

A technical term that this author often uses, “identifier-recognizer mechanism,” was suggested to me by something in the 26th chapter of the Zhuang Zi. I fear that this chapter was not by Zhuang Zhuo himself, but by one of the members of his scholarly community. In ancient China, the authors in this field could not avoid the limitations of the vocabulary of that day. For instance, in texts given below, they lacked the term “referent” and, so they had to use “meaning” to fill that need.

According to the 23rd chapter of the Zhuang Zi, a fish trap is the way to catch fish, and “speech” is the way to get “meaning.” We would draw a connection between some noun or gerund and its referent. An observer uses a “fish trap,” an identifier mechanism, and gets a **creature**. After that, the observer locates the black box of the newly created **creature**, starts observing its outputs, its reactions, to inputs received. eventually makes a model, and somewhere along the way gives this **creature** a name. That amounts to giving the “meaning” a name. Somebody named A notices something, investigates it, and eventually gives it a name. Somebody named B gets told about this new discovery. After that, B has ways of going backwards from the name to the **creature** that A noticed. For instance, A tells B about something called an aye-aye that is an interesting small animal. B can look it up in a dictionary, read about it on Wikipedia, and even go to Madagascar to interact with a living specimen.

“Hedgehog cub” is a name. If you understand that phrase, you already have the concept of a hedgehog cub. Even so, the “fish” in this “fish trap: is not a concept. It is a living hedgehog cub. “How can I forget the words about hedgehog cubs and go play with one?”



Photo credit : IV Korneev , Leningrad Zoo<sup>1</sup>

26 The objective of a fish trap is fish. Once you have caught the fish you can forget about the trap. The objective of a snare is rabbits. Once you have caught a rabbit you can

forget about the snare. The objective of words is a referent. Once you have caught a referent you can forget about the words. How can I find people who have forgotten about words and have a word with them?

Zhuang Zi explained how a capacity of human beings allows them to extract a figure even from a very confused background.

Dr. Taylor explained that the brain needs to process data that passes through the senses. It seems that stimuli from the outside need to undergo a kind of pre-processing before they can have some background phenomena in the perceptual field. As the brain encounters increasing difficulties in functioning, the perceptual field becomes increasingly blurred. After Taylor suffered a stroke, letters and numbers increasingly turned into meaningless squiggles.

Lao Tzu uses the metaphor of “the Uncarved Block” to talk about the universe. That term means uncarved wood. Because people have various desires, they often cut off part of the Uncarved Block and use it. For example, a person who wants to eat will cut certain foods out of the block. The book Laozi calls this way of handling “the Uncarved Block” “fabrication”. Laozi criticized the things made by ordinary people because it is too easy for subjective observations and prejudices learned in the past to affect the psychology of the individual and lead to mistakes. For example, Americans are very unwilling to eat corn smut. They often call it “corn contaminant” ). Maybe some people would rather die than eat contaminated corn. In fact, like cheese, the foodstuff produced by this bacteria is safe and delicious,

Perhaps all people in a certain community may recognize people and can clearly distinguish people from human statues, but some people in the same community refuse to regard formerly

imprisoned people as human beings.

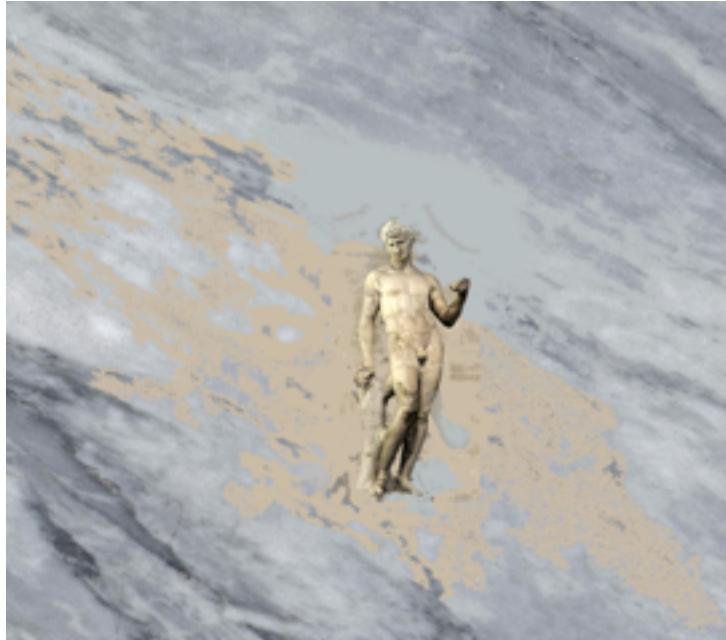
It could be people who have been wrongly convicted of serious crimes and still the community refuses to treat them as human beings. Prejudice directed against innocent people in this way not only harms those people but robs society of their talents.

This metaphor of an Uncarved Block is reminiscent of the Eurocentric idea that the carving is already present in the block of marble and that the sculptor only needs to remove the excess stone around it. According to Lao Tzu, people have a wrong view. They believe that the "bad guys" they subjectively carved out of Pu originally existed in Pu and existed in nature.

Chapter 28 of Lao Tzu says that a person with a very high state of mind can still make things without their being separated from the Uncarved Block. Because the most basic meaning of “制zhì” is "to carve wood with a knife", it is a bit strange to speak of "making a great fabrication without cutting." However, one can use their imagination to carve things. Therefore, a person with a very high level can, for example, understand an entire family. They don't need first to isolate each family member and then figure out how to mechanically reconnect them together again.

