongsun Long: "You shouldn't debate with Kong Zi Gao: in him principles win over rhetoric, but in you rhetoric wins over principles. When rhetoric wins over principles, in the end one is necessarily defeated."

⁵⁹⁰ More commonly interpreted and translated as "Zang has three ears"; about this famous paradox and my interpretation of its meaning, see note 67 at pages 24-25 of the present study.

⁵⁹¹ Or "Zang to have three ears".

APPENDIX B: Rare texts

Xie Xishen's preface to the *Gongsun Longzi* (謝希深公孫龍子原序)⁵⁹²

公孫龍子，姓公孫，名龍，字子秉，趙人也；以堅白之辯，鳴於時。初為平原君門客，平原君信其說，而厚待之。後齊使鄒衍過趙，平原君以問鄒子，鄒子曰：『不可；彼天下之辯，有「五勝」，「三至」而「辭至」為下。辯者別殊類，使不相害；序異端，使不相亂抒意通指，明其鏘謂，使人與知焉，不務相迷也。故勝者，不失其所守；不勝者，得其所求；若是故辯可為也。及至煩文以相假，飾辭以相悖，巧譬以相移，引人聲使不得及其意；如此，害大道。』平原君悟而絀之。又與魏國公子牟相善，樂正子輿笑曰：『公孫龍之為人也，行無師，學無友；佞給而不中，漫衍而無家，好怪而妄言，欲感人之心，屈人之口。』與韓檀等肆之，而公子牟不以為龍也，其說迺大行矣。今閱所著書六篇，多虛誕不可解，謬以膚識註釋，私心尚在疑信間，未能頓怡然無異也。昔莊子云：『公孫龍能勝人之口，不能服人之心。辯者之囿也。』厥有旨哉！宋謝希深序

Preface to the *Shoubai Lun* (書程雲莊語錄後)⁵⁹³

初南雷黃先生嘗言同詩有程雲莊者，倡教吳，鄆之門，以一四篇言佛，二三篇言道，三兩篇言儒，乃修飾林三教之餘術，而別自出頭地者。予思見其書未得，雍正甲寅，長洲徐編修丈澄齋出其遺書示予，三篇之外，尚有〈守白論〉。其言以公孫龍子為宗，而著定為十六目，其前八目曰：不著形質，不雜青黃之白，是為真白。此彼相非之謂指，指有不至，至則不指，不指之指，是為真指。是非交錯，此彼和同，是為指物。青白既兼，方員亦舉，二三交錯，直析橫分，是為指變。萬變攘攘，各正性命，聲負色勝，天地莫能定，惟人言是正；言正之物，是為名物，惟名統物，天地莫測；天地莫測，名與偕極；與天地偕極之物，其誰得而有無之，幻假之，是為真物。指而非指，非指而指；非指而指，而指非指，是為物指。一不是雙，二自非一，隻雙二隻，黃馬堅石，惟其所適，此之謂物變。其後八目曰：不落形色，不涉是即，自地之天，地中取天，曰地天。統盡形色，脫盡是即，有天之地，天中取地，曰天地。天地地天，地天天地，閃爍難名，精光獨透，曰真神。至精至神，結頂位極，名實兼盡，惟獨為正，曰神物。天地之中，

⁵⁹² Taken from Jin Shoushen's edition (Jin Shoushen, 1922, *Yuanxu* 原序, pp. 1-2). For a translation see Perleberg, 1952, pp. 17-19.

⁵⁹³ Quan Zuwang 全祖望, 2003, pp. 807-808.

物無自物，往來交錯，物各自物，惟審乃知，曰審知。惟審則直，惟至則止，從橫周遍，一知之至，曰至知。實不曠位，名不通位，惟慎所謂，名實自正，曰慎謂。彼此惟謂，當正不變，通變惟神，神化惟變，曰神變。其宗旨則曰：天地惟神，萬物惟名，天地無知，惟神生知；指皆無物，惟名成物。

APPENDIX C:
Gongsun Longzi Chinese text
(Shuofu/Daozang variants)

Abbreviations:

SF = *Shuofu* edition

DZ = *Daozang* edition

[] = variants between the two editions

Ø = absence of a corresponding variant in one of the two editions

***Gongsun Longzi – Jifu* [SF疏/DZ跡]府**

公孫龍六國時[SF辨/DZ辯]士也。疾名實之散亂。因資[SF才/DZ材]之所長為守白之之論。假物取譬以守白[SF辨/DZ辯]謂白馬為非馬也。白馬為非馬者言白所以名色[SF也/DZØ]言馬所以名形也。色非形形非色也。夫言色則形不當與。言形則色不宜從。今合以為物非也。如求白馬[SF于/DZ於]廄中。無有而有驪色之馬然不可以應有白馬也。不可以應有白馬則所求之馬亡矣。亡則白馬竟非馬。欲推是[SF辨/DZ辯]以正名實而化天下焉。龍於孔穿會趙平原君家。穿曰：「素聞先生高誼。願為弟子久但不取先生以白馬為非馬[SF爾/DZ耳]。情去此術則穿請為弟子。」龍曰：「先生之言悖。龍之所以為名[SFØ/DZ者]乃以白馬之論[SF耳/DZ爾]。今使龍去之則無以教焉。且欲師之者以智與學不如也。今使龍去之此先教而後師之[SF者/DZØ]。先教而後師之者悖。且白馬非馬乃仲尼之所取。龍聞楚王張繁弱之弓載亡歸之矢以射蛟口於雲夢之圃而喪其弓。左右請求之。王曰：『止。楚人遺弓楚人得之。又何求乎。』仲尼聞之曰：『楚王仁義而未遂也。亦曰人亡弓人得之而已。何必楚。』若此仲尼異楚人[SF于/DZ於]所謂人。夫是仲尼異楚人[SF于/

DZ於]所謂人而非龍白馬[SF于/DZ於]所謂馬悖。先生修儒術而非仲尼之所取。欲學而使龍去所教則雖百龍固不能當前矣。」孔穿無以應焉。公孫龍趙平原君之客也。孔穿孔子之葉也。穿與龍會。穿謂龍曰：「臣居魯側聞下風高先生之智說先生之行。願受益之日久矣乃今得見。然所不取先生者獨不取先生之[SF言耳/DZ以白馬為非馬耳]。請去白馬非馬之學[SF則/DZØ]穿請為弟子。」公孫龍曰：「先生之言悖。龍之學以白馬為非馬者也。使龍去之則龍無以教。無以教而乃學[SF于/DZ於]龍也者悖。且夫欲學[SF于/DZ於]龍者以智與學焉為不逮也。今教龍去白馬非馬是先教而後師之也。先教而後師之不可。先生之所以教龍者似齊王之謂尹文也。齊王之謂尹文曰：『寡人甚好士。[SF而/DZ以]齊國無士。何也。』尹文曰：『願聞大王之所謂士者。齊王無以應。尹文曰今有人[SF于/DZ於]此。事君則忠。事親則孝。交友則信。處鄉則順。有此四行可謂士乎。』齊王曰：『[SFØ/DZ善]。此真吾所謂士也。』尹文曰王得此人肯以為臣乎。王曰：『所願而不[SFØ/DZ可]得也。』是時齊王好勇。[SF于/DZ於]是尹文曰：『使此人廣眾大庭之中見侵侮而終不敢鬥，王將以為臣乎。』王曰：『鉅士也。見侮而不鬥辱也。辱則寡人不以為臣矣。』尹文曰：『[SF惟/DZ唯]見侮而不鬥未失其四行也。是人失其四行其所以為士也然。而王一以為臣一不以為臣則向之所謂士者乃非士乎。』齊王無以應。尹文曰：『今有人君將理其國。人有非則非之。無非則亦非之。有功則賞之。無功則亦賞之。而怨人之不理也可乎。』齊王曰：『不可。』尹文曰：『臣竊[SF聞王/DZ觀下吏]之理齊。方若此矣。』王曰：『寡人理國信若先生之煙人雖不理寡人不敢怨也。意未至然與。』尹文曰：『言之敢無說乎。王之令曰殺人者死。傷人者刑。人有畏王之令者見侮而終不敢鬥。是全王之令也。而王曰見侮而不鬥者辱也。謂之辱非之也。無非而王辱之故因除其籍。不以為臣也。不以為臣者罰之也。此無罪而王罰之也。且王辱不敢鬥者必榮敢鬥者也。榮敢鬥者是[SFØ/DZ而]王是之必以為臣矣。必以為臣者賞之也。彼無功而王賞之。王之所賞吏之所誅也。上之所是而法之所非也。賞罰是非相與四[SF繆/DZ謬]。雖十黃帝不能理也。』齊王無以應。故龍以子之言有似齊王。子知難白馬之非馬。不知所以難之說。以此猶好士之名而不知察士之類。」

Gongsun Longzi – Baima Lun 白馬論

(曰):「白馬非馬可乎。」

曰:「可。」

曰:「何哉。」

曰:「馬者所以命形也。白者,所以命色也。命色者非命形也故曰白馬非馬。」

曰:「有白馬不可謂無馬也。不可謂無馬者非馬也。有白馬為有[SF白馬/DZ馬白]之非馬何也。」

曰:「求馬**黃**黑馬皆可致。求白馬**黃**黑馬不可致。使白馬乃馬也是所求一也。所求一者白者不異馬也。所求不異如**黃**黑馬有可有不可何也。可與不可其相非明。故**黃**黑馬一也而可以應有馬而不可以應有白馬。是白馬之非馬審矣。」

曰:「以馬之有色為非馬。天下非有無色之馬也。天下無馬可乎。」

曰:「馬固有色故有白馬。使馬無色有馬如已耳安取白馬。故白者非馬也。白馬者馬與白也。馬與白馬也。故曰白馬非馬也。」

曰:「馬未與白為馬。白未與馬為白。合馬與白復名白馬是相與以不相與為名。未可。故曰白馬非馬未可。」

曰:「以有白馬為有馬。謂有白馬為有**黃**馬可乎。」

曰:「未可。」

曰:「以有馬為異有**黃**馬是異**黃**馬於馬也。異**黃**馬於馬是以**黃**馬為非馬[SF也/DZØ]。以**黃**馬為非馬而以白馬為有馬。此飛者入池而棺槨異處。此天下之悖言亂辭也。」

曰:「有白馬不可謂無馬者離白之謂也。[SF是/DZ不]離者有白馬不可謂有馬也。故所以為有馬者獨以馬為有馬耳。非有白馬為有馬。故其為有馬也不可以[SF為/DZ謂]馬馬也。」

曰：「白者不定所白。忘之而可也。白馬者言白定所白也。定所白者非白也。馬者無去取[SF于/DZ於]色故黃黑皆所以應。白馬者有去取[SF于/DZ於]色。黃黑馬皆所以色去。故唯白馬獨可以應耳。無去者非有去也。故曰白馬非馬。」

***Gongsun Longzi – Zhiwu Lun* 指物論**

物莫非指而指非指。天下無指物無可以謂物。非指者天下而物可謂指乎。指也者天下之所無也。物也者天下之所有也。以天下之所有為天下之所無未可。天下無指而物不可謂指也。不可謂指者非指也。非指者物莫非指也。天下無指而物不可謂指者。非有非指也。非有非指者物莫非指也。物莫非指者而指非指也。天下無指者生[SF于/DZ於]物之各有名不為指也。不為指而謂之指是兼不為指。以有不為指之無不為指未可。且指者天下之所兼。天下無指者。物不可謂無指也。不可謂無指者非有非指也。非有非指者物莫非指。指非非指也。指與物非指也。使天下無物指誰徑謂非指。天下無物誰徑謂指。天下有指無物指誰徑謂非指。徑謂無物非指。且夫指[SF故/DZ固]自為非指。奚待[SF于/DZ於]物而乃與為指。

***Gongsun Longzi - Jianbai Lun* 堅白論**

(曰)：「堅白石三可乎。」

曰：「不可。」

曰：「二可乎。」

曰：「可。」

曰：「何哉。」

曰：「無堅得白其舉也二。無白得堅其舉也二。」

曰：「得其所白不可謂無白。得其所堅不可謂無堅。而之石也之[SF于/DZ於]然也。非三也。」

曰：「視不得其所堅而得其所白者無堅也。拊不得其所白而得其所堅[SF者/DZØ]。得其堅也無白也。」

曰：「天下無白不可以視石。天下無堅不可以謂石。堅白石不相外。藏三可乎[SF有/DZØ]。」

曰：「有自藏也非藏而藏也。」

曰：「其白也其堅也而石必得以相盛盈。其自藏奈何。」

曰：「得其白得其堅見[SF與不見/DZ與不見與不見]離。[SF不見離/DZØ]一一不相盈故離。離也者。藏也。」

曰：「石之白石之堅見與不見。二與三若廣修而相盈也。其非舉乎。」

曰：「物白焉不定其所白。物堅焉不定其所堅。不定者兼惡乎[SF其/DZ甚]石也。」

曰：「循石非彼無石。非石無所取乎。白石不相離者固乎然其無[SF也/DZ已]。」

曰：「[SF于/DZ於]石一也。堅白二也而在[SF于/DZ於]石。故有知焉有不知焉。有見焉[SF有不見焉/DZØ]。故知與不知相與離。見與不見相與藏。藏故孰[SF為/DZ謂]之不離。」

