

# **Selfhood East and West: De-Constructions of Identity**

**WELTPHILOSOPHIEN IM GESPRÄCH  
BAND 8**

# **WELTPHILOSOPHIEN IM GESPRÄCH**

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# **Selfhood East and West: De-Constructions of Identity**

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## Contents

<i>Hans-Georg Möller</i>	
Introduction.....	7

### I. China

<i>Deborah Sommer</i>	
The <i>Ji</i> Self in Early Chinese Texts.....	17

<i>Richard John Lynn</i>	
Concepts of Self and Identity in the <i>Zhuangzi</i> : New Translations of Key Passages.....	47

<i>Paul D'Ambrosio</i>	
The Role of a Pretending Tree: Hermits, Social Constructs, and the 'Self' in the <i>Zhuangzi</i> .....	57

<i>Hans-Rudolf Kantor</i>	
Identity and Transformation in the Chinese Mahāyāna Traditions.....	71

### II. Europe

<i>S.J. McGrath</i>	
The Dissociated Self.....	93

<i>Brendan Moran</i>	
'Weltperson' in Salomo Friedlaender's <i>Schöpferische Indifferenz</i> .....	111

### III. Comparative Case Studies

<i>Jason Dockstader</i> Monism in Spinoza and Daoism.....	127
<i>Hans Skott-Myhre</i> Who Are We to Become If We Are Not This: Spinoza's Substance and the Dao of Deleuze's Desire.....	153
<i>Andrew Whitehead</i> Equating Unequal Things.....	167
<i>Karl-Heinz Pohl</i> Who is Who? Zhuangzi and the Dead Man in Lu Xun's and Enzensberger's Rewritings of <i>Zhuangzi</i> .....	179
<i>Lorraine Markotic</i> The Seized Subject in Badiou's Ethics and Murakami's <i>The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle</i> .....	193

### IV. Alternative Paradigms

<i>Günter Wohlfart</i> EGOD: The Death of the Ego.....	213
<i>John C. Maraldo</i> Personal Autonomy: An Alternative View.....	221
<i>Rolf Trauzettel</i> Two Mythic Paradigms of the Constitution of Personhood.....	237
Notes on the Editors.....	263

Hans-Georg Möller

## Introduction

“Self” and “identity” have been quite popular academic subjects in the humanities and the social sciences. It seems that selfhood and identity become particularly pressing issues when what these notions are supposed to designate is perceived as being in danger. As long as we are sure about ourselves and our identity, we do not need to question them. We often only start caring about them when they are in doubt. This tends to be the case for both individuals and societies or cultures in general. With respect to the latter, the struggle for either gaining or maintaining identity typically occurs in a situation of crisis, in times of conflict, of suppression, or of occupation. But also with respect to the individuals, questions about what or who we “really” are tend to arise only when we feel that the actuality of our existence is in doubt. Accordingly, philosophical debates about self and identity in Western and non-Western traditions have focused on trying to *identify* essential characteristics of what constitutes *ourselves* – either in the singular or in the plural.

The Confucian “project” may well be described as a lifelong effort of “self-transformation,” to use a term often used by Du Weiming, who is perhaps the strongest contemporary advocate of Confucianism. Confucianism has always been insisting on the need for the cultivation of the self (*xiu shen*) and on the task of preserving and developing what is good in “human nature” – or *xing* in the sense of Mencius. This tradition has encouraged its followers to expand their “little selves” (*xiao wo*) into “big selves” (*da wo*). Daoists and Buddhists, on the other hand, have stressed the importance of “self-overcoming,” to use a term used by Graham Parkes in his analysis of the philosophy of the Kyoto School, especially in Nishitani’s reading of Nietzsche. Practices of “self-forgetting” (*wang ji* or *wang wu*) are

often proposed and exercised. In a paradoxical way, the process of self-cultivation was here supposed to result in losing one's self or attaining a state of a completely "detached" selfhood.