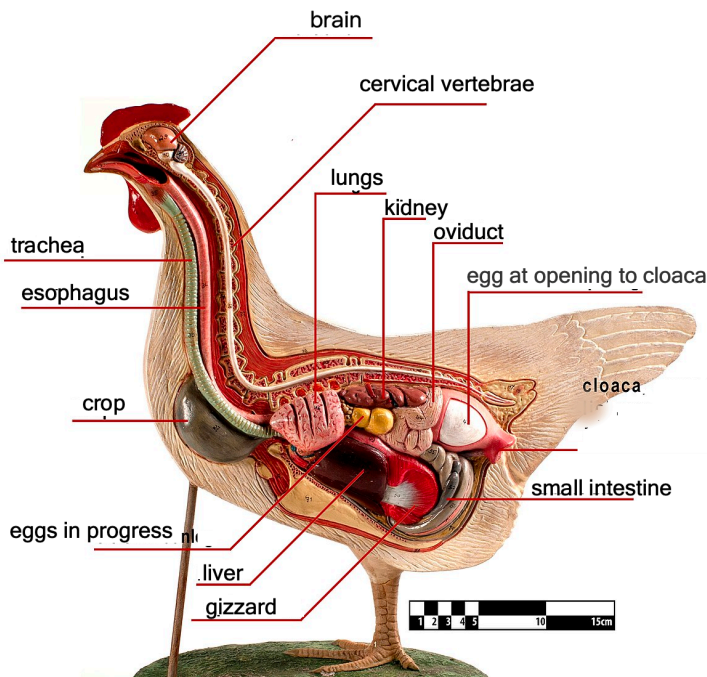
A preliminary study of chicken anatomy involves dissection and understanding the various parts of the body. Initial understanding will always be limited. Once any major organ is cut off, it will naturally lose its function. If researchers want to know the true function of this organ, they need to observe its interactions with the heart, lungs, liver, etc. in a living body.

Lao Tzu's metaphor explains how people separate an object from its “Uncarved Block” background in order to exploit the benefits of that object. The following metaphor evokes a Eurocentric view of art.



### **Adonis on marble cliff**

Some sculptors say that the sculpture already exists in the marble,  
They simply removed unnecessary objects from around them



credit: Wagner Souza e Silva<sup>2</sup>

The whole chicken is a small Uncarved Block" ( a small continuum.) and its internal organs are **creatures** created by previous investigations. When research was done, by the more progressive minds, the entrails were separated only by their imaginations.

Related Readings:

DDJ 14 : If you look right at it but do not see it, it is named "the evanescent."

If you listen for it but cannot hear it, it is called "the rarified."

If you grab for it but cannot get it, it is called "the infinitesimal."

These three [characterizations] cannot be given any more exhaustive investigation, so they will

be muddled together as "the One."

From above it is not dazzling.

From beneath it is not dark.

Wispy, wispy, it cannot be named.

It retreats into not being any thing.

It is called the shape without any form, and

The image without any [corresponding] thing.

It is called the obscure and the wildly evasive.

If one goes forward to meet it, one will not see its head. If one follows it, one will not see its tail.

Grasp the Way of antiquity in order to control the things of the present.

Be able to know the ancient beginnings. They are spoken of as the Thread transversing the Way.

21 :

The acceptingness of the the great virtue follows from the Way alone. As for the sense in which the Way is a "thing," It can only be [described as being] elusive and obscure. Oh how obscure!

Oh how elusive! Within it there are foreshadowings. Oh how obscure!

Oh how elusive! Within it there are creatures. Oh how profound! Oh how obscure!

Within it there is a seminal essence. Its seminal essence is extremely pure.

Within it there is something worth of trust.

From antiquity down to the present, its name has never perished, And by that means one is able to inspect the multitude of progenitors. By what means do I know the characteristics of the multitude of progenitors? By this!

37 : The Way is always without ado and yet there is nothing it fails to do. If the nobles and kings could manage to preserve it, then the myriad creatures would transform by themselves. Should they transform and yet desire arises anew, I would suppress it by means of the absence of names that characterizes the Uncarved Block. {By means of] the nameless Uncarved Block, [they] will in future be without desire. By desirelessness stilled, all beneath Heaven will in the future become settled on their own.

Supposing somebody in ancient Greece left behind a diagram like this:

Fire:	:Coal
Lightning:	:Thunderstorm cloud
Light:	: Firefly
Crushed Pumice Stone :	: Big fall

Do you believe the average thinker would believe this was entirely accidental?

The left column contains the results of energy consumption, and the right column represents the source of that energy.

The meaning of a sentence depends not only on the words used, but also on the social context of the phrase.

## Supplementary readings

Zhuangzi 2:3 Were there no other, there could be no I. Were there no I, there could be nobody to do the apprehending. — That is close to the truth, yet I do not know what runs this process. It seems that it has a true ruler, and yet there is a singular lack of actual evidence of its presence. That it can function, I already firmly believe, yet I fail to see its form and body. There are "true circumstances" to be considered in its case, and yet they are formless.

- Commentary: Zhuang Zi discusses how perception of the world occurs, and also how humans have autonomous control of themselves.
- "True circumstances" is a translation of the term 情 qíng. It originally just meant "true feelings," but evolved to mean (particularly in the context of criminal trials) the fullest account of all the factors involved in any way in some affair.

From the "Qi Wu Lun" chapter

The hundred bones, the nine orifices, the six internal organs, are all complete in themselves. To which of them should I give preference? Should one take delight in them equally rather than having a partiality toward one of them? In that case do they all fall into the category of servants and concubines? Are these servants and concubines adequate to regulate themselves by taking turns? Or, is there is a true ruler among them? Should one seek, but fail to obtain, proof of the true state of affairs, that would make no difference to whether there really is such a thing  
As soon as people get their full forms, they hold tightly to them until the

time of their ultimate exhaustion. They match blades, or they grind each other down. Their processes of attrition speed into action like a team of four horses, and nobody can bring them to a halt. Is that not a sorry sight? For

The whole of one's life, one is slaving away at things, yet one never sees any accomplishments. To be totally wiped out and to know of no refuge, is that not a great sorrow?

• Commentary: Humans function as autonomous units, but doing so seems always to involve conflicts of various kinds with other people and damage and suffering follow.」

People say that they will never die — to what avail? Their bodies decompose and their minds must follow. Could anyone claim that this is not a great tragedy? Are not people, having once been born, just deluded about that? How could it be that I alone am deluded and that there are others who are not deluded?