曰：「目不能堅。手不能白。不可謂無堅。不可謂無白。其異任也。其無以代也。堅白域[SF于/DZ於]石惡乎離。」

曰：「堅未與石為堅而物兼。未與為堅而堅必堅。其不堅石物而堅。天下未有若堅而堅藏。白固不能自白惡能白石物乎。若白者必白則不白物而白焉。黃黑與之然。石其無有惡取堅白石乎。故離也。離也者因是。力與[SF智/DZ知]果不若因是。且猶白以目。以火見而火不見則火與目不見而神見。神不見而見離。堅以手而手以捶是捶與手知而不知。而神與不知神乎。是之謂離焉。離也者天下故獨而正。」

***Gongsun Longzi – Tongbian Lun* 通變論**

曰：「二有一乎。」

曰：「二無一。」
 曰：「二有右乎。」
 曰：「二無右。」
 曰：「二有左乎。」
 曰：「二無左。」
 曰：「右可[SF為/DZ謂]二[SF位/DZØ]乎。」
 曰：「不可。」
 曰：「左可[SF為/DZ謂]二[SF位/DZØ]乎。」
 曰：「不可。」
 曰：「左與右可謂二乎。」
 曰：「可。」
 曰：「謂變非不變可乎。」
 曰：「可。」
 曰：「右有與可謂變乎。」
 曰：「可。」
 曰：「變隻。」
 曰：「右。」
 曰：「有苟變安可謂右。苟不變安可謂變。」
 曰：「二苟無左又無右。二者左與右奈何。」
 (曰)：「羊合牛非馬。牛合羊非雞。」
 曰：「何哉。」
 曰：「羊與牛唯異。羊有齒牛無齒。而[SFØ/DZ羊]牛之非羊也。[SF羊/DZØ]之非牛也未可。是不俱有而或類焉。羊有角牛有角。牛之而羊也羊之而牛也未可。是俱有而類之不同也。羊牛有角。馬無角。馬有尾。羊牛無尾。故曰：『羊合牛非馬也』。非馬者無馬也。無馬者羊不二牛不二而羊牛二。是而羊而牛非馬可也。若舉而以是猶類之不同。若左右[SF之/DZØ]猶是舉。牛羊有毛。雞有羽。」

謂雞足一數足二。二而一故三。謂牛羊足一數足四。四而一故五。牛羊足五。雞足三故曰：『牛合羊非雞』。非有以非雞也。與馬以雞寧馬。材不材其無以類審矣。舉是[SF為/DZ謂]亂名是狂舉。」

曰：「他[SF辨/DZ辯]。」

曰：「青以白非黃。白以青非碧。」

曰：「何哉。」

曰：「青白不相與而相與 反對也。不相[SF連/DZ鄰]而相[SF連/DZ鄰] 不害其方也。不害其方者反而對。各當其所若左右不驪。故一[SF于/DZ於]青不可。一[SF于/DZ於]白不可。惡乎其有黃矣哉。黃其正矣是正舉也。其有君臣之[SF于/DZ於]國焉故[SF強/DZ強]壽矣。而且青驪乎白而白不勝也。白足之勝矣而不勝是木賊金也。木賊金者碧。碧則非正舉矣。青白不相與而相與。不相勝則兩明也。爭而明其色碧也。與其碧寧黃。黃其馬也。其與類乎。碧其雞也。其與暴乎。暴則君臣爭而兩明也。兩明者昏不明非正舉也。非正舉者名實無當驪色章焉。故曰兩明也。兩明而道喪其無有以正焉。」

***Gongsun Longzi – Mingshi Lun* 名實論**

天地與其所產焉物也。物以物其所物而不過焉實也。實以實其所實不曠焉位也。出其所位,非位。位其所位焉正也。以其所正正其所不正,疑其所正。其正者正其所實也。正其所實者正其名也。[SFØ/DZ其]名正,則唯乎其彼此焉。謂彼[SF其/DZ而]彼不唯乎彼則彼謂不行。謂此而行不唯乎此則此謂不行。其以當不當也。不當而亂也。故彼彼當乎彼則唯乎彼。其謂行彼。此此當乎此則唯乎此。其謂行此。其以當而當也。以當而當正也。故彼[SFØ/DZ故]彼止[SF于/DZ於]彼此此止[SF于/DZ於]此可。彼此而彼且此此彼而此且彼不可。夫名實謂也。知此之非也知此之不在此也[SF則/DZ明]不謂也。知彼之非彼也知彼之不在彼也則不謂也。至矣哉。古之明王審其名實慎其所謂。至矣哉。古之明王。

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abbiati M., 1992, *La Lingua Cinese*, Cafoscarina, Venezia

Acton H. B., 1936, "The Theory of Concrete Universals", *Mind*, New Series, vol. 45, n. 180, pp. 417-431

Allan K., 1977, "Classifiers", *Language*, vol. 53.2, pp. 285-311

Allinson R. E., (ed.), 1989, *Understanding the Chinese Mind*, Oxford University Press, New York

- 2003, "On Chuang Tzu as a Deconstructionist with a Difference", *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 30.3/4, pp.487-500

Ames R. T., 1994, *The Art of Rulership – a Study of Ancient Chinese Political Thought*, State University of New York Press, Albany

Andreini A., 2004, "Scrivere, copiare, inventare: la Trasmissione Testuale nella Cina Antica", *Annali di Cà Foscari - Estratto*, 43.3

- 2004a, "Nuove Prospettive di Studio del Pensiero Cinese Antico alla Luce dei Codici Manoscritti", *Litterae Caelestes* ,1, pp. 131-157

- 2005, "Cases of 'Diffraction' and *Lectio Difficilior* in Early Chinese Manuscripts", *Asiatische Studien*, 59.1, pp. 849-879

Andrš D., 1998, "Gongsun Long's *Baima Lun*: a Semiotic Argument", *Tamkang Review*, XXVIII.3, pp. 47-

Ariel Y., 1988, *K'ung-Ts'ung-Tzu – The K'ung Family Master's Anthology*, Princeton University Press, Princeton

- Austin J. L., 1984, *How to do Things with Words – Second Edition*, a cura di J.O.Urmson e M.Sbisà, Oxford University Press, New York
- 1990, *Saggi Filosofici*, Guerini e Associati, Milano
- Bao Zhiming, 1987, “Abstraction, *Ming-Shi* and Problems of Translation”, *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 14, pp. 419-444
- 1990, “Language and World View in Ancient China”, *Philosophy East & West*, 40.2, pp. 195-219
- Barber K., 2003, “Text and Performance in Africa”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol. 66.3, pp. 324-333
- Baudry P., Baudry-Weulersee D. and Levi J, 1991(1978), *Chine, an – 81: Dispute sur le sel et le fer – Yantie lun*, Seghers, Paris
- Baxter W. H., 1992, *A Handbook of old Chinese Phonology*, Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin/New York
- Bell C., 1992, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, Oxford University Press, New York and Oxford
- Benesch W., 1993, “The Euclidean Egg, the Three Legged Chicken – Contextual vs Formal Approaches to Reason and Logics, an Approach to Comparative Philosophy and Logics”, *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 20, pp. 109-131
- Berman A., 1999, *La traduction et la lettre ou l’auberge du lointain*, Seuil, Paris
- Berto F., 2006, *Teorie dell’Assurdo: I Rivali del Principio di Non-Contraddizione*, Carocci Ed., Roma

- Billeter J. F., 1998, "Stopping, Seeing, and Language: an Interpretation of Zhuangzi's *Qiwulun*", *East Asian History*, vol. 15-16, pp.1-32
- Bloom A., 1981, *The Linguistic Shaping of Thought – A Study in the Impact of Language on Thinking in China and the West*, Erlbaum Ed., Hillsdale, New Jersey
- Boltz W. G., 1985, "Desultory Notes on Language and Semantics in Ancient China", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 105.2, pp. 309-313
- 1990, "Notes on the Textual Relation between the *Kuo Yü* and the *Tso Chuan*", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol. 53.3, pp. 491-502
 - 1993, "Notes on the Reconstruction of Old Chinese", *Oriens Extremus*, vol. 36.2, pp. 185-207
 - 1997, "Manuscripts with Transmitted Counterparts", in Shaughnessy E., (ed.), 1997, *New Sources of Early Chinese History. An Introduction to the Reading of Inscriptions and Manuscripts*, Berkeley, pp. 253-283
 - 1999, "The fourth-century B.C. Guodian Manuscripts from Chuu and the Composition of *Laotzyy*", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 119.4, pp. 590-608
 - 2000, "Logic, Language and Grammar in Early China", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 120.2, pp. 218-229
 - 2005, "The Composite Nature of Early Chinese Texts", in Kern, 2005a, *Text and Ritual in Early China*, University of Washington Press, Seattle and London, pp. 50-78
- Bosley R., 1997, "The Emergence of Concepts of a Sentence in Ancient Greek and in Ancient Chinese Philosophy", *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, vol. 24.2, pp. 209-230
- Bradley J. E. S. and Barnes A. C., 1963, *Chinese-English Glossary of Mineral Names*, Consultants Bureau, New York

- Butzenberger K., 1993, "Some General Remarks on Negation and Paradox in Chinese Logic", *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 20, pp. 313-347
- Cadonna A., (ed.), 2008, *Liezi: La scrittura reale del vuoto abissale e della potenza suprema*, Einaudi, Torino.
- Cai Zong-qi, 2001, *A Chinese Literary Mind – Culture, Creativity, and Rhetoric in Wenxin Diaolong*, Stanford University Press, Stanford
- Carson M., 1983, "The Battle of Words in Ancient China", *Asian Culture Quarterly*, vol. 11.2, pp. 48-61
- Chaehyun Chong, 1999, "The Neo-Mohist Conception of *Bian* (Disputation)", *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 26.1, pp. 1-19
- Chan Chi-ching, 1998, "The Rhetorical and the Grammatical in Early Chinese Logic", *Tamkang Review*, XXVIII.3, pp. 31-45
- Chang Chi-wei, 1998, "The Road not taken: the Convergence/Divergence of Logic and Rhetoric in the Mohist '*Xiaoqu*'", *Tamkang Review*, XVIII.3, pp.77-94
- Chang Han-liang, 1998, "Controversy over Language: towards a Pre-Qin Semiotics", *Tamkang Review*, XXVIII.3, pp. 1-29
- Chen Derong, 2005, "Three Meta-questions in Epistemology: rethinking some Metaphors in the *Zhuangzi*", *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 32.3, pp.493-507
- Chen E. M., 1971, "The *Tao Te Ching*'s Approach to Language", *Chinese Culture*, n.12, pp. 37-48

- Chen Guimiao 陳癸森, 1975, *Gongsun Longzi jinzhu jinyi* 公孫龍子今註今譯, Taiwan shangwu yinshu guan, Taipei
- Chen Qiyou 陳奇猷, 1990 (1984), *Lüshi chunqiu jiaoshi* 呂氏春秋校釋, Xuelin chubanshe, Shanghai
- Chen Xianyou 陳宪猷, 1990, *Gongsun Longzi qiuzhen* 公孫龍子求真, Zhonghua shuju chubanshe, Beijing
- Chen Yuan 陳垣, 1958, *Shi hui juli* 史諱舉例, Kexue chubanshe, Beijing
- Chen Zhensun 陳振孫, 1883 (光緒九年八月), *Zhizhai shulu jieti* 直齋書錄解題, Jiangsu shuju kanban, (?)
- Chen Zhu 陳柱, 1937, *Gongsun Longzi jijie* 公孫龍子集解, Shangwu yinshu guan, Shanghai
- Cheng A., 2000, *Storia del Pensiero Cinese*, vol.1, Einaudi, Torino
- Cheng Chung-ying, 1965, "Inquiries into Classical Chinese Logic", *Philosophy East & West*, 15.3-4, pp. 195-216
- 1973, "A Generative Unit: Chinese Language and Chinese Philosophy", *Tsing Hua Journal of Chinese Studies*, New Series, Vol. 10.1, pp. 90-105
 - 1975, "On Implication (*tse*^a) and Inference (*ku*^b) in Chinese Grammar and Chinese Logic", *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, vol.2, pp. 225-244
 - 1976, "Model of Causality in Chinese Philosophy: a Comparative Study", *Philosophy East & West*, 26.1, pp. 3-20
 - 1977, "Chinese Philosophy and Symbolic Reference", *Philosophy East & West*, 27.3, pp. 307-322