The history of Western philosophy may be understood in terms of the rise and fall of the "subject" and its "subjectivity." Since the times of ancient Greece, to "know thyself" was seen as a, if not *the*, major philosophical imperative. This commandment arguably culminated in modern enlightenment visions of liberating ourselves from, in Kantian terms, our "self-inflicted immaturity," and to develop, speaking with Hegel, our "self-consciousness," what we are "in-and-for-ourselves." The modern subject, however, has given way to postmodern and post-colonialist critiques of self and identity. Since Nietzsche, there has been an increasing suspicion about the "subject," and in the latter part of the 20th century identity has been "deconstructed" as a concept employed in certain narratives that serve all kinds of political and economical projects of discipline and control and which are viewed to justify various artificial divisions between "us and them." The controversies about the political and moral problems stemming from such a division has resulted in accusations of "Orientalism" and thus have had a significant effect on the debates within the relatively new field of Comparative or East-West Philosophy. – The essays collected in this volume, stemming from contributions to the *18th Symposium of the Académie du Midi*, held in May 2010 in Alet-les-Bains, France, explore various philosophical reflections on selfhood and identity within an intercultural framework. The first section presents studies on selfhood in Chinese philosophy, focusing on, in particular, Confucian, Daoist, and Buddhist texts. The second section introduces and discusses perspectives on selfhood found in European thinkers from the 19th and 20th centuries. The third section contains a number of case studies comparing and contrasting specific authors from the East and West. Finally, the fourth section offers some more general suggestions for a philosophical typology of culturally contingent philosophies of identity and selfhood.



## INTRODUCTION

Deborah Sommer outlines a spectrum of notions of selfhood that appear in philosophical texts of ancient China and, in her words, offer multiple “potentialities for orchestrating one’s identity.” Various terms, such as *xing*, *shen*, and *ti* refer to somatic aspects of the self, i.e. the physical body. Interestingly, at least in the cases of *shen* and *ti*, these notions do not exclusively designate the physical shape of the single individual, but, in various degrees, may well extend beyond our own separate body and, for instance, include connotations of the biological aspects that one shares with one’s family members or with the organisms one incorporates into oneself when eating. In this way, some notions of selfhood in ancient China are in sharp contrast with the ancient Western notion of the “individual,” which literally designates the *indivisible and isolated* identity of human beings. Sommer then focuses on the notion of *ji* which, particularly in Confucian texts, refers to the self in a less embodied sense and implies a potential for personal relationships with others outside of one’s family or being an owner and having possessions. It is this *ji* self which the *Zhuangzi* famously advises us to get rid of.

Richard John Lynn looks in detail on passages from the *Zhuangzi* in which such “good riddance” is described or advocated. He provides new translations of these passages, including, unlike most other translators, the commentaries and philosophical interpretations by Guo Xiang, the early 4<sup>th</sup> century editor of the *textus receptus* of this Daoist classic, as well as some philological remarks from the sub-commentary by Chen Xuanying. Lynn concludes that the *Zhuangzi* advocates a paradoxical overcoming of “all conscious dimensions of self” in order to achieve “authentic self-realization.” This authentic self-realization, according to Lynn, establishes a “self-transcendent, universal self.” Lynn insists, however, that the *Zhuangzi* acknowledges that the actual attainment of such a universal self is extremely rare and typically eludes ordinary people who “remain firmly trapped inside self-conscious individual awareness.”

Paul D’Ambrosio analyses one of the lesser known allegories of the

*Zhuangzi* in which a carpenter named Shi, looking for trees to cut, comes by an enormous tree that is used by the villagers in its vicinity as a holy shrine for religious rituals. Interpreters have usually focused on the Daoist praise of the usefulness of the tree's uselessness. It has been spared from being turned into lumber since its wood had not been considered valuable for practical purposes. Thereby, the tree managed to survive, become a shrine, and reach longevity—a Daoist ideal. D'Ambrosio, however, highlights a more subtle philosophical aspect of the story. As the carpenter explains in the text, the tree (who, in the story, speaks just like a human character), does not share the villager's religious beliefs and does not consider itself a holy tree. However, it does not mind *pretending* to be a shrine and thereby fulfilling a role that obviously pleases those around it and so is beneficial for itself. Paradoxically, the tree's non-identification with its (social) role allows it to happily embrace and affirm whatever role it is assigned. In this way, the (un)holy tree represents a Daoist form of paradoxical (non-)selfhood through "genuine pretending."