.....

Although things are that way, at the moment that one thing is produced something else dies. At the moment that one thing dies, something else is produced. When one thing becomes permissible, something else becomes impermissible, and when one thing becomes impermissible then at the same time something else becomes permissible. In depending on This, one is also depending on That, and in depending on That, one is also depending on This. Therefore the sage does not draw on these distinctions and instead casts vision on them in their natural state. To do so also depends on This.

””””

So is there really a This and a That? Or is there really no This and no That? When That and This both fail to get their counterpart, we have what is called the pivot point of the Dao. The pivot point gets placed at the center of the circle in order to respond to the infinite. Affirmations involve an infinity, and denials also involve an infinity. Therefore it is said: "There is nothing like Brightness."



## Qi Wu Lun

There is no self  
without an  
Other.



{The two depend for  
their existence on  
each other.}  
{The existence of each is interdependent.}

There is no Other  
without a self.

{I am that which  
fabricates the Other.}

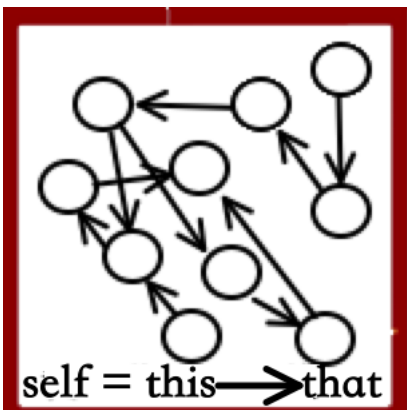
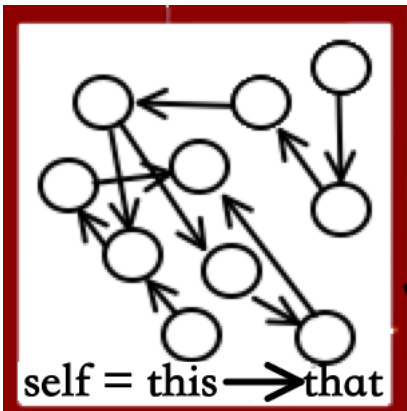


{I am that which fabricates the Other. Without me there would be nothing  
to fabricate the Other.}

No **creature** fails to be an Other. No **creature** fails to be a Self.

{ The **creature** <sub>u</sub> may be this (is), then the **creature** <sub>v</sub> shall be that. A

**creature** <sub>v</sub> may be regarded as this (is), and a **creature** <sub>u</sub> shall be regarded as that. }



{Every **creature** can be subjected to attention. Every **creature** can pay attention to any of the others.}

{ From a daily perspective, if you are seen by me, I am probably seen by you. }

{If some **creature** A focuses on A, then A is “this” or “self,” and its counterpart B is “that” or “other.”}

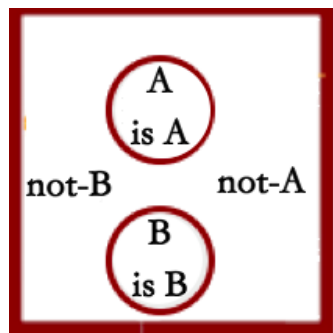
{If B focuses on B, then B is “this” or “self,” and its counterpart might be C, being regarded as “that” or “other.”}}

{From the viewpoint of people in their everyday lives, If you are identified by me, it is possible that I am being identified by you.}

{Every **creature** can pay attention to humans and other **creatures**.  
If B notices C, then B is "This ( is ) " , and C is "that" ( is ) }

{If A pays attention to C, then B is “This,” and C is “That..”}

{If C pays attention to B, then C is “This,” and B is “That.”}



The other comes from this ( is ) , this ( is ) is also caused by that; this is the teaching about how that ( is ) and this appear simultaneously.

{When " this ( is )" creates "that", " that " becomes a **creature**. When " this ( is )" creates "that ," he reaffirms himself as a **creature**. I must create myself as a thing in order to create you as a **creature** . }

☐{ A affirms that he is A and says, "I am A. " Anything other than A is considered to be "not A. " }

Ⓒ {The identification mechanism of A creates B and moreover acquires an understanding of B, There is a kind of mutual creation relationship between A and B.

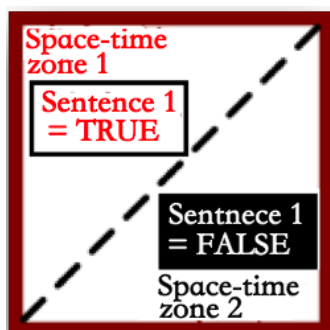
Ⓓ {Infants all spend much time playing with their own toes. An infant does not have an opportunity to discover that things on the outside will not respond to the infant's wishes or intentions until such time as the infant has created some **creatures** (father, mother, crib ornaments, etc.).

Ⓔ {When "This" fabricates "That," "That" becomes a **creature**. When "This" creates "That," it reaffirms its own being a **creature**. I must create myself before I am able to fabricate you as a **creature**.

Ⓕ {The noumenal aspect of me needs to construct me, and only then can I construct you as a **creature**.}

When something is born, something else dies, and when something dies, something else is born; when something is allowed, something else is disallowed, and when something is disallowed, something else is allowed.

{ The birth of some **creature** must lead to its death; The death of something must lead to the birth of something. The permissibility of something leads to the impermissibility of another, and the impermissibility of something leads to the permissibility of something else,



{ Lincoln is still alive" /

“Lincoln is dead.” At a certain point, "Lincoln the Living" becomes incorrect. It is incorrect during other ranges of time.}  
}

{ The "right" or "wrong" of a certain sentence depends on where and when it was said. }

Depending on an affirmation means depending on some denial. Depending on a denial means depending on some affirmation.