- 1983, “Kung-sun Lung: White Horse and other Issues”, *Philosophy East & West*, 33.3, pp. 341-354
- 1987, “Logic and Language in Chinese Philosophy”, *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 14, pp. 285-307
- 1997, “Philosophical Significance of Gongsun Long: a New Interpretation of Theory of *zhi* as Meaning and Reference”, *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 24.2, pp. 139-178
- 2004, “Dimensions of the Dao and Onto-Ethics in Light of the *DDJ*”, *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 31.2, pp. 143-182
- 2007, “Preface”, *Journal of Chinese Philosophy – Gongsun Long and Contemporary Philosophy Special Theme*, vol. 34.4, pp. 537-560
- 2007a, “Reinterpreting *Gongsun Longzi* and Critical Comments on other Interpretations”, *Journal of Chinese Philosophy – Gongsun Long and Contemporary Philosophy Special Theme*, vol. 34.4, pp. 537-560

Cheng Chung-ying and Swain R. H., 1970, “Logic and Ontology in the Chih Wu Lun of Kung-sun Lung Tzu”, *Philosophy East & West*, 20.2, pp. 137-154

Cheng L. and Sybesma R., 1998, “Yi-wan Tang, Yi-ge Tang: Classifiers and Massifiers”, *Tsing Hua Journal of Chinese Studies*, New Series XXVIII.3, pp. 385-412

Chmielewski J., 1962, “Notes on Early Chinese Logic” (I), *Rocznik Orientalistyczny*, vol. 26.1, pp. 7-21

- 1963, “Notes on Early Chinese Logic” (II), *Rocznik Orientalistyczny*, vol. 26.2, pp. 91-105
- 1963a, “Notes on Early Chinese Logic” (III), *Rocznik Orientalistyczny*, vol. 27.1, pp. 103-121
- 1965, “Notes on Early Chinese Logic” (IV), *Rocznik Orientalistyczny*, vol. 28.2, pp. 87-111
- 1965a, “Notes on Early Chinese Logic” (V), *Rocznik Orientalistyczny*, vol. 29.2, pp. 116-138

- 1966, “Notes on Early Chinese Logic” (VI), *Rocznik Orientalistyczny*, vol. 30.1, pp. 31-52
- 1968, “Notes on Early Chinese Logic” (VII), *Rocznik Orientalistyczny*, vol. 31.1, pp. 117-136
- 1969, “Notes on Early Chinese Logic” (VIII), *Rocznik Orientalistyczny*, vol. 32.2, pp.83-103
- 1979, “Concerning the Problem of Analogical Reasoning in Ancient China”, *Rocznik Orientalistyczny*, vol. 40.2, pp. 65-78

Chomsky N., 1998, *Linguaggio e Problemi della Conoscenza*, Società Editrice il Mulino, Bologna

Cikoski J. S., 1975, “On Standards of Analogical Reasoning in the Late Zhou”, *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, vol.2, pp. 325-357

Concordance to the Gongsun Longzi – The Ics Ancient China Texts Concordance Series, 1995, Chinese University of Hong Kong, The Commercial Press, Hong Kong

Concordance to the Hanfeizi – The Ics Ancient China Texts Concordance Series, 1995, Chinese University of Hong Kong, The Commercial Press, Hong Kong

Concordance to the Huainanzi – The Ics Ancient China Texts Concordance Series, 1995, Chinese University of Hong Kong, The Commercial Press, Hong Kong

Concordance to the Laozi – The Ics Ancient China Texts Concordance Series, 1995, Chinese University of Hong Kong, The Commercial Press, Hong Kong

Concordance to the Lunheng – The Ics Ancient China Texts Concordance Series, 1995, vol. I, Chinese University of Hong Kong, The Commercial Press, Hong Kong

Concordance to the Lunyu – The Ics Ancient China Texts Concordance Series, 1995,
Chinese University of Hong Kong, The Commercial Press, Hong Kong

Concordance to the Mengzi – The Ics Ancient China Texts Concordance Series, 1995,
Chinese University of Hong Kong, The Commercial Press, Hong Kong

Concordance to the Mozi – The Ics Ancient China Texts Concordance Series, 1995,
Chinese University of Hong Kong, The Commercial Press, Hong Kong

Concordance to the Zhuangzi – The Ics Ancient China Texts Concordance Series,
1995, Chinese University of Hong Kong, The Commercial Press, Hong Kong

Conrady A., 1932-33, “Über einige altchinesische Hilfsörter”, *Asia Major*, vol. 8, pp.
491-525

Creel G. C., 1970 , “The Meaning of 刑名 *Hsing-ming*”, in *What is Taoism? And other
Studies in Chinese Cultural History*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and
London, pp. 79-91

- 1970a , “The Role of the Horse in Chinese History”, in *What is Taoism? And other
Studies in Chinese Cultural History*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and
London, pp. 160-186.

Crump J. I., 1964, 戰國策 *Intrigues: Studies of the Chan-kuo Ts'e*, The University of
Michigan Press, Ann Arbor

- 1979, *Chan-kuo Ts'e*, Chinese Materials Center Inc., San Francisco

Csikszentmihalyi M. and Nylan M., 2003, “Constructing Lineages and inventing
Traditions through Exemplary Figures in Early China”, *T'oung Pao*, vol. 89, 1-3, pp.
59-99

- Cua A. S., 2003, *Encyclopedia of Chinese Philosophy*, Routledge, New York
- Defoort C., 2001, “Ruling the World with Words: the Idea of *Zhengming* in the *Shizi*”, *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities*, pp. 217-242
- 2005-2006, “Argumentation and Persuasion in Ancient Chinese Texts – Introduction”, *Oriens Extremus*, vol. 45, pp. 91-98
- Demiéville P., 1955, “Bibliographie: Ignace Kou Pao-koh 顧保鵠, *Deux Sophistes Chinois: Houei Che et Kong-souen Long*. Préface de Paul Masson-Oursel. Bibliothèque de l’Institut des Hautes Etudes chinoises, volume VIII. Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, Presses Universitaires de France, 1953, viii + 163 pp., gr. in-8°.”, *T’oung Pao*, Series II, vol. 43, pp. 108-121
- Djamouri R., 1992, “Un Emploi Particulier de *You* (有) en Chinois Archaïque”, *Cahiers de Linguistique – Asie Orientale*, vol. 21.2, pp. 231-289
- Doeringer F., 1993, “Imaging the Imageless: Symbol and Perception in Early Chinese Thought”, *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 20.1, pp. 5-28
- Dong Tonghe 董同龢, 1967, *Shanggu yinyun biaogao* 上古音韻表稿, Zhongyang yanjiuyuan lishi Yuyan yanjiusuo chuban, Taibei
- Drège J. P., 1997, “La Matérialité du Texte: Préliminaires à une Etude de la Mise en Page du Livre Chinois”, in Alleton V., (ed.), 1997, *Paroles à Dire, Paroles à Ecrire – Inde, Chine, Japon*, Editions de l’Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Science Sociales, pp. 241-252
- Du Guoxiang 杜國庠, 1955, *Xian Qin zhuzi de ruogan yanjiu* 先秦諸子若干研究, Shenghuo · Dushu · Xinzhi san lian shudian chuban, Beijing, pp. 1-64

- Du Shousu 杜守素, 1937, *Xian Qin zhuzi pipan* 先秦諸子批判, Zuoja shuwu, Shanghai, pp. 1-76
- Durrant S. W., 1977-78, “A Consideration of Differences in the Grammar of the *Mo Tzu* ‘Essays’ and ‘Dialogues’”, *Monumenta Serica*, vol. 33, pp. 248-267
- Eifring H., 1988, “The Chinese Counterfactual”, *Journal of Chinese Linguistics*, 16.2, pp. 193-218
- Ellerman D., 1988, “Category Theory and Concrete Universals”, *Erkenntnis*, vol. 28, pp. 409-429
(<http://www.ellerman.org/Davids-Stuff/Maths/Conc-Univ.pdf>)
- Elman B. A., 1984, *From Philosophy to Phonology*, Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, pp. 212-221
- Erkes E., 1942, “Das Pferd im alten China”, *T'oung Pao*, vol. 36, pp. 26-63.
- Fang Wan-chuan, 1984, “Chinese Language and Theoretical Thinking: a Review Article”, *Journal of Oriental Studies*, 22.1, pp. 25-32
- Farmer S., 2006, “Neurobiology, Stratified Texts and the Evolution of Thought: from Mythos to Religions and Philosophies”,
www.safarmer.com/Farmer.Beijingpaper2.pdf
- Farmer S., Henderson J.B. and Witzel M., 2000, “Neurobiology, Layered Texts, and Correlative Cosmologies”, *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities*, vol. 72, pp. 48-90

- Feng Youlan [Fung Yu-lan] 馮友蘭, 1952, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, vol.1, Princeton University Press, Princeton, pp. 192-220
- 1964, *Zhongguo zhhexueshi – xinbian* 中国哲学史·新编, Renmin chubanshe, Beijing
 - 1968, *Zhongguo zhhexueshi bu* 中国哲学史補, Taiping yang tushu gongsi, Hong Kong
 - 2004, *Feng Youlan jingdian wencun* 冯友兰经典文存, Shanghai daxue chubanshe, Shanghai
- Forke A., 1901-1902, “The Chinese Sophists”, *Journal of the China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 34, pp. 1-100
- 1927, *Geschichte der alten chinesischen Philosophie*, Kommissionsverlag Friederichsen & Co., Hamburg, pp. 427-441
- Frangoulidis S. A., 1997, “Intratextuality in Apuleius’ *Metamorphoses*”, *L’Antiquité Classique*, vol. 66, pp. 293-299
- Fraser C., 2002, *Stanford Encyclopedia for Philosophy*, Center for the Study of Language and Information, Stanford University, Stanford: <http://plato.stanford.edu/>
- 2005, *School of Names*, in *Stanford Encyclopedia for Philosophy*, Center for the Study of Language and Information, Stanford University, Stanford: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/school-names/>
- Freeman K., 1959, *The Pre-Socratic Philosophers: A Companion to Diel’s Fragment der Vorsokratiker*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford.
- Frege G., 2001, *Senso, Funzione, Concetto*, a cura di Penco C., Picardi E., Laterza, Roma-Bari
- Freud S., 1925, *Der Witz und seine Beziehung zum Unbewussten*, Franz Leuticke, Leipzig und Wien
- 1999, *Wit and its Relation to the Unconscious*, Moffat, Yard & Company, New York

Fujiwara Sukeyo 藤原左世, 1978, *Nihonkoku genzaisho mokuroku*
日本國現在書目錄, Chengwen chubanshe, Taibei

Fung Yiu-ming 冯耀明, 1986, *Kung-sun Lung de xingshang shizai lun yu “guding yizhi”* 公孙龙的形上实在论的《固定意指》: *Kung-sun Lung’s metaphysical realism and “rigid designation”*, Occasional Paper and Monograph series, n.3, Institute of East Asian Philosophy, Singapore

- 2006, “Paradoxes and Parallelism in Ancient Chinese Philosophy”, presented at the Oxford Conference “Topics in Comparative Ancient Philosophy: Greek and Chinese” (22-24 June 2006), www.ust.hk
- 2007, “A Logical Perspective on ‘Discourse on White-Horse’”, *Journal of Chinese Philosophy – Gongsun Long and Contemporary Philosophy Special Theme*, vol. 34.4, pp. 515-536

Gabelentz, von der, G., 1953, *Chinesische Grammatik*, Deutscher Vershlag der Wissenschaften, Berlin, pp. 313-315

Gale E. M., 1967, *Discourses on Salt and Iron: A Debate in State Control of Commerce and Industry in Ancient China, Chapters 1-28*, Ch’eng-wen Publishing Co., Taibei

Geaney J. M., 1999, “A Critique of A.C. Graham’s Reconstruction of the ‘Neo-Mohist Canons’”, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 119.1, pp. 1-11

Ghiglione A., 1999, *La Pensée Chinoise Ancienne et l’Abstraction*, Editions You-Feng Libraire Editeur, Paris