Hans-Rudolf Kantor explains the complex conception of identity in "medieval" (4<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> century C.E.) Chinese Mahāyāna Buddhism—which seems to be quite compatible with the notion of identity constitution through "genuine pretending." Based on the fundamental doctrine of non-self that goes back to the historical Buddha and his early followers, Chinese Buddhists, like their Indian predecessors, focused on the problem of how identity is constituted within the context of the "radical transformation" which encompasses all that exists. In connection with the concept of interdependent origination, impermanence and continuity mutually imply one another. While everything is subject to change, the process of change as such excludes nothing and is thus permanent. Each identifiable aspect of the whole is impermanent and in this way non-substantial or non-essential. However, extending onto the transformative processes as a whole, everything partakes in permanence. Similarly, the Buddha (and, by extension, the Buddhist practitioner) lacks any fixed or per-

## INTRODUCTION

manent identity, but precisely therefore, lacks nothing substantial. S.J McGrath discusses two contradictory and sometimes conflicting paradigms of selfhood in the Western philosophical-psychological tradition. The first paradigm, dating back to Plato, refers to the unified personality who exists as an orderly and fully integrated whole. Politically, this paradigm parallels the organic and homogenous state. Psychologically, this ideal of a united whole can be seen as analogous to the “repressive self,” the form of personhood which does not tolerate internal diversity and culminates in the constitution of an overarching Ego. The second paradigm refers to, psychologically speaking, the “dissociative” self which is constitutively plural and incorporates ultimately incommensurable multiplicity. McGrath traces the philosophy of such a dissociative self back to F.W.J. Schelling’s metaphysical system and his doctrine of potencies developed in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Brendan Moran introduces the concept of the *Weltperson* (world person) coined by the German thinker Salomo Friedlaender (1871-1946) and outlined in his book *Schöpferische Indifferenz* (Creative Indifference), which was first published in 1918. For Friedlaender, the “world” is “an utterly indifferent and non-human force that is the sole permanently constitutive element of personhood.” Analogously, the *Weltperson* represents the “irrevocable indifference in each of us, the person that we are more fundamentally than we are anything else.” For Moran, this idea of a “super-human” identity is quite Nietzschean in kind. The self becomes “identical with the world that is no specific entity and no human.” It is *weltidentisch*, or “world-identical.” Still, Friedlaender maintains that the indifference of the *Weltperson* does not exclude all human, cultural, and ethnic differences. Concrete human beings are not ultimately similar with respect to such traits. This allows Friedlaender to comment on what he deems to be some problematic characteristics of, for instance, “Indians” and “Americans.”

Jason Dockstader argues in favor of a general classification of both

Spinozism and Daoism (*Laozi*, *Zhuangzi*) as forms of philosophical monism (without denying crucial differences between them in other respects). While acknowledging that “monism” has recently acquired a bad reputation among some philosophers, he claims that this is only so because it often remains incorrectly comprehended. For Dockstader, Spinozism and Daoism each represent specific kinds of “existence monism” (claiming “that only one concrete object, *without any genuine parts*, really exists”), which affirm the identity of the many and the one. Simply put, for both Spinoza and the Daoists, the one universe “exists, not at the expense of its parts, but *as them*.” While Spinoza speaks of “all singular things as the affections of God,” the Daoists texts express the idea that all things (*wanwu*) manifest the way of nature or *tian dao*.