<b>A:</b>	Affirms Sentence 1	T
	Affirms Sentence 2	T
	Denies Sentence 3	F
	Denies Sentence 4	F
<b>B:</b>	Affirms Sentence 3	T
	Affirms Sentence 4	T
	Denies Sentence 1	F
	Denies Sentence 2	F

{ Sentence 1: T + F = ?  
Sentence 2: T + F = ?  
Sentence 3: F + T = ?  
Sentence 4: F + T = ? }

{ Each member of a pair cancels out the other. A or B, who can people trust? If you don't know, symmetrical sentences will lose their meaning. }

{ If a person named A believes the first and second sentences, but does not believe the third and fourth sentences, then this set of beliefs is A's position. A person named B may not believe the first and second sentences, but believe the third and fourth sentences. So this set of beliefs is B's position. Even if some third party C thinks any one of them is right, that is just another opinion. Every sentence uttered is contradicted by somebody else's sentence. If no one is some kind of privileged observer, then every belief is counterbalanced by its opposite }

{“We are now coming into springtime,” is true for a certain period of time, but only in the Southern Hemisphere. In the Northern Hemisphere, during the same time period, it is false.}

Therefore the sage does not draw on these distinctions and instead casts vision on them in their natural state. To do so also depends on This.

•

{\* Is 是 shì "right and wrong"? Or is it "this"?  
The author strongly believes that it means “this” here.}

{ The “fish trap” or identifier mechanism” and **creatures** are on one level, the black box is on one level, and the model is on another level. When two people come to opposite conclusions, the most reliable way is to tear the whole argument apart and carefully use the identifier mechanism, etc. again. }

{ Humans can use language. Language is very useful to humans. However, there are many pitfalls when using language. I can say that a very intelligent animal named ET met and discussed issues with the President of the United States in the White House. Do you think it's safe to accept my report without checking the basis? }

C D

筌A 筌B

C says the Jin's kid is horrible.  
D says his moral status is A+.  
A child psychologist rejects all their identity-recognition stuff.

+ study of the new black box  
+ a new model  
+ a new concept  
+ a new communication  
= a comparatively objective report

The child psychologist's initial "fish trap" is just



enough to make sure that she is examining the child of the Jin family.

{ C and D have opposite opinions about the children of the Jin family. There is only one child, but C uses a different identifier mechanism than D. The black boxes, models, concepts, and language materials that come next are of course different. A child psychologist threw it all away. He started from scratch and got a more objective understanding .}

{C and D have completely different opinions about the Jin family's kid. There is only one child, but D's identification mechanism is different from the one that C uses. The ways of handling the related black boxes, models, concepts, and all the linguistic side\of their treatments of the child are accordingly different. A child psychologist abandoned all these previous efforts. She started out with no previously acquired information, went

through the whole process again, and as a result she got a relatively objective understanding of the child.”.

## A this is also a that, and a that is also a this.

Both “that” involves an affirmation and a denial and “this” involves an affirmation and also a denial

{This involves a question of point of view. My counterpart gets called “that” by me, From my counterpart’s point of view, he is “this” and I am “that.”}

{ The problem doesn't stop there. C, D, etc. all have their own understanding of B. Some of these understandings may be very different. That is also right and wrong, and this is also right and wrong. }

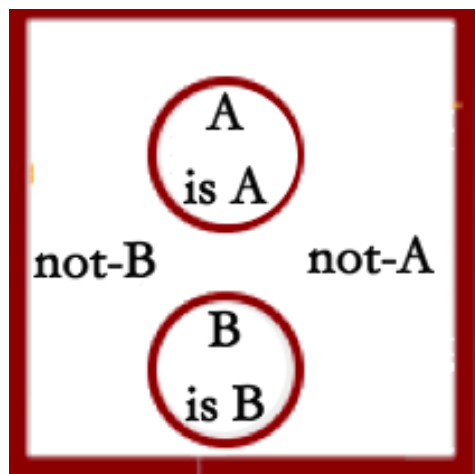
{If A takes the position of “this,” then yi becomes a “that.” A conforms that what is within the top circle above is A, and also denies that anything outside that circle is A.}

{If A takes the position of “this,” then yi becomes a “that.” A conforms that what is within the top circle above is A, and also denies that anything outside that circle is A.}

{If B holds the position of “this,” then A becomes “that.” B confirms that what is within the bottom circle above is Yi, and also denies that anything outside that circle is B.}

④{If B holds the position of “this,” then A becomes “that.” B confirms that what is within the bottom circle above is B, and also denies that anything outside that circle is B}





{If A takes the position of “this,” then B becomes a “that.” A conforms that what is within the top circle above is A, and also denies that anything outside that circle is A.}

{ From another perspective, maybe A uses its identifier mechanism to build B, looks at B's input and output, and makes a model. According to A's understanding, B is like this, and everything other than B isNot so. This view is unavoidably subjective. }

{ How many people in the world know who Chen Duxiu is? A, B, B, D, etc. all have their own " Chen Duxiu ". Who is more right and who is more wrong? I'm afraid there is no absolute answer. }

{ From another perspective, maybe A uses its identifier mechanism to build B, looks at B's input and output, and makes a model. According to A's understanding, B is such-and-such, and anything other than B is not such-and-such. This view is unavoidably subjective. }

Are there really a “this” and a “that”? Are really not any “this” and “that”? When neither “this” nor “that” gets its counterpart, this state is called the axis of the Dao, and when the axis gets its proper position in the center of its circle, it can respond to the infinite. Therefore it is said, “There is nothing better than Brightness.”