Giele E., 2003, “Using Early Chinese Manuscripts as Historical Source Materials”, *Monumenta Serica*, vol. 51, pp. 409-438

- Gongsun Longzi* 公孫龍子, in *Daozang* 道藏, 1988, Shanghai shudian chubanshe, Wenwu chubanshe, Tianjin guji chubanshe, Shanghai – Beijing – Tianjin, vol. 27, pp. 168-175.
- Gongsun Longzi* 公孫龍子, in (Qing) Zhang Haipeng (清)張海鵬, (ed.), 1969 (reprint), *Mohai jinhu* 墨海金壺, Wenyou shudian, Taibei, pp. 16709-16742.
- Gongsun Longzi* 公孫龍子, in (Qing) Qian Xizuo (清)錢熙祚, (ed.), 1922 (reprint), *Shoushange congshu – zibu* 守山閣叢書 -子部, Shanghai bogu, Shanghai, vol. 23, pp. 1-13.
- Gongsun Longzi* 公孫龍子, in (Qing) Fu Shan (清)傅山, (ed.), 1971 (reprint), *Shuang hong kan ji – Qing mingjia huikan* 霜紅龕集 -清名家集彙刊, Hanhua wenhua shicong gufen youxian gongsi, Taibei, ce 4, pp.948-963.
- Gongsun Longzi* 公孫龍子, in Tao Zongyi 陶宗儀, (ed.), 1988 (reprint), *Shuofu* 說郛, Shanghai guji chubanshe, *juan* 47, pp. 1-6.
- Gongsun Longzi* 公孫龍子, in Tao Zongyi 陶宗儀, (ed.), 1988 (reprint), *Shuofu san zhong* 說郛三種, Shanghai shudian chubanshe, Shanghai, *juan* 47, pp. 761-764.
- Gongsun Longzi* 公孫龍子, in *Sibu beiyao - zibu* 四部備要-子部, 1927-35, Zhonghua shuju, Shanghai, pp. 1-13.
- Gongsun Longzi* 公孫龍子, in Guang Xifu 光熙甫, *Zhuzi huihan* 諸子彙函, Guoli zhongyang tushuguan, Taibei, *juan* 7, pp. 12-24.

Gongsun Longzi 公孫龍子, in Xiao Tianshi 蕭天石, (ed.), 1978, *Zhongguo zixue mingzhu jicheng* 中國子學名著集成, vol. 82, mingjia zibu 名家子部, *Zhongguo zixue mingzhu jicheng bianyin jijin hui*, Taipei, pp. 555-616

Graffi G. and Scalise S., 2002, *Le Lingue e il Linguaggio – Introduzione alla Linguistica*, Il Mulino, Bologna

Graham A. C., 1955, “Kung-sun Lung’s Essay on Meanings and Things”, *Journal of Oriental Studies*, vol.2.2, pp. 283-301

- 1955a, “The Final Particle *Fwu* 夫”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol. XVII, part 1, pp. 120-132
- 1957, “The Composition of the *Gongsuen Long Tzyy*”, *Asia Major*, vol. 5, pp. 147-183
- 1957a, “The Relation between the Final Particles *Yu* 與 and *Yee* 也”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol. XIX, part 1, pp. 105-123
- 1959, “‘Being’ in Western Philosophy compared with *shih/fei* and *yu/wu* in Chinese Philosophy”, *Asia Major*, vol. 7, pp. 79-112
- 1964, “The Logic of the Mohist Hsiao’chü”, *T’oung Pao*, 51.1, pp.1-54
- 1964-65, “Two Dialogues in the Kung-sun Lung Tzu: ‘White Horse’ and ‘Left and Right’”, *Asia Major*, vol. 11, pp. 128-152
- 1967, “‘Being’ in Classical Chinese”, in Verhaar J.W.M., 1967, *The Verb ‘Be’ and its Synonyms – Philosophical and Grammatical Studies*, vol.1, pp. 1-39
- 1967a, “The ‘Hard and White’ Disputations of the Chinese Sophists”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol. XXX, part 2, pp. 358-368
- 1969-70, “The Archaic Chinese Pronouns”, *Asia Major*, vol. 15, pp. 17-61
- 1972, “Later Mohist Treatises on Ethics and Logic reconstructed from the *Ta-ch’ü* 大取 Chapter of *Mo-tzu* 墨子”, *Asia Major*, vol. 17, pp. 137-189
- 1972a, “The Classical Chinese Topic-marker *Fu* 夫”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol. XXXV, part 1, pp. 85-100
- 1974, “The Concepts of Necessity and the ‘A Priori’ in Later Mohist Disputation”, *Asia Major*, vol. 19, pp. 163-190

- 1978, *Later Mohist Logic, Ethics and Science*, The Chinese University Press, School of Oriental and African Studies, London
- 1978a, “The Organization of the Mohist *Canons*”, in Roy D.T., Tsuen-hsuei Tsien, 1978, *Ancient China: Studies in Early Civilization*, The Chinese University Press, Hong Kong, pp. 167-179
- 1978b, “A Post-verbal Aspectual Particle in Classical Chinese: the Supposed Preposition *Hu* 乎”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol. XLI, part 2, pp. 314-342
- 1981, *Chuang-tzu: the Inner Chapters*, Allen & Unwin, London
- 1985, “Divisions in early Mohism reflected in the core Chapters of the *Mo-tzu*”, the Institute of East Asian Philosophy, Singapore
- 1986, “The Disputation of Kung-sun Lung as an Argument about Whole and Part”, *Philosophy East & West*, 36.2, pp. 89-106
- 1986a, *Studies in Chinese Philosophy and Philosophical Literature*, the Institute of East Asian Philosophies, National University of Singapore
- 1986b, *Chuang-tzŭ – The Inner Chapters*, Mandala Books, Unwin Paperbacks, London, Boston and Sidney.
- 1990 (1960), *The Book of Lieh-tzŭ – A Classic of Tao*, Columbia University Press, New York.
- 1992, “Being in Linguistics and Philosophy”, in *Unreason within Reason – Essays on the Outskirts of Rationality*, Open Court, La Salle, Illinois, pp. 85-95
- 1992a, “Rationalism and Anti-Rationalism in Pre-Buddhist China”, in *Unreason within Reason – Essays on the Outskirts of Rationality*, Open Court, La Salle, Illinois, pp. 97-119
- 1999, *La Ricerca del Dao*, trad. it. a cura di Fracasso R., Neri Pozza, Vicenza

Granet M., 1968, *La Pensée Chinoise*, Albin Michel ed., Paris

Guo Moruo 郭沫若, 1951, *Qingtong shidai* 青銅時代, Xin wenyi, Shanghai

- 1996, “Mingbian sichao de pipan” <名辯思潮的批判>, *Shi pipan shu* 十批判書, Dongfang chubanshe, Beijing, pp. 260-325

- Guo Qingfan 郭庆藩, (ed.), 2005, *Zhuangzi jishi* 莊子集釋, Xibian zhuzi jicheng 新編諸子集成, Zhonghua shuju, Beijing.
- Hackmann H., 1930, *Chineesche Wijsgeeren – II: De Chineesche Sophisten en de Filosofie van het Uitleven der Persoonlijkheid*, Amsterdam-H.J. Paris, pp. 7-16, 33-59
- Haeger J. W., 1968, “The Significance of Confusion: The Origins of the T’ai-p’ing yü-lan”, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, col. 88.3, pp. 401-410
- Hall J. W., Shively D. H. and McCullough W. H., 1999, *The Cambridge History of Japan vol. 2 – Heian Japan*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- Hanfeizi jijie* 韓非子集解, 1998, Xibian zhuzi jicheng 新編諸子集成, Zhonghua shuju, Beijing
- Hansen C., 1975, “Ancient Chinese Theories of Language”, *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, vol. 2, pp. 245-283
- 1976, “Mass Nouns and ‘A White Horse is not a Horse’”, *Philosophy East & West*, 26.2, pp. 189-209
 - 1981, “Linguistic Skepticism in the *Lao Tzu*”, *Philosophy East & West*, vol. 31.3, pp. 321-336
 - 1983, *Language and Logic in Ancient China*, The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor
 - 1985, “Chinese Language, Chinese Philosophy, and ‘Truth’”, *Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. XLIV.3, pp. 491-519
 - 1987, “Classical Chinese Philosophy as Linguistic Analysis”, *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 14.3, pp. 309-330
 - 1989, “*Mo-tzu*: Language Utilitarianism”, *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 16, pp. 355-380

- 1989a, “Language in the Heart-mind”, in Allinson R.E., (ed.), 1989, *Understanding the Chinese Mind*, Oxford University Press, New York, pp. 75-124
- 1992, *A Daoist Theory of Chinese Thought*, Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York
- 2007, “Prolegomena to Future Solutions to ‘White-Horse not Horse’”, *Journal of Chinese Philosophy – Gongsun Long and Contemporary Philosophy Special Theme*, vol. 34.4, pp. 473-491

Hara Wing-han, 1993, “Between Individuality and Universality: an Explication of Chuang-tzu’s Theses on *chien-tu* and *c’hi-wu*”, *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 20, pp. 87-99

Harbsmeier C., 1981, *Aspects of Classical Chinese Syntax*, Scandinavian Institute of Asian Studies Monograph Series n.45, Curzon Press, London and Malmö

- 1983, “Review: *Language and Logic in Ancient China* by Chad Hansen”, *Early China*, 1983-1985, voll. 9-10, pp. 250-257
- 1989, “Marginalia sino-logica”, in Allinson R. E., (ed.), 1989, *Understanding the Chinese Mind*, Oxford University Press, New York, pp. 125-166
- 1991, “The Mass Noun Hypothesis and the Part-Whole Analysis of the White Horse Dialogue”, in Rosemont H.J., 1991, *Chinese Texts and Philosophical Contexts – Essays dedicated to Angus C. Graham*, La Salle Open Court, Illinois
- 1998, *Language and Logic* vol. 7, in Needham J., 1998, *Science and Civilization in China*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- 1999, “Chinese Rhetoric”, *T’oung Pao*, 85.1-3, pp. 114-126

Harris W. V., 1991, “Canonicity”, *PMLA*, vol. 106.1, pp. 110-121

Hegel G. W. F., 2002 (1969), *Science of Logic*, Muirhead Library of Philosophy, Routledge, London

- 2008, *Wissenschaft der Logik – die Lehre von Sein (1832)*, Felix Meiner Verlag GmbH, Hamburg

- Ho Ch'i Min 何啓民, 1956, *Kung Sun-lung yü Kung Sun-lung tzu* 公孫龍與公孫龍子, Hong Kong
- Holz H., 1994, "Diskussion zu Rolf Trauzettel: 'Ein Sophismus des Philosophen Gongsun Long' (*Minima Sinica*, 1/1993, S. 1-17)", *Minima Sinica*, vol. 1, pp. 158-161
- Holzman D., 1956, "The Conversational Tradition in Chinese Philosophy", *Philosophy East & West*, 6.3, pp. 223-230
- Hrdličková V., 1968, "The Chinese Storytellers and Singers of Ballads: their Performances and Storytelling Techniques", *The Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, Third Series, vol. 10, August 1968, pp. 97-115
- Hu Daojing 胡道静, 1992, *Gongsun Longzi kao* 公孙龙子考, Shanghai shudian chuban, Shanghai
- Hu Quyuan 胡曲园 and Chen Jinkun 陈进坤, 1987, *Gongsun Longzi lunshu* 公孙龙子论论疏, Fudan daxue chubanshe, Shanghai
- Hu Shi 胡适, 1963, *The Development of the Logical Method in Ancient China*, Paragon Book, New York
- 1968, *Zhongguo gudai zhexue shi* 中國古代哲學史, Shangwu yinshuguan, Taipei
 - 1983, *Xian Qin mingxue shi* 先秦名学史, Xuelin chubanshe, Shanghai, pp. 95-112
 - 1997, *Zhongguo zhexue dagang* 中国哲学大纲, Shanghai guji chubanshe, Shanghai
- Hu Xuechen 胡学琛, 1995, *Zhonghua daojiao da cidian* 中华道教大辞典, Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, Beijing