Hans Skott-Myhre finds another “family resemblance” between Spinozism and Daoism, that is, in their respective ways they both conceive of an “impersonal self” as a “mode of subjectivity.” While, in comparison with the Daoists, Spinoza puts more emphasis on active aspects of the person and the body, there seems some common ground between the two sides with respect to the energetic and creative potential that they ascribe to all things. Speaking in Bergsonian terms, the “impersonal self” that one can find in Spinoza and Daoist texts manifests itself as some sort of *élan vital*. It is interesting to note how Deleuze and Guattari, in their reading of Spinoza, focus on the flow that constitutes “the process of Life as a non-organic and impersonal power.” This biotic flow resembles the motion of the Dao as described in some chapters in the *Daodejing*. Skott-Myhre believes that such conceptions of productive capacities can help us to form alternative notions of subjectivity in order to challenge functionalist forms of personhood promoted in contemporary Capitalist society.

Andrew Whitehead juxtaposes strategies for deconstructing identity in the East and in the West by comparing what he calls Nietzsche’s “dissolution of objects” with the “dissolution of subjects” found in East Asian Buddhism, namely in the writings of the Chinese Chan

## INTRODUCTION

Buddhist Linji and the Japanese Zen Buddhist Ikkyū Sōjun. In *On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense*, Nietzsche points out how linguistic conventions deceive us into believing in essential characteristics of objects and in our capacity to find out the “truth” about them. In this way, assumptions about the true identity of objects are illusions created by our use of language. Linji and Ikkyū also reflect on what may be called the tendency of language to establish “essentialist illusions.” Both develop counter-strategies, for instance through poetry in the case of Ikkyū, to dissolve conceptions of essential identity, including that of the self.

Karl-Heinz Pohl traces a case of intertextuality by delineating the East-West history of a literary theme. In the 1930s, the modern Chinese writer Lu Xun satirically re-wrote a rather well-known story from the *Zhuangzi* which depicts the ancient Daoist master in dialogue with a skull. Lu Xun transformed this allegory into a criticism of the (sometimes allegedly Daoist) “philosophical” tendency to engage in lofty thoughts while ignoring pressing social problems and injustices. In 1978, the German author Hans Magnus Enzensberger wrote a short play (for radio performance) in which he, in turn, transformed Lu Xun’s version of the story and, to some extent, restored the philosophical intentions of the original text.

Lorraine Markotic reads the novel *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* by the contemporary Japanese author Haruki Murakami as a striking illustration of “the theory of the subject explicated by Alan Badiou in his *Ethics: An Essay on the Understanding of Evil*.” In Markotic’s view, the protagonist of the Japanese novel, a character named Toru Okada, undergoes a process of self-dissolution and self-reconstruction by which he becomes a subject in the sense of the French philosopher’s theory.

Günter Wohlfart shows how modern Western philosophy, as represented by its founder Descartes, has transformed the belief in the Christian God into the secularized belief in an individual ego—the “Egod” in Wohlfart’s creative terminology. Replacing the transcen-

dent God, the ego becomes with Kant “the transcendental apex of dogmatic criticism,” i.e. the foundation for everything reasonable and true. For Wohlfart, it was Nietzsche’s achievement to succeed in a “pre-postmodern deconstruction” of this “Egod.” This effort makes Nietzsche an ally of a pre-modern Eastern deconstructionist of the ego, namely that of the *Zhuangzi*.

John Maraldo offers an alternative to the notion of “personal autonomy” that is often identified with Western Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment thought in the tradition of Kantian moral philosophy. Maraldo identifies the contemporary “standard notion” of personal autonomy as implying and affirming the power of individual agency. An autonomous person is believed to be capable of acting freely and independently and to be in self-control. The denial of such autonomy is often decried as an infringement on “human rights.” By referring to Chinese and Japanese texts from both Buddhist and Confucian traditions, Maraldo suggests an entirely different notion of autonomy based on reciprocal self-mastery rather than mastery over others (people or things), and on the recognition of interdependence rather than independence. – Rolf Trauzettel compares “two mythic paradigms of the constitution of personhood.” Analyzing ancient Greek sources, Trauzettel defines the first paradigm as emerging from within the individual and constituting it as an integral and inseparable agent. The second paradigm, to the contrary, is externally imposed and conceives of the person as divisible; one’s actions can be assessed as if they came “from a separate and isolated partial self, and not from a unitary person.” Different variations of this second paradigm can be found in ancient Greek and in Chinese texts. Only the first paradigm can, according to Trauzettel, lead to “the notion of unique identity which cannot be substituted by something else.” In the context of the second paradigm, persons remain heteronomously determined by their social roles and are ultimately replaceable and dispensable. Such forms of personhood have occurred in a Confucian context and, in more recent times, within a Communist framework.