{ To avoid confusion, assume there are two entities, one called Chen and one called Fang. "This (is)" means oneself, and "that" means others. Therefore, Chen is "this" to himself, and Chen is "that" to the other party and any other observer. Likewise, Fang is "this" to himself and "that" to Chen and any other observer. }

{ When Chen observes Fang, he says that Fang is such-and-such, while denying that other areas of the world are such-and-such. When Fang observed Chen, he said that Chen was like this and that, and denied that the rest of the world was like this and that. }

{ When Fang observes Chen, he says that Chen is such-and-such, and denies that other areas of the world are such-and-such. When Chen observed Fang, he said that Fang was like this and that, and denied that the rest of the world was like this and that .}

{ Judging whether something is "ok" is based on the language level. }

{ As for a person saying that something is possible or not, it depends on which identifier mechanisms the person uses, his observations about the black box, the patterns he creates from it, and his values. As a result, for me, whatever I think is okay is okay. This is of course a relatively subjective judgment. }

{ Another person may say that thing is not allowed. The basis of his judgment is similar to mine. But he might say, "I think that's not allowed. This is just not allowed!" }

{ Confucius, Laozi, Mozi, and Buddha each have their own moral standards, misunderstandings about the origin of certain diseases, etc. To be modest and objective, one should always say, "I think so." }

Permissibility comes from being permitted. Impermissibility comes from being forbidden. Paths develop from people walking that way. **Creatures** are that way because people so declare them to be. Why are they that way? That belief comes from the corresponding affirmation. Why are not they that way? They are not that way because people deny them to be that way.

{ 「乎」 is interchangeable with 「於」 .}

{ Judging whether something is "ok" is an activity conducted on the language level. }

{ As for a person saying that something is possible or not, it depends on which identifier mechanisms the person uses, his observations about the black box, the patterns he creates from it, and his values. As a result, for me, whatever I think is okay is okay. This is of course a relatively subjective judgment. }

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**Creatures** do indeed have an inherent nature, and they do indeed have an inherent kind of permissibility. There are no **creatures** that do not have an inherent nature, and there are no **creatures** that do not have an innate permissibility. So whether it is a straw or a mighty column, Char'lotte Heine or Marylin Monroe, things weird and strange, the Dao links them all into a single whole.

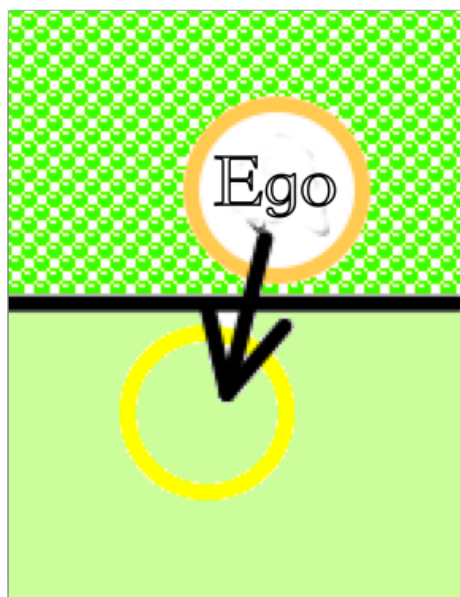
{Maybe everybody loathes Komodo Dragons and maybe they would wish they would go extinct. "They are so odious! They shouldn't exist!" But their body chemistry produces some agents that have powerful antibiotic characteristics.}

故為是舉莛與楹，厲與西施，恢恠譎怪，道通為一。其分也，成也；其成也，毀也。凡物無成與毀，復通為一。

So, let us consider a twig and a pillar, or an ugly person and Xi Shi,<sup>3</sup> the great and the shifty, the agreeable and the perverse. The Dao links them all into a single whole. Its division is a completion. Its completion is a destruction. In all cases, **creatures** have neither a completion nor a destruction but are once again melded into one.

The following come from the beginning of “Qi Wu Lun,” to be examined in detail below.

Nan-guo Zi-qi sat, casting a shadow over his low table. Then he raised his head toward Heaven and sighed, sundered, as though one who had lost his companion. Yan-cheng Zi-you stood before him, ready to serve, and said, “In what realm were you, such that it could cause your form to resemble a withered tree and your heart to be like dead ashes? The one who now leans against his table is not he who leaned against it a short while ago.”



Zi-qi said: “Yan, you did well to ask that question. Just now I lost my Self. Did you realize that? You may have heard the pipes of humans and not have heard the pipes of Earth. You may have heard the pipes of Earth and have yet to hear the pipes of Heaven.”<sup>4</sup>

Zi-you replied, “I dare to ask for the gist of the matter.”

Zi-qi said: “When the Great Clod belches gas, it is called the wind. Perhaps at first it does not rise up, but when it does arise the myriad cavities bellow loudly. Surely you cannot be the only person in the world who has never heard its whistling. The rocky outcroppings on the mountain peaks, the hollows and cavities in the great trees of a hundred spans: like nostrils, like mouths, like ears, like hubs, like sockets, like mortars, like puddles, like

tubs. It produces sounds like cataracts, the twanging of a bow, hoots, gulps, shrieks, and howls. The one that goes first sings 'Yuuu' and the one that follows sings 'Ouuu.' With a cool breeze there is a minor confluence of sounds, and with a violent windstorm there is a major cacophony. When a violent wind gains surcease, then the multitude of cavities become empty and silent. Have you alone failed to observe the bending and swinging of those trees?"

Zi-you responded: "The pipes of Earth are the multitude of its cavities. The pipes of human beings are the [graduated] arrays of bamboo pipes. I make bold to inquire as to the pipes of Heaven."

{ Yan is limited by common wisdom . He can understand his social interactions, but he may not understand nature very well. People who are more advanced than Yan may understand nature, but they only care about the sounds of earth and have not yet reached the level of the sounds of nature. He may understand an object but cannot penetrate into its essence. }

Zi-qi said: "The puffs of breath have a multitude of differentiations, and what gives them their individuality are in all cases instances of their self determination. But who is there to arouse them to action in the first place?"

Great knowledge is self assured. Small knowledge works by prying at cracks. Great speech is bland. Petty speech is mere blathering.

When people sleep their spirits intertwine, when they awaken their bodies are estranged, and should they meet they will contend mind against mind on every day. Some are broad-minded, some have deep minds, some are capable of close arguments. Some people are moderately fearful, unhappy and apprehensive. Some people are terrified, totally shrinking into apathy. These feelings come upon people like the firing of a bolt from a crossbow, and that explains how and why their affirmations and condemnations are marshaled for conflict. When people are struggling to achieve victory, they hold tight to their own views as though they were solemn pacts and treaties to be maintained. The daily attrition they suffer resembles the killing force of autumn and winter. There is no way of recovering from the besotted state that comes from what they do. Their suppression acts like a seal put on a tomb, one that permits no air to enter.