- Huainan honglie jijie – shang/xia ce* 淮南鴻烈鷄集解·上下冊, 1989, Xinbian zhuzi jicheng 新編諸子集成, Zhonghua shuju, Beijing.
- Huang C. T. and Li A. Y. H., 2006, *New Horizons in Chinese Linguistics – Studies in Natural Languages and Linguistic Theory*, Kluwer Academic Publication, Dordrecht
- Huang Siu-chi, 1977, “Introduction to the 1976 Workshop on ‘Dialogue in Skepticism’”, *Philosophy East & West*, 27.2, pp. 135-154
- Hulsewé A. F. P., 1965, “Texts in Tombs”, *Asiatische Studien*, vol. 18, pp. 78-89
- Hummel A. W., 1941, “The Development of the Book in China“, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 61, pp. 71-76
- Idema W. and Haft L., a cura di, 2000, *Letteratura Cinese*, Cafoscarina, Venezia
- Iljic R., 2001, “The Origin of the Suffix –men 們 in Chinese”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 64.1, pp. 74-97
- 2005, “Personal collective in Chinese”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol. 68.1, pp. 77-103
- Im Manyul, 2007, “Horse-parts, White-parts, and Naming: Semantics, Ontology, and Compound Terms in the White Horse Dialogue”, *Dao*, vol. 6.2, pp. 167-185
- Ivanhoe P. J., 1993, “Zhuangzi on Skepticism, Skill and the Ineffable Dao”, *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 61.4, pp. 639-654

- Jacques G., 2000, “The Character 維·惟·唯 ywij and the Reconstruction of the 脂 *Zhi* and 微 *Wei* Rhymes”, *Cahiers de Linguistique – Asie Orientale*, vol. 29.2, pp. 205-222
- Jin Shoushen 金受申, 1922, *Gongsun Longzi shi* 公孫龍子釋, Shanwu yinshuguan, Shanghai
- Johnston I., 2004, “The *Gongsun Longzi*: a Translation and an Analysis of its Relationship to Later Mohist Writings”, *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 31.2, pp. 271-295
- Kai-wing Chow, On-cho Ng and Henderson J.B., (eds.), 1999, *Imagining Boundaries – Changing Confucian Doctrines, Texts, and Hermeneutics*, State University of New York Press
- Kang Youwei 康有為, 1984, *Lunyu zhu* 論語注, Kang Youwei xueshu zhuzuo xuan 康有為學術著作選, Zhonghua shuju, Beijing
- Kao Kung-yi and Obenchain D. B., 1975, “Kung-sun Lung’s *Chih Wu Lun* and Semantics of Reference and Predication” *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, vol. 2, pp. 285-324
- Karlgren B., 1929-30, “The Authenticity of Ancient Chinese Text”, *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities*, vol.1, pp. 165-183
- 1957, *Grammata Serica Recensa*, The Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm
 - 1963, *Xian Qin wenxian jiajie zili* 先秦文獻假借字例 (tr. Chen Shunzheng 陳舜政), Zhonghua congshu bianshen weiyuanhui, Taipei

Kennedy G. A., 1940, “A Study of the Particle *Yen* - A. Its Meaning”, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 60.1, pp. 1-22

- 1940a, “A Study of the Particle *Yen* - B. Its Form”, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 60.2, pp. 193-207

Kern M., 2000, “ ‘Persuasion’ or ‘Treatise’ ? The Prose Genre *Shui* 說 and *Shuo* 說 in the Light of the *Guwenci leizhuan* of 1779”, in L. Bieg, E. von Mende and M. Siebert, 2000, *Ad Seres et Tungusos – Festschrift für Martin Gimm zu seinem 65. Geburtstag am 25. Mai 1995*, Harassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden, pp. 221-245

- 2002, “Methodological Reflections on the Analysis of the Textual Variants and the Modes of Manuscript Production in Early China”, *Journal of East Asian Archaeology*, vol. 4, 1-4, pp.143-181

- 2005, “Quotation and the Confucian Canon in Early Chinese Manuscripts: the Case of ‘Zi Yi’(Black Robes)”, *Asiatische Studien*, 59.1, pp. 293-332

- 2005a, *Text and Ritual in Early China*, University of Washington Press, Seattle and London

Knechtges D. R., 1971, “Wit, Humor and Satire in Early Chinese Literature (to A.D.220)”, *Monumenta Serica*, vol. 29, pp. 79-98

- 1982, *Wen Xuan or Selection of Refined Literature – Volume One : Rhapsodies on Metropolises and Capitals*, Princeton University Press, Princeton

Knechtges D. R. and Vance E., 2005, *Rhetoric and the Discourse of Power in Court Culture –China, Europe, and Japan*, University of Washington Press, Seattle and London

Knoblock J. and Riegel J., (eds.), 2000, *The Annals of Lü Buwei - 呂氏春秋*, Stanford University Press, Stanford

Kongcongzi 孔叢子, 1995(1990), in *Kongcongzi – Zengzi quanshu – Zisizi quanshu*
孔叢子 - 曾子全書 - 子思子全書, Zhuzi baijia congshu 諸子百家叢書, Shanghai
guji chubanshe, Shanghai, pp. 36-39

Koryō-sa 高麗史, <http://kindai.ndl.go.jp/>

Kou Pao-Koh I., 1953, *Deux Sophistes Chinois - Houi Che et Kong- Souen Long*,
Bibliothèque de l'Institut des Hautes Etudes Chinoises, Imprimerie Nationale, Paris

Kramer S. N., 1949, "Schooldays: a Sumerian Composition relating to the Education
of a Scribe", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 64, pp. 199-215

Kristeva J., 2000 (1969), Σημειωτική – *Recherches pour une sémanalyse*, Éditions du
Seuil, Paris

Kroll J. L., 1973, "The Term *Yi-piao* and "Associative" Thinking", *Journal of the
American Oriental Society*, vol. 93.3, pp. 356-359

- 1985, "Disputation in Ancient Chinese Culture", *Early China*, vol. 11-12, 1985-86,
pp. 119-145

Lai W., 1990, "Looking for Ho Po: Unmasking the River God of Ancient China",
History of Religions, vol. 29.4, pp. 335-350

- 1995, "White Horse not Horse: making Sense of a Negative Logic", *Asian
Philosophy*, 5.1, pp. 59-74

- 1997, "Kung-sun Lung on the Point of Pointing: the Moral Rhetoric of Names",
Asian Philosophy, 7.1, pp. 47-58

Lange M., 1988-1989, "Hui Shih's Logical Theory of Descriptions: a Philosophical
Reconstruction of Hui Shih's ten Enigmatic Arguments", *Monumenta Serica*, 38, pp.
95-114

- Larre C., Robinet I. and Rochat de la Vallée E., 1993, *Les grands traits du Huainan zi*, Variétés Sinologiques n. 75, Institut Ricci, Les Éditions du Cerf, Paris.
- Lau D. C., 1958, “The Treatment of the Opposites in the *Lao Tzu*”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol. 21, pp. 345- 360
- 1963, “On Mencius’ Use of the Method of Analogy in Argument”, *Asia Major*, vol. 10, pp. 173-194
 - 1973, “Reviews and Notice of Books – Herrlee G. Creel, *What is Taoism and other Studies in Chinese Cultural History*, viii + 192 pp. Chicago and London. The University of Chicago Press, 1970”, *Asia Major*, vol. 18, pp. 121-123
- Lavagnino A. C., (tr.), 1995, Liu Xie : *Il tesoro delle lettere – un intaglio di draghi*, Luni Editrice, Milano, pp. 131, 134.
- Leeuw, van der, K., 1994, *Het Chinese Denken: Geschiedenis van de Chinese Filosofie in Hoofdlijnen*, Boom Amsterdam, Amsterdam, pp. 88-93
- Lenk H. and Gregor P. S., (eds.), 1993, *Epistemological Issues in Classical Chinese Philosophy*, State University of N.Y. Press, Albany
- Leslie D., 1964, *Argument by Contradiction in Pre-Buddhist Chinese Reasoning*, Occasional Paper n. 4, Centre of Oriental Studies, The Australian National University, Canberra
- Levi J., 1992, “L’Art de la Persuasion à l’Epoque des Royaumes Combattants (V^e-III^e Siècles a.v. J.C.)”, *Extrême Orient-Extrême Occident*, vol. 14, pp. 49-89
- 1993, “Quelques aspects de la rectification des noms dans la pensée et la pratique politiques de la Chine ancienne”, *Extrême Orient-Extrême Occident*, vol. 15, pp. 23-54

- 1999, *Han-Fei-tse ou Le Tao du Prince – La Stratégie de la Domination Absolue*, Seuil, Paris
- Lewis M. E., 1999, *Writing and Authority in Early China*, State University of New York Press, Albany, pp. 53-97, 109-123
- Li Chenyang, 1999, *The Tao encounters the West – Explorations in Comparative Philosophy*, State University of New York Press, Albany, pp. 11-33, pp. 63-87
- Li Fanggui 李方桂, 1980, *Shang guyin yanjiu* 上古音研究, Shangwu yinshuguan, Beijing
- Liang Qichao 梁啟超, 1923, *Mozi xue'an* 墨子學案, Shangwu yinshuguan, Shanghai
- Liang Yusheng 梁玉繩, 1981, *Shiji zhiyi* 史記志疑, Xinhua shudian, Beijing.
- Liao W. K., 1959, *The Complete Works of Han Fei Tzu – a Classic of Chinese Political Science*, voll. 1-2, Probsthain's Oriental Series vol XXVI, Arthur Probsthain, London.
- Lidai xiaoshuo biji xuan (ming) – di er ce* 歷代小說筆記選(明)第二冊, 1958, Shangwu yinshuguan, Xianggang – Xinjiapo – Jilongpo
- Liezi zhu* 列子註, 1960, commented by Zhang Zhan 張湛, Guangwen shuju, Taipei.
- Liou Kia-Hway, 1961, *L'Esprit synthétique de la Chine – Etude de la Mentalité chinoise selon le Textes des Philosophes de l'Antiquité*, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 126-152

Liu J. J. Y., 1988, *Language Paradox Poetics – a Chinese Perspective*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J.

Liu Weihua 刘蔚华 and Miao Runtian 苗润田, 1992, *Jixia xueshi 稷下学史*, Zhongguo guangbo dianshi chubanshe, Beijing, pp. 228-244

Liu Xiang 劉向, 1965, *Bie lu 別錄*, in Yan Kejun 嚴可均, (ed.), 1965 (1958), *Quan shanggu sandai Qin Han Sanguo Liuchao wen 全上古三代秦漢三國六朝文*, Xinhua shuju chubanshe, Beijing, *juan 38*, pp. 336-340

- 1965a, *Xinxu 新序*, in Yan Kejun 嚴可均, (ed.), 1965 (1958), *Quan shanggu sandai Qin Han Sanguo Liuchao wen 全上古三代秦漢三國六朝文*, Xinhua shuju chubanshe, Beijing, *juan 39*, pp. 340-345

- 1987, *Shuoyuan jiaozheng 說苑校證*, Zhongguo gudian wenxuejiben congshu, Zhonghua shuju, Beijing.

Liu Yiqing 劉義慶, 1982, *Shishuo xinyu 世說新語*, Shanghai guji chubanshe, Shanghai.

Lloyd G., 2005, “ ‘Philosophy’: what did the Greeks invent and is relevant to China?”, *Extrême-Orient, Extrême Occident*, vol. 27, pp. 149-159.