**I.**  
**China**





Deborah Sommer

## The *Ji* Self in Early Chinese Texts

Study of the self has created a vast literature in Chinese studies. In much of this scholarship, the English word "self" is used in a general sense to refer primarily to Western notions, and it does not necessarily refer to any specific Chinese term. Projects in comparative philosophy, ethics, and religious studies often begin inquiries into Chinese texts by defining a project in the language of modern Western interests. Ideas of self are complex enough within Western philosophical literature; understanding the self becomes even more challenging when exploring Chinese-language sources, which articulate different notions of self, body, and personhood. In the negotiated space between Western and Chinese languages, the self travels a slippery path. In English translations of Chinese texts, Chinese terms that might be translated as "self" appear and disappear quite arbitrarily. The English word "self" might be a translation of any one of several different Chinese terms, each of which actually has its own field of meaning. Most comparative studies do not distinguish between the meanings of these different terms. And "self" might be a translation of nothing at all--merely a word added to render a passage into readable English. Yet at the same time, a Chinese term that might otherwise be rendered as "self" in English often vanishes conceptually in translations by being omitted or by being translated as another word entirely.<sup>1</sup>

This essay attempts to explore one Chinese notion of the self by fo-

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<sup>1</sup> For recent English-language studies of the self, see for example R. Ames et al., *Self as Person in Asian Theory and Practice*, Albany 1994; K. Lai, *Learning from Chinese Philosophies: Ethics of Interdependent and Contextualised Self*, Aldershot 2006; K. Shun and D. B. Wong, *Confucian Ethics: A Comparative Study of Self, Autonomy, and Community*, New York 2004; and E. Slingerland, "Conceptions of the Self in the Zhuangzi," *Philosophy East and West* 54.3 (2004): 322-342.

cusing on one Chinese character: the character *ji* 己. This term has various fields of meaning, one of which may be rendered by the English word "self." When I use the term "self" in this essay, I am usually referring to this particular character. The term *ji* is very well known, but what is it, exactly? Does it have discernible qualities or characteristics? Does it differ from other terms that also might be translated as "self"? If so, how? My goal is to determine whether *ji* has any distinct discernable fields of meaning, and if so, to articulate them as clearly as possible. I also consider how the *ji* self differs from other terms for self, person, or body: terms such as *xing* 形, *gong* 躬, *shen* 身, and *ti* 體. For in early Chinese texts, human beings (*ren* 人) are composites of various fields or valences of embodiment, personhood, selfhood, and identity. I have discussed elsewhere how a human being might simultaneously have a *xing* 形 form, or physical frame; a *gong* 躬 body that visually performs ritualized conduct; a *shen* 身 body that is cultivated and is a site of family and social identity; and a *ti* 體 body, which is a complex corpus of overlapping bodies and identities.<sup>2</sup> When doing that earlier study, which focused on conceptualizations of the body and embodiment, I observed that the character *ji* often appeared in passages alongside these other terms, but it seemed to be less embodied than those notions and had its own range of meanings. Here I now explore how a human being has a *ji* self. My method is quite straightforward: using various electronic databases, I have located many occurrences of the term *ji* in received versions of early Chinese texts, and I have tried to identify the terms range of meaning.<sup>3</sup>

Unexpectedly, the character *ji* does not occur nearly as frequently in early texts as I had presupposed. It occurs only once in the *Book of*

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<sup>2</sup> For text passages and citations related to each of these terms