The heart that has been brought near to death cannot be made to live again.

- **Commentary:** Humans have many activities that are analogous to the sounds produced by windstorms acting on a forest. Some of these activities can be harmful to humans and need to be regulated somehow.

Happiness, anger, sorrow, and joy, compulsive thoughts, sorrowful sighings, incessant changes of mind, and losses of the courage to change, impulsiveness, extravagance, self-indulgence, and affected behavior, [all come upon people just as] music can come from voids, and steam can change into fungi. Day and night such [illusory] things trade places before us and none know whence they sprout. Let it be over! Oh, let it be over! That is all! That is the end of it! Dawn and dusk obtain This in order to be produced.

Were there no other, there could be no I. Were there no I, there could be nobody to do the apprehending. — That is close to the truth, yet I do not know what runs this process. It seems that it has a true ruler, and yet there is a singular lack of actual evidence of its presence. That it can function, I already firmly believe, yet I fail to see its form and body. There are "true circumstances" to be considered in its case, and yet they are formless.

The hundred bones, the nine orifices, the six internal organs, are all complete in themselves. To which of them should I give preference? Should one take delight in them equally rather than having a partiality toward one of them? In that case do they all fall into the category of servants and concubines? Are these servants and concubines adequate to regulate themselves by taking turns? Or, is there is a true ruler among them? Should one seek, but fail to obtain, proof of the true state of affairs, that would make no difference to whether there really is such a thing.

As soon as people get their full forms, they hold tightly to them until the time of their ultimate exhaustion. They match blades, or they grind each other down. Their processes of attrition speed into action like a team of four horses, and nobody can bring them to a halt. Is that not a sorry sight? For the whole of one's life, one is slaving away at things, yet one never sees any accomplishments. To be totally wiped out and to know of no refuge, is that not a great sorrow?



People say that they will never die — to what avail? Their bodies decompose and their minds must follow. Could anyone claim that this is not a great tragedy? Are not people, having once been born, just deluded about that? How could it be that I alone am deluded and that there are others who are not deluded?

Should one take his preconceptions as his authority, then who would fail to have an authority [by which to justify his beliefs]?

Why must it be [only] those who are cognizant of the changes that sweep across the scene in front of them and mentally select from them according to their own preferences who have [such beliefs]? Unperceptive people will also have their own [opinions]. To have opinions about the right and wrong of something before there is a full comprehension of it is like going to Yue today and getting there in the past. To do so is to take something that does not exist to be something that does. Even though it were the godlike Yu,<sup>5</sup> such a one would not be able to comprehend a course of action of that kind, so what can I make of it?

Now speech is not just hot air. Speakers have things that they say, but what they say is particularly indeterminate. Are there really propositions? Or were there really never any propositions? Is there a difference between words and the cheeping of nestling birds or is there not?

How is the Dao obscured so that distinctions between genuine and counterfeit come into existence? How are words obscured so that distinctions between true and false come to be? How is it that the Dao wanders and is not preserved? How is it that words are preserved and are yet inadequate? The Dao is obscured by minor [conceptual] successes, and words are obscured by vaingloriousness and pomposity. As a result, much contention has arisen between the Confucians and the Mohists, in which each affirms what the other denies and denies what the other affirms. There is no better course, in desiring to show to be true what others deny and denying what others affirm, than the use of Brightness.

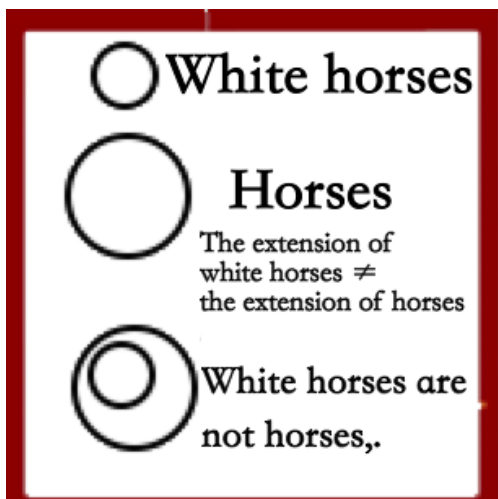
{ Humans can use language. Language is very useful to humans. However, there are many pitfalls when using language. I can say that a very intelligent animal named ET met and discussed issues with the President of the United States in the White House. Do you think it's safe to accept my report without checking the basis? }

Zhuang Zhou may have studied the metamorphosis of caterpillars himself. If the cocoon or pupa is cut open during its metamorphosis, caterpillar soup will ooze out <sup>6</sup>. Actually, This is a kind of objectification. Dragonfly larvae also undergo metamorphosis. It changed from a predator in the water to another predator that could fly. Chapter One begins with a story about an aquatic creature, Kun. Kun "turned into a bird". The Theory of Equality of Things begins with a story about a person who can transform. He has lost his "I", his "I think I am an independent individual". In "Miracle," Dr. Taylor said, "The boundaries of my body disappeared and I merged with the universe <sup>7</sup>."

Zhuang Zhou liked to debate with Hui Shi, but Hui Shi 's thinking centered on semantics while Zhuang Zhou's thinking centered on epistemology or phenomenology.

" Extension is the set of things to which an attribute applies; it is relative to intension. This general concept comes from semantics and also applies to some other fields <sup>8</sup>. "

"A white is not a horse <sup>9</sup>" is a very simple example of sophistry.