Loewe M., 1993, *Early Chinese Texts: a Bibliographical Guide*, Berkley

Loewe M. and Shaughnessy E., (eds.), 1999, *The Cambridge History of Ancient China: from the Origins of Civilization to 221 B.C.*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

- Lu Xing, 1998, *Rhetoric in Ancient China, fifth to third century B.C.E. – a Comparison with Classical Greek Rhetoric*, University of South Carolina Press, Columbia, South Carolina
- Lucas T., 1993, “Hui Shi and Kung Sun Lung, an Approach from Contemporary Logic”, *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 20.2, pp. 211-255
- 2005, “Later Mohist Logic, *Lei*, Classes and Sorts”, *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 32.3, pp. 349-365
- Ma Duanlin 馬端臨, 1963, *Wenxian tongkao 文獻通考*, Hsin-hsing shu-chü, Taipei.
- Maeder E. W., 1992, “Some Observations on the Composition of the ‘Core Chapters’ of the *Mozi*”, *Early China*, vol. 17, pp.27-82
- Mair V., 1983, *Experimental Essays on Chuang-tzu*, Asian Studies at Hawaii, n. 29, Center for Asian and Pacific Studies, University of Hawaii Press, Hawaii
- Major J. S., 1987, “The Meaning of *Hsing-te*”, in Le Blanc C., Blader S., (eds.), *Chinese Ideas about Nature and Society – Studies in Honour of Derk Bodde*, Hong Kong University Press, Hong Kong, pp. 281-291
- Makeham J., 1988, “Rectifying Confucius’ *Zheng Ming*”, in *Papers of Far Eastern History*, vol. 38, The Australian National University Department of Far Eastern History, pp. 1-24
- 1989, “The *chien-pai* Sophism – Alive and well”, *Philosophy East & West*, 39.1, pp. 74-81
- 1990-91, “The Legalist Concept of *Hsing-ming*: an Example of the Contribution of Archaeological Evidence to the Re-Interpretation of Transmitted Texts”, *Monumenta Serica*, vol. 39, pp. 87-114
- 1994, *Name and Actuality in Early Chinese Thought*, State University of New York Press, Albany, New York

- Man, de, P., 1979, *Allegories of Reading - Figural Language in Rousseau, Nietzsche, Rilke, and Proust*, Yale University Press, New Haven
- Mansvelt Beck B. J., 1987, “The First Emperor’s Taboo Character and Three Day Reign of King Xiaowen: Two Moot Points raised by the Qin Chronicle unearthed in Shuihudi in 1975”, *T’oung Pao*, vol. 73, 1-3, pp. 68-85
- Mao Pengji 毛鵬基, 1953, *Zhuzi shijia pingyi shuyao* 諸子十家平議述要, Yiwen yinshuguan, Taibei, pp. 155-169
- Maspero H., 1955 (1927), *Histoire du Monde – La Chine antique* vol. 4, De Boccard, Paris
- 1925, “Le roman de Sou Ts’in”, *Études Asiatiques*, publiées à l’occasion du vingt-cinquième anniversaire de l’École Française d’ Extrême-Orient, vol. 2, pp. 127-141
- Mather R. B., 2002, *Shih-shuo Hsin-yü: a New Account of Tales of the World*, Michigan Classics in Chinese Studies 95, Ann Arbor
- Mei Y. P., 1953, “The *Kung-sun Lung Tzu* with a Translation into English”, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 16.3/4, pp. 404-437
- Mejor M., 1990, “Janusz Chmielewski (1916-1998)”, *Monumenta Serica*, vol. 47, pp. 501-503
- Meyer D., 2005-06, “Structure as a Means of Persuasion as seen in the Manuscript ‘*Qiong da yi shi*’ 窮達以時 from Tomb One, Guodian”, *Oriens Extremus*, pp. 179-210
- 2008, *Meaning-Construction in Warring States Philosophical Discourse: a Discussion of the Paleographic Materials from Tomb Guodian One*, Ph.D. Dissertation, Leiden University, Leiden.

- Möller H. G., 1997, “The Chinese Theory of Forms and Names (*xingming zhi xue*) and its Relations to a ‘Philosophy of Signs’”, *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 24.2, pp. 179-190
- 2000, “Chinese Language Philosophy and Correlativism”, *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities*, vol. 72, pp. 91-109
- Morgan E, 1969, *Tao, The Great Luminant – Essays from Huai Nan Tzu with introductory articles, notes, analyses*, Paragon Book, New York.
- Moritz R., 1973, *Hui Shi und die Entwicklung des chinesischen Denkens im alten China*, Schriften zur Geschichte und Kultur des alten Orients n.12 , Akademie Verlag, Berlin, pp. 104-105, 150-157
- Mou Bo, 2007, “Introduction: Methodological Notes”, *Journal of Chinese Philosophy – Gongsun Long and Contemporary Philosophy Special Theme*, vol. 34.4, pp. 465-471
- 2007a, “A Double-Reference Account: Gongsun Long’s ‘White-Horse-not-Horse’ Thesis”, *Journal of Chinese Philosophy – Gongsun Long and Contemporary Philosophy Special Theme*, vol. 34.4, pp.493-513
- Mou Wenyuan 繆文遠, 1984, *Zhanguoce kaobian 戰國策考辨*, Zhonghua shuju, Beijing.
- Mou Zongsan 牟宗三, 1961-64, “Huishi yu bianzhe zhi tu zhi guashuo 《惠施與辯者之徒之怪說》”, *Journal of Oriental Studies*, vol. II.1, pp. 1-38
- Mullie J. L. M., 1952, “Note sur 焉 Yen”, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, vol. 15, pp. 140-165

- Munro D., 1969, *The Concept of Man in Early China*, Stanford University Press, Stanford
- Nakamura Hajime, 1964, *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples – India, China, Tibet, Japan*, East-West Center Press, Honolulu, Hawaii
- Nanhua zhenjing yushi zalu* 南華真經餘事雜錄, in *Daozang* 道藏, 1988, Shanghai shudian chubanshe, Wenwu chubanshe, Tianjin guji chubanshe, Shanghai – Beijing – Tianjin, vol. 16, pp. 959-961
- Nanhua zhenjing zhushu* 南華真經註疏, in *Daozang* 道藏, 1988, Shanghai shudian chubanshe, Wenwu chubanshe, Tianjin guji chubanshe, Shanghai – Beijing – Tianjin, vol. 16, *juan* 2 pp. 287-300, *juan* 19 pp. 485-502, *juan* 35 pp. 657-672
- Nienhauser W. H. Jr, (ed.), 1986, *The Indiana Companion to Traditional Chinese Literature*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington
- (ed.), 1994, *The Grand Scribe's Records, Volume VII – The Memoirs of Pre-Han China by Ssu-ma C'hien*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington & Indianapolis.
- Nivison D. S., 1977, “The Pronominal Use of the Verb Yu (Gǐüg) in Early Archaic Chinese”, *Early China*, vol. 3, pp. 1-17
- Norden, van, B. W., 1993, “Hansen on *Hsün-tzu*”, *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 20, pp. 365-382
- Nylan M., 1998, “Sima Qian: a True Historian?”, *Early China*, 1998-1999, vol. 23-24, pp. 203-246
- 1999, “A Problematic Model – the Han “Orthodox Synthesis”, Then and Now”, in Kai-wing Chow, On-cho Ng, Henderson J.B., (eds.), 1999, *Imagining Boundaries –*

- Changing Confucian Doctrines, Texts, and Hermeneutics*, State University of New York Press, pp. 17-56
- 2000, "Textual Authority in Pre-Han and Han", *Early China*, vol. 25, pp. 205-258
- Oliver R., 1971, *Communication and Culture in Ancient India and China*, Syracuse University Press, Syracuse
- Owens W. D., 1993, "Tao and Difference: the Existential Implications", *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 20.3, pp.261-277
- Pang Pu 龐樸, 1974, *Kung Sun-lung tzu i chu* 公孫龍子譯注, Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, Shanghai
- 1979, *Kung Sun-lung tzu yen-chiu* 公孫龍子研究, Zhonghua Shuju Chubanshe, Beijing
 - 1989 (1987), *Gongsun Longzi jin yi* 公孫龍子今譯, Bashu shushe chubanshe, Chengdu
- Paul G., 1991, "Reflections on the Usage of the Terms 'Logic' and 'Logical'", *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, vol. 18.1, pp. 73-87
- Pelliot P., 1902, "Notes de bibliographie chinoise: I. Le kou yi ts'ong chou", *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient*, vol. 2.1, pp. 315-340, www.persee.fr
- Penco C., 2004, *Introduzione alla Filosofia del Linguaggio*, Laterza, Roma-Bari
- Peng Yoke Ho, Moffett J. P. C. and Sungwu Cho, (eds.), 2007, *Explorations in Daoism – Medicine and Alchemy in Literature*, Routledge, London and New York
- Perissinotto L., 2002, *Le Vie dell'Interpretazione nella Filosofia Contemporanea*, Ed. Laterza, Bari-Roma

Perleberg M., 1952, *The Works of Kung-sun Lung-tzu*, LTD., Hong Kong

Petersen J. Ø., 1995, “Which Books did the First Emperor of Ch’in burn? On the Meaning of *Pai Chia* in Early Chinese Sources”, *Monumenta Serica*, vol. 43, pp. 1-52

Peyraube A., 1998, “On the History of Classifiers in Archaic and Medieval Chinese”, in T’sou B., (ed.), *Studia Linguistica Serica*, City University Press, Hong Kong, pp. 131-145

Plaks A. H., 1990, “Where the Lines meet: Parallelism in Chinese and Western Literatures”, *Poetics Today*, vol. 11.3, pp. 523-546

Pokora T., 1973, “Ironical Critics at Ancient Chinese Courts (*Shih chi*, 126)”, *Oriens Extremus*, vol. 20, pp. 49-64

- 1975, *Hsin-lun (New Treatise) and other Writings by Huan T’an (43 B.C. – 28 A.D.) – an Annotated Translation with Index*, Centre for Chinese Studies, The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor Publishing House, Michigan

Poxielun 破邪論, n. 2109, *juan* 1, T52, p. 0477/a12-13, in Takakusu Junjirō 高楠順次郎 and Watanabe Kaikyoku 渡辺海旭, (eds.), 1924-1932, *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新修大藏經, voll. 1-85, Tōkyō

Pregadio F., 2006, *Great Clarity: Daoism and Alchemy in Early Medieval China*, Stanford University Press, Stanford

Pulleyblank E. G., 1959, “*Fei* 非, *wei* 唯 and certain related words”, in Egerod S., Glahn E., (eds.), 1959, *Studia Serica Bernhard Karlgren dedicata – Sinological Studies dedicated to Bernhard Karlgren on his Seventieth Birthday October Fifth, 1959*, Ejnar Munksgaard ed., Copenhagen, pp. 178-189

- 1978, “Emphatic Negatives in Classical Chinese”, in Roy D.T., Tsuen-hsuei Tsien, (eds.), 1978, *Ancient Chinese Studies in Early Civilization*, The Chinese University Press, Hong Kong, pp. 115-135
- 1986, “The Locative Particles *Yü* 于, *Yü* 於, and *Hu* 呼”, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 106.1, pp. 1-12
- 1991, *Lexicon of Reconstructed Pronunciation in Early Middle Chinese and Early Mandarin*, University of British Columbia Press, Vancouver
- 1995, *Outline of Classical Chinese Grammar*, UBC Press, Vancouver

Qian Mu 錢穆, 1934, *Hui Shi Gongsun Long* 惠施公孫龍, Shanghai shudian, Shanghai

- Qiu Xigui 裘錫圭, 1998, “Gu wenxian zhong du wei ‘she’ de ‘zhi’ ji qi yu ‘zhi’ hu’e zhi li” 《古文獻中讀為〈設〉的〈執〉及其與〈執〉互訛之例》, *Journal of Oriental Studies*, vol. 36, 1-2, pp. 39-46
- 2000, *Chinese Writing*, The Society for the Study of Early China and the Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, Berkeley

Quan Zuwang 全祖望, 2003, *Jieqiting ji* 鮚埼亭集, Wending shuju, Taipei, pp. 807-809

- Quine von W. O., 1966, *The Ways of Paradox and other Essays*, Random House Book, New York
- 1975, *I Modi del Paradosso e altri Saggi*, Il Saggiatore, Milano
 - 1986, *La Relatività Ontologica e altri Saggi*, a cura di M. Leonelli, Armando Editore, Roma
 - 2004, *Da un Punto di Vista Logico*, Raffaello Cortina Editore, Milano

Rakita Goldin P., 1993, “Miching Mallecho: The *Zhanguo* and Classical Rhetoric”, *Sino-Platonic Papers*, vol. 41, pp. 1-27

- Raphals L., 1992, *Knowing Words – Wisdom and Cunning in the Classical Traditions of China and Greece*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, pp. 50-69, pp. 101-128
- 1998, “On Hui Shi”, in Ames R. T., (ed.), *Wandering at Ease in the Zhuangzi*, State University of New York Press, Albany, New York, pp. 143-161
- Reding J. P., 1985, *Les Fondements Philosophiques de la Rétorique chez les Sophistes Grecs et chez les Sophistes Chinois*, Publications Universitaires Européennes, Peter Lang, Berne, Frankfurt, New York
- 1986, “Greek and Chinese Categories: a Reexamination of the Problem of Linguistic Relativism”, *Philosophy East & West*, vol. 3, pp. 350-374
 - 1986a, “Analogical Reasoning in Early Chinese Philosophy”, *Asiatische Studien*, vol. 40, pp.40-56
 - 2002, “Gongsun Long on What is not: Steps toward the Deciphering of the *Zhiwulun*”, *Philosophy East & West*, 52.2, pp. 190-206
- Richter M., 2001, “Handschriftenkundliche Probleme beim Lesen altchinesischer Manuskripte”, in Führer B., (ed.), 2005, *Aspekte des Lesens in China in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart – Referate der Jahrestagung 2001 der Deutschen Vereinigung für Chinastudien (DVCS)*, Band 54, Edition Cathay, Projekt Verlag, Bochum, pp. 88-121
- Rieman F., 1977, “On Linguistic Skepticism in Wittgenstein and Kung-sun Lung”, *Philosophy East & West*, 27.2, pp. 183-193
- 1980, “Kung-sun Lung, Designated Things, and Logic”, *Philosophy East & West*, 30.3, pp. 305-319
- Robins D., 2000, “Mass Nouns and Count Nouns in Classical Chinese”, *Early China*, vol. 25, pp. 147-184

- Rosemont H. J., 1974, "On representing Abstractions in Archaic Chinese", *Philosophy East & West*, 24.1, pp. 71-88
- Roth H., 1993, "Text and Edition in Early Chinese Philosophical Literature", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 113.2, pp. 214-227
- Roy D. T. and Tsuen-hsuei Tsien, (eds.), 1978, *Ancient China: Studies in Early Chinese Civilization*, Chinese University Press, Hong Kong
- Russell B., 1905, "On Denoting", *Mind*, New Series, vol. 14, n. 56, pp. 479-493
 - 1986, *The Philosophy of Logical Atomism and other Essays, 1914-19*, Allen & Unwin, London - Boston
- Ryden E., 1996, "Was Confucius a Confucian? Confusion over the Use of the Term 'School' in Chinese Philosophy", *Early China News*, vol. 9, pp. 5-9, 28-29
- Rygaloff A., 1958, "A propos de l'Antonymie: l'Exemple du Chinois", *Journal de Psychologie Normale et Pathologique*, 55, pp. 358-376
- Sabattini M. and Santangelo P., 1994, *Storia della Cina*, Laterza Editore, Roma
- Saussure de F., 1967, *Corso di Linguistica Generale*, Laterza, Bari-Roma
- Sbisà S., (ed.), 1987, *Gli Atti Linguistici – Aspetti e Problemi di Filosofia del Linguaggio*, Feltrinelli, Milano
- Scarpari M., 1979, "Le Negazioni del Cinese Arcaico", *Cina*, vol. 15, pp. 227-268
 - 1995, *Avviamento allo Studio del Cinese Classico*, Cafoscarina, Venezia

- 2000, “Riscrivere la storia e la cultura della Cina antica: credenze religiose, correnti di pensiero e società alla luce delle recenti scoperte archeologiche”, *Conoscere la Cina*, a cura di L. Lanciotti, Torino, pp. 113-126
- 2004, “Zi yue, ‘The Master said..’, or did he?”, *Guru. The spiritual master in Eastern and Western tradition: Authority and Charisma*, a cura di Rigopoulos A., New Dehli
- 2004a, “Tra manoscritti e tradizione: la produzione del testo nella Cina antica”, *Scritture e codici nelle culture dell’Asia (Giappone, Cina, Tibet, India). Prospettive di studio*, a cura di G. Boccali e M. Scarpari, Venezia

Schindler B., 1926, “Zur Partikel 惟”, *Asia Major*, vol. 3, pp. 575-584

- 1954, “Grammatical Notes III: 甚 Shen”, *Asia Major*, vol. 4, pp. 57-59

Schwartz B., 1985, *The World of Thought in Ancient China*, Cambridge, Massachussettes

Sharrock A. and Morales H., (eds.), 2000, *Intratextuality – Greek and Roman Textual Relations*, Oxford University Press, Oxford

Shaughnessy E., 1997, *New Sources of early Chinese history. An introduction to the reading of Inscriptions and manuscripts*, Berkeley

- 2006, *Rewriting Early Chinese Texts*, State University of New York Press, Albany

Shen Yu-ting, 1979, “On Appraisal of the *Kung-sun Lung Tzu*”, *Chinese Studies in Philosophy*, vol. 10.3, pp. 20-27

Shih Yu-chung V., 1970, *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons* 文心雕龍 by Liu Hsieh, Chung Hwa Book Company Ltd., Taipei

Shuowen jiezi 說文解字, 1981, Shanghai guji chubanshe, Shanghai

Sian L.Yen, 1971, "On Negation with *Fei* in Classical Chinese", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 91.3, pp. 409-417

- 1997, "On the Negative *Wei* in Classical Chinese", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 97.4, pp. 469-

Siku Quanshu 四庫全書, 2005, <http://skqs.leidenuniv.nl/>

Sima Qian 司馬遷, 1963, *Shiji* 史記, Zhonghua shuju, Beijing

Simon W., 1951, "*Der erl jiann* 得而見 and *der jiann* 得見 in *Luenyeu* 論語 VII.25", *Asia Major* (New Series), vol. 2, pp. 46-67

- 1951a, "Functions and Meaning of *Erl 而*", *Asia Major*, vol. 2, pp. 179-202

- 1953, "Functions and Meaning of *Erl 而* : Part II", *Asia Major*, vol. 3, pp. 7-18

- 1953a, "Functions and Meaning of *Erl 而* : Part III", *Asia Major*, vol. 3, pp. 117-131

- 1954, "Functions and Meaning of *Erl 而* : Part IV", *Asia Major*, vol. 4, pp. 20-35

Sivin N., 1991, "Text and experience in classical Chinese medicine", in Bates D., (ed.), 1991, *Knowledge and the scholarly medical traditions*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 177-204

- 1995, "The Myth of the Naturalists", in *Id.*, 1995, *Medicine, Philosophy and Religion in Ancient China – Researches and Reflections*, Variorum, Ashgate, pp. 1-33

Smith K., 2003, "Sima Tan and the Invention of Daoism, 'Legalism', *et cetera*", *The Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 62.1, pp. 129-156

Smyth D., (ed.), 2000, *The Canon is Southeast Asian Literatures – Literatures of Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam*, Curzon Press, Richmond

- Solomon B., 1954, “ ‘One is no Number’ in China and the West”, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, vol. 17, pp. 253-260
- 1969, “The Assumptions of Hui-tzu”, *Monumenta Serica*, 28, pp. 1-40
 - 1981-83, “Kung-sun Lung Tzu 公孫龍子 IV and VI”, *Monumenta Serica*, 35, pp. 235 -273
- Soymié M., 1990, “Observations sur les Caractères interdits en Chine”, *Journal Asiatique*, 278.3-4, pp. 377-407
- Spirin V. S., 1976, *Postroenie drevnekitaiskikh tekstov* Построение древнекитайских текстов, Hayka
- 1991, “Composition des Textes Chinois Anciens”, *Extrême Orient-Extrême Occident*, vol. 13, pp. 31-58
- Steinkraus W. E., 1980, “Socrates, Confucius and the Rectification of Names”, *Philosophy East & West*, 30. 2, pp. 261-264
- Sterckx R., 1996, “An Ancient Chinese Horse Ritual”, *Early China*, vol. 21, pp. 47-79.
- Stevenson F., 1991, “Meaning is not Meaning: World, Thing and Difference in Kung-sun Lung’s *Chih Wu Lun*”, *Tamkang Review*, XXI.3, pp. 297-322
- 1991a, “South has (no) Limits: Relative and Absolute Meaning in Hui Shih’s Ten Points”, *Tamkang Review*, XXI.4, pp. 325-346
- Stimson H. M., 1971, “*Sheir*, *Shwu* ‘Who? Whom?’, and *Moh* ‘None’ in Old Chinese”, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 91.4, pp. 447-466
- Sun Lu 孫祿, 1957, *Sun Lu jianbai liying bian kaozheng* 孫祿堅白離盈辯考證, in Luan Diaofu 栾调甫, 1957, *Mozi yanjiu lunwenji* 墨子研究論文集, Renmin chubanshe.

Sun Yirang 孫詒讓, 1989, *Zhayi* 札迓, Zhonghua shuju, Beijing, pp. 179-180

Sun Zhenbin, 1997, “*Yan*: a Dimension of Praxis and its Philosophical Implications (a Chinese Perspective on Language)”, *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 24.2, pp. 191-208

Taiping Yulan 太平御覽, 1968, Shangwu yinshuguan, Taipei

Tan Jiefu 譚戒甫, 2006 (1956), *Gongsun Longzi xingming fawei* 公孫龍子發微, Wuhan Daxue chubanshe, Wuhan

Tao Hongqing 陶鴻慶, 1959, *Du zhuzi zhaji* 讀諸子札記, Zhonghua shuju, Shanghai, pp. 428-433

Thomas R., 2003, “Performance and written Literature in Classical Greece: envisaging Performance from written Literature and Comparative Context”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol. 66.3, pp. 348-357

Thompson K. O., 1955, “When a White Horse is not a ‘Horse’”, *Philosophy East & West*, 45.4, pp. 481-499

Tian Chenshan, 2000, “*Tongbian* : a Chinese Strand of Thought”, *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, vol. 27.4, pp. 441-468

Trauzettel R., 1993, “Ein Sophismus des altchinesischen Philosophen Gongsun Long: Scherz, Ironie oder doch tiefere Bedeutung?”, *Minima Sinica*, vol. 1, pp. 1-17
- 1999, “A Sophism by the Ancient Philosopher Gongsun Long: Jest, Satire, Irony – or is there a deeper Significance?”, *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 26.1, pp. 21-35

- Tsien Tsuen-Hsuin, 1963, *Written on Bamboo and Silk: The Beginnings of Chinese Books and Inscriptions*, Chicago University Press, Chicago
- T'sou E. K. Y., 1981, "A Sociolinguistic Analysis of the Logographic System of Chinese", *Journal of Chinese Linguistics*, 9, pp.1-19
- Unger U., 1994, *Rhetorik des klassischen Chinesisch*, Harassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden
- Vandermeersch L., 1989, "Les origines divinatoires de la tradition chinoise du parallélisme littéraire", *Extrême Orient-Extrême Occident*, vol. 11, pp. 11-33
- 1993, "Rectification des nomes et langue graphique chinoises", *Extrême Orient-Extrême Occident*, vol. 15, pp. 11-21
- Vierheller E. J., 1993, "Object Language and Meta-Language in the *Gongsun-Long-Zi*", *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 20.2, pp. 181-209
- Vittinghof H., 2001, "Dialecticians/Logicians (*mingjia*) and their Teaching", *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 28.2, pp. 165- 172
- Vogelsang K., 2002, "The Scribe's Genealogy", *Oriens Extremus*, 2003-2004, vol. 44, pp. 3-10
- Volkov A., 1992, "Analogical Reasoning in Ancient China: some Examples", *Extrême Orient-Extrême Occident*, vol. 14, pp. 15-48
- Wagner R., 1980, "Interlocking Parallel Style: Laozi and Wang Bi", *Asiatische Studien*, vol. 34, pp. 18-58
- 1999, "The Impact of Conceptions of Rhetoric and Style upon the Formation of Early *Laozi* Editions: Evidence from Guodian, Mawangdui and the Wang Bi *Laozi*", *Transactions of the International Conference of Eastern Studies*, vol. 44, pp. 32-56

Wang Chong 王充, 1966, *Lun Heng* 論衡, 2 voll., Taiwan Zhonghua shuju, Taipei

- 1990, *Lun Heng jiaoshi* 論衡校釋, 4 voll., Zhonghua shuju, Beijing

Wang Deming 王德明, (ed.), 1998, *Kongzi Jiayu yizhu* 孔子家语译注, Guanxi Shifan Daxue chubanshe, Guilin

Wang Dianji 王奠基, 1961, *Zhongguo luoji sixiang shiliao fenxi – di yi ji* 中國邏輯思想史料分析- 第一輯, Zhonghua shuju, Beijing, pp. 160-265

- 1979, *Zhongguo luoji sixiang shi* 中国逻辑思想史, Shanghai Renmin chubanshe, Shanghai, pp. 54-98

Wang Guan 王瑄, 1992 (1988), *Gongsun Longzi xuanjie* 公孫龍子懸解, Zhonghua shuju, Beijing

Wang Lianqing, 1994, *Origin and Development of Classifiers in Chinese*, PhD Dissertation, Ohio State University

Wang Qixiang 王啓湘, 1957, *Zhou Qin mingjia san zi jiaquan* 周秦名家三子校詮, Zhonghua shuju, Shanghai, pp.45-90

Wang W. S. Y., 1999, “Language Emergence and Transmission”, in Peyraube A., Sun Chaofen, (eds.), *In Honor of Mei Tsu-Lin – Studies on Chinese Historical Syntax and Morphology*, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Centre de Recherches Linguistiques sur l’Asie Orientale, Paris, pp. 247-257

Wang Youru, 2004, “The Strategies of ‘Goblet Words’: Indirect Communication in the *Zhuangzi*”, *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 31.2, pp. 195-218