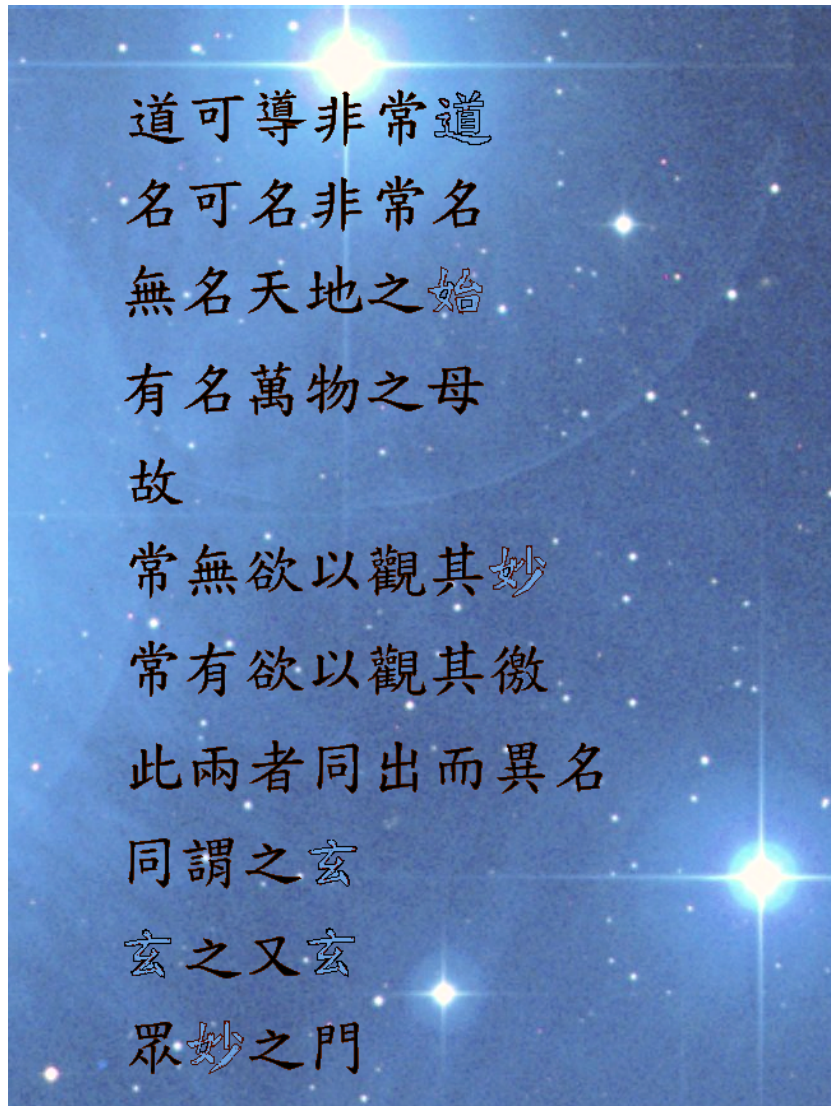
If Gongsun Long was asked to explain "a white horse is not a horse", he might say: "When I say "horse", I am not referring to the animal but the denotation <sup>10</sup>of the word "horse" . When I say " white horse ", I am not referring to the white animal but the extension of the word "white horse" . The two extensions are obviously different. "

Hui Shi is an expert at playing with words. Zhuang Zhou likes to play, but what he talks about is teasing Hui Shi, celebrities, wise men , etc. from a standpoint outside the scope of Hui Shi 's thoughts .

I find it unlikely that Zhuangzi begins the first chapter by talking about giant sea creatures that transform into flying creatures beyond the ability of ordinary people to understand, and then goes on to talk about people who have the ability to separate themselves from "me" in the second chapter. He is thus able to see more clearly what may have been distorted by pre-existing conceptualizations. The more undistorted a person is about the reality of his or her surroundings, the better able he is to accomplish what is required, and the greater the chance of success. The introduction to the passage in question focuses entirely on the violent verbal confrontations that often occur between people over what they consider matters of fact.

In modern times, sophistry is a confusing or illogical argument used to deceive others, that is, it appears to be using correct reasoning methods, but in fact it violates the laws of logic and makes specious reasoning. . Isn't the use of sophistry one of the most important sources of error that Zhuangzi wanted to avoid? Why did Zhuangzi do all the preparations listed above, establish an alternative path , and then suddenly indulge in sophistry? The author thinks this is unreasonable. Modern physics is based on laboratory results, not on Aristotle's Physics. The same goes for chemistry, geography, anthropology, etc. Zhuangzi's purpose is to get rid of the troubles and errors caused by remarks without sufficient basis. His purpose was not to make a name for himself in sophistic circles .

The first chapter of Laozi has many annotations, vernacular translations, foreign language translations, etc., but they only give the literal meaning and do not explain what these sentences mean. In order to understand speech, it is important to look at the context. This chapter has a very special structure.



Ontological aspect

Changdao \_

( anonymous ) \_ beginning → fetal

( unnamed ) the beginning of embryonicity

No desires or desires → Guan Miao

Phenomenal Aspect

common name

( famous ) mother → breasts and nipples

( famous ) producer of breasts

Have desire → View

The two have the same origin but different names

The same name is Xuan

Mysterious and mysterious, the door to all mysteries

Looking down from the upper left corner of the chart:

There may be one called "the normal way", but because the things on the left belong to the ontological aspect, there is no way to guide people on how to follow this way or do other similar procedures. There is a kind of beginning in this aspect of the universe, but it is like a newly fertilized egg in the womb . It is something innermost and invisible. On the opposite side there is a producer in the phenomenon. When the fetus emerges from its transcendent source, it becomes connected with the phenomenal side of things.

If a person does not have any desire, he can see the noumenal aspect. ( At the same time, because there is no desire or motivation, this person cannot maintain his own life. )

Looking down from the upper right corner of the chart:

There may be one called "permanent name", but because all things in the phenomenal world are constantly changing, and each thing is created by "I". Its "name" was added later. There should be some definition between name and thing. When an object changes, it no longer conforms to its old definition. New definitions should be accompanied by new names. In this way, objects often undergo changes, and their nouns should also continue to change. So there is no possibility of a "permanent name". The mother of all things, the producer of all things, has breasts and nipples, so it is natural to give these producers names. If a person has some desires, he can see the phenomenal aspect.