- Wang Zhen-ping, 1991, "Manuscript Copies of Chinese Books in Ancient Japan", *The Gest Library Journal*, vol. 4.2, pp. 35-67
- Wang Zhong 汪中, 1936, *Shi san jiu (shang, zhong, xia)* 釋三九 (上、中、下), in *Sibu Congkan* 四部叢刊, *Jibu* 集部, *Shuxue nepian yi* 術學內篇一, Shangwu yinshuguan, Shanghai
- Wardy R., 2000, *Aristotle in China – Language, Categories and Translation*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- Watson B., 1958, *Ssu-ma Ch'ien – Grand Historian of China*, Columbia University Press, New York and London, pp. 135-180
- 1968, *The complete works of Chuang Tzu*, Columbia University Press, New York and London
- Wen Gongyi 溫公頤, 1983, *Xian Qin luoji shi* 先秦逻辑史, Shanghai Renmin chubanshe, Shanghai, pp. 27-57
- Wenxuan (quan liu ce)* 文選(全六冊), 1986, Shanghai guji chubanshe, Shanghai
- Wenxuan quanyi* 文選全譯, 1995, *Zhongguo lidai mingzhu quanyi congshu* 中國歷代名著全譯叢書, Guizhou renmin chubanshe, Guiyang
- Wenyuan yinghua* 文苑英華, 1982 [1979], *Zhongghua shuju*, Beijing, vol. 5, pp. 3971-3973.
- Wilde O., 1998, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Broadview Press

- Wilhelm H., 1957, "The Scholar's Frustration: Notes on a Type of *Fu*", in J. K. Fairbank, 1957, *Chinese Thought and Institutions*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, pp. 310-319
- Williams R. J., 1972, "Scribal Training in Ancient Egypt", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 92.2, pp. 214-221
- Wing-tsit Chan, 1963, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, pp. 232-243
- Wittgenstein L., 1998, *Tractatus logico-philosophicus e Quaderni 1914-1916*, Einaudi, Torino
- Wivell C. J., 1971, "The Chinese Oral and Pseudo-oral Narrative Traditions", *Transactions of the International Conference of Orientalists in Japan*, vol. XVI, pp. 53-65
- Wu Chengxue and Sha Hongbing, 2007, "The classics of ancient Chinese literature", *Frontiers of Literary Studies in China*, vol. 1.1, pp. 50-79
- Wu J. S., 1969, "Chinese Language and Chinese Thought", *Philosophy East & West*, 19.4, pp. 423-434
- Wu Feibai 伍非百, 1983, *Zhongguo gu mingjia yan - xia* 中国古名家言 - 下, Zhongguo xuehui kexue chubanshe, Beijing, pp. 500-628
- Wu Kuang-ming, 1989, "Counterfactuals, Universals and Chinese Thinking", *Tsing Hua Journal of Chinese Studies*, New Series, vol. 19.2, pp. 1-43
- Wu Yenna, 1998, "In Search of Satire in Classical Chinese Poetry and Prose", *Tamkang Review*, vol. 28.4, pp. 1-39

- 1999, "Satiric Elements in Chinese *Xiaoshuo*, Drama, and Oral Literature and Performance", *Tamkang Review*, vol. 29.3, pp. 1-45
- Wu Yujiang 吳毓江, Wu Xingyu 吳興宇, 2001, *Gongsun Longzi jiaoshi* 公孫龍子校釋, *Zhonghua yaoji jishi congshu*, Shanghai guji chubanshe, Shanghai
- Xiao Yumin 蕭裕民, 2006, "*Zhuangzi* 'Tiandi yi zhi ye, wanwu yi ma ye' xishi" 《〈莊子〉「天地一指也, 萬物一馬也」析釋》, *Wen yu Zhe*, 2006.12, pp. 83-108
- Xu Fuguan 徐復觀, 1982 (1955), *Gongsun Longzi jiangshu* 公孫龍子講疏, Taiwan xuesheng shuju, Taibei
- Xu Kangsheng 許抗生, 1986, *Xian Qin mingjia yanjiu* 先秦名家研究, Hunan renmin chubanshe, Changsha
- Xu Keqian, 1997, "The Unique Features of Hui Shi's Thought: a Comparative Study between Hui Shi and other Pre-Qin Philosophers", 24.2, pp. 231-254
- Xu Yulong, 1987, "A Study of Referential Functions of Demonstratives in Chinese Discourse", *Journal of Chinese Linguistics*, vol. 15.1, pp. 132-150
- Xunzi jijie* 荀子集解, 1988, *Xinbian zhuzi jicheng* 新編諸子集成, Zhonghua shuju, Beijing
- Yang Junguang 楊俊光, 1991, *Hui Shi Gongsun Long pingzhuan* 惠施公孫龍評傳, Nanjing Daxue chubanshe, Nanjing

- Yang Liuqiao 杨柳桥, 1988, *Gongsun Longzi jiaojie yihua* 公孙龙子校解译话, Tianjin guji chubanshe, Tianjin.
- Yang Rongguo 杨荣国, 1954, *Zhongguo gudai sixiang shi* 中国古代思想史, Renmin chubanshe, Beijing, pp. 291-372
- Yang Shoujian 楊壽錢, 1964, *Gongsun Longzi shiyi* 公孫龍子釋義, *Zhongguo zhexue sixiang yaoji congbian* 中國哲學思想要籍叢編, Huawen shuju, Taipei
- Yang Tianyu 杨天宇, 2004, *Zhouli yizhu* 周礼译注, *Shisan jing yizhu* 十三经译注, Shanghai guji chubanshe, Shanghai
- Yang Xiong 揚雄, 1992, *Fayan zhu* 法言注, Zhonghua shuju, Beijing
- Yang Yongzhi 杨永志, 1963, "Gongsun Long zhexue pipan" < 公孙龙哲学批判 >, *Zhongguo Zhexue* 《 中国哲学 》, 1963 年 二期, pp. 45-59
- Yantie Lun* 盐铁论, 1974, Shanghai renmin chubanshe, Shanghai
- Yen-hui A. L., 1999, "Plurality in a Classifier Language", *Journal of East Asian Linguistics*, vol. 8.1, pp. 75-99
- Yu P. R., 1978, "Chinese and Symbolist Poetic Theories", *Comparative Literature*, vol. 30.4, pp. 291-312
- 1983, "Allegory, Allegoresis, and the Classic of Poetry", *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, vol. 43.2, pp. 377-412

- Yu Yue 俞樾, 1956, *Zhuzi pingyi bulu* 諸子評議補錄, Zhonghua shuju chuban, Shanghai, pp. 26-33
- Yuasa Yasuo, 2005, “Image-thinking and the understanding of ‘Being’: the Psychological Basis of Linguistic Expression”, *Philosophy East & West*, 55.2, pp. 179-208
- Yue A. O., 1999, “The so-called Pivotal Construction in Pre-Qin Chinese”, in Peyraube A. and Sun Chaofen, (eds.), *In Honor of Mei Tsu-Lin – Studies on Chinese Historical Syntax and Morphology*, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Centre de Recherches Linguistiques sur l’Asie Orientale, Paris, pp. 327-360
- Zach, von E., 1926, “Zu 惟曰 bei Mengtzu”, *Asia Major*, vol. III, p. 574
- Zhang Dongsun 張東蓀, 1939, “A Chinese Philosopher’s Theory of Knowledge”, *The Yenching Journal of Social Studies*, vol. 1.2, pp. 155-191
- 1950, “Gongsun Long de bianxue” 《公孫龍的辯學》, *Yanjing xuebao*, 期 37, pp. 27-54
- Zhang Huaimin 張懷民, 1996 (1937), *Gongsun Longzi jiaoshi* 公孫龍字斟釋, Shanghai shudian, Shanghai
- Zhang Longxi, 1985, “The Tao and the Logos: Notes on Derrida’s Critique of Logocentrism”, *Critical Inquiry*, 11, pp. 385-398
- 1992, *The Tao and the Logos – Literary Hermeneutics, East and West*, Duke University Press, Durham & London, pp. 131-187
- Zhang Qingchang 張清常, Wang Yandong 王延棟, 1994, *Zhanguoce jianzhu* 戰果策箋注, Nankai Daxue chubanshe

- Zhang Shizhao 章士釗, 1927, “Chen Lanfu xiansheng ‘Gongsun Longzi zhu’ houthi”
《陳蘭甫先生〈公孫龍子注〉後題》, in *Zhang shizhao quanji - di liu juan*
章士釗全集·第六卷, Wenhui chubanshe, Shanghai, pp. 457-458
- Zhang Xin 張新, 1996, *Zhongguo mingjia* 中國名家, Zongjiao wenhua chubanshe,
Beijing, pp. 1-24, 214-285
- Zhang Zhenhua, 1990, *Chinesische und europäische Rhetorik*, Europäische
Hochschulschriften/Publications Universitaires Européennes, Peter Lang, Frankfurt
am Main · Bern · New York · Paris
- Zhanguoce* 戰國策, 1985, Shanghai guji chubanshe, Shanghai
- Zhao Yuan-ren, 1959, “How Chinese Logic operates”, *Anthropological Linguistics*,
vol. 1
- Zhongfa Hanxue Yanjiusuo 中法漢學研究所, 1968, *Wenxin diaolong xinshu*
文心雕龍新書, Ch’eng-wen publishing, Taipei.
- Zhongguo luojishi yanjiuhui ziliao bianxuan zu 中國邏輯史研究會資料編選組,
1985, “Gongsun Long” 《公孫龍》 in *Zhongguo luojishi ziliao xuan – xian Qin juan*
中國邏輯史資料選 – 先秦卷, Gansu renmin chubanshe, Lanzhou, pp. 72-105
- Zhongwen da cidian* 中文大辭典, 1962, The Institute for Advanced Chinese Studies,
Taipei.

Zhou Changzhong 周昌忠, 1991, *Gongsun Longzi xinlun – he xifan zhexue de bijiao yanjiu* 公孙龙子新论 – 和西方哲学的比较研究, Shanghai shehui kexueyuan chubanshe, Shanghai

Zhou Yunzhi 周云之, 1994, *Gongsun Longzi zhengming xueshuo yanjiu – jiaoquan, jinyi, pouxi, zonglun* 公孙龙子正名学说研究 – 校诂、今译、剖析、总论, Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, Beijing

Zhouyi quanjie 周易全解, 1989, Jilin Daxue chubanshe, Changchun

Zhuang - zi , 1990, a cura di Liou Kia-hway, Biblioteca Adelphi, Milano

Zhuangzi jijie – Zhuangzi jijie neipian buzheng 莊子集解· 莊子集解內篇補正, 1948, Xinbian zhuzi jicheng 新編諸子集成, Zhonghua shuju, Beijing.

Estratto per riassunto della tesi di dottorato

Studente: Lisa Indraccolo matricola: 955351

Dottorato: Scuola di Dottorato in Lingue, Culture e Società – indirizzo in Studi Orientali

Ciclo: XXII°

Titolo della tesi: *Gongsun Long and the Gongsun Longzi : Authorship and textual variation in a multilayered text*

Abstract:

Il presente lavoro si pone come obiettivo il gettare nuova luce sulla struttura e il contenuto del *Gongsun Longzi*, concentrandosi in particolare sui cosiddetti “capitoli originali”, ovvero quelli considerati i più fedeli ad una ipotetica formulazione originaria – scritta e/od orale - degli argomenti discussi, il *Baima Lun* ed il *Zhiwu Lun*. Dopo aver preso in considerazione la figura pseudo-storica dell’autore putativo, Gongsun Long, viene fornita un’analisi della struttura complessiva del testo, incluso anche un accurato studio delle varianti testuali esistenti tra le due versioni più antiche del testo ricevuto (le edizioni dello *Shuofu* e del *Daozang*). Infine, un’esaustiva trattazione dei contenuti filosofici del *Baima Lun* e del *Zhiwu Lun*, corredata da una traduzione commentata, chiude il lavoro

The present work aims at shading new light on the structure and content of the *Gongsun Longzi*, focusing in particular on the so-called “original chapters”, those who are considered more truthful to an hypothetical original formulation – written and/or oral – of the topics discussed, the *Baima Lun* and the *Zhiwu Lun*. After taking into consideration the pseudo-historical figure of the putative author, the persuader Gongsun Long, an analysis of the overall structure of the text is provided, comprehending an accurate study of textual variants existing between the two most ancient versions available of the received text (the *Shuofu* and the *Daozang* edition). Finally, an exhaustive treatment of the philosophical contents of the *Baima Lun* and *Zhiwu Lun*, accompanied with a commented translation, concludes the work.

Firma dello studente