When the ontology and phenomena are still connected in this way, this situation is called Xuan. If it is possible to go back to the mysterious, through the more and more mysterious, you will come to all the wonderful doors.

## Analogy to the Big Bang

Both matter and antimatter emerged from the Big Bang.

The single point at  $x=0, y=0, z=0, t=0$  is like a door to all wonders.

There is no way to know why a point expanded into our universe.

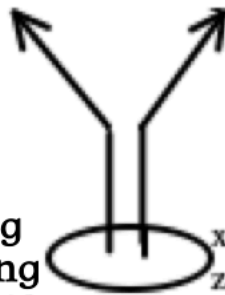
Noumenal      Phenomenal



Transcendent  
Domain

Analogous to

Matter      Anti-matter



Big Bang  $x=0, y=0$   
 $z=0, t=0$

Nobody knows why  
a single point would  
become the Universe.

All intractable routes will change. We crossed the river through a bridge the day before yesterday, but the typhoon blew down the bridge yesterday. Today we have to take a ferry to cross the river. Maybe next year we will go through a new tunnel. In the phenomenal world, all Tao is impermanent. In terms of the ontology, there may be some characteristics that cannot be changed. For example, there must be an attraction between two gravitational masses.

Certain features of reality prevent certain things from happening. The road that the car must pass must be strong enough to prevent the car from breaking through the surface. No one could drive a carriage in the air from one hilltop to a nearby hilltop. These features are permanent, but humans cannot detect them with their senses .

Nouns are real-world things. It seems that there should be an object first , and then people choose a name for it. Be real first and then famous. However, people often write novels, lie to people, etc., Therefore, there are also many nouns that have no reference. Just looking at the names that refer to them, the things that those names refer to continue to undergo changes. A noun should have its definition. How many changes, how many new referents and how many new nouns should there be. When writing history, historians can only talk about three-year-old Socrates , twenty-year-old Socrates , dead Socrates , and so on. There cannot be a "permanent name". On the other hand, If there is a noumenon, since people cannot perceive the noumenon with their senses, nothing in the noumenon can have a name.

"Beginning" refers to the ontology, Therefore, all "beginnings" have no names. In people's experience, "mother" is the producer of something, so they can all have names.

Then, everything in the universe has two sides, the ontological side and the phenomenal side . We can experience the phenomenal side of things through our senses , but we can't see anything that makes the car unable to perform certain actions. For example, an electric car being transported to space could rev up its engines to spin its wheels as fast as possible, but the car wouldn't move anywhere because the wheels couldn't gain traction in the open space.

In short, everything in the universe has two aspects, one is noumenal and the other is phenomenal.

If we were completely detached from things in our environment, we might be able to perceive underlying sources of activity that explain things, such as the regular changes in the seasons, but we would no longer see these wonders as relevant to our daily lives. In this situation we have lost our so-called daily life. If we came into this world and acted on our desires, we would see things differently. For example, when we crave a frog for breakfast, we view the frog as food and ignore its journey from fertilized egg to tadpole to mature frog and its part in our ecology. If we're hungry enough, we might start hallucinating frogs. The aforementioned "light" is meant to emphasize the desire to break away from human-created concepts and return to a state where our desires and personal motivations are suspended.

"Ming" has been mentioned above. "Ming" is a psychological state that allows people to avoid self-centered misinterpretation and return to the state before any identifier mechanism was used. This is needed before you can try to use a different identifier mechanism, or use a new identifier mechanism.

Einstein's theory of relativity replaced our basic concepts of motion and rest. Niels Bohr's quantum mechanics made it necessary for a thing to be described both as a wave phenomenon and as a particle. Although this change makes people feel very uncomfortable, some new basic concepts have been accepted, and the theoretical results are less inconsistent with the actual results than before.

The ontological aspect of the world that includes things like the way things work, and there is a phenomenal aspect of the world that includes the hearts of chickens that are treated as food without recognizing the regularities of how those hearts work within the bodies of living chickens. Noumenon and phenomena come from a transcendent source that we cannot experience. They appear together because they are aspects of the same production flow, which contains both the phenomena that exist in our universe and the invisible principles (the threads of Tao) that determine how these phenomena work. Taken as a whole, these two aspects can only be characterized as "mysterious", and the most mysterious of all mysteries



has been called the gateway to all the incomprehensible wonders of our universe .

<sup>1</sup>本文檔的版權所有者允許任何人將其用於任何目的，前提是版權所有者得到適當的署名。允許傳播、衍生作品、商業用途和所有其他用途。

簽名：IV Korneev，列寧格勒動物園

<sup>2</sup> [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Anatomie\\_kip.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Anatomie_kip.jpg)

<sup>3</sup> For the ancient Chinese, Xi Shi was the epitome of feminine beauty.

<sup>4</sup> 葉秉敬 quoted in 《錢穆，莊子纂箋，8頁》 Qian Mu says that there is a loss of 我見, which could just mean a personal vision, but I think is more likely to mean a perception of self. When one no longer has a perception of self, then the perception of "the other" disappears, and the myriad creatures no longer get constituted. They drop away too.

<sup>5</sup> According to tradition, Yu was the founder of the Xia dynasty, but he was also regarded as a supernatural being in some traditions.

<sup>6</sup> "If you cut open the cocoon or pupa at the right time, the caterpillar soup will ooze out." <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/caterpillar-butterfly-metamorphosis-explainer/>

<sup>7</sup>p. 50 of *My Stroke of Insight* .

<sup>8</sup><https://zh.wikipedia.org/zh-tw/%E5%A4%96%E5%BB%B6>

<sup>9</sup><https://zh.wikipedia.org/zh-tw/白马不马>

<sup>10</sup>[https://zh.wikipedia.org/zh-tw/Extension \\_](https://zh.wikipedia.org/zh-tw/Extension_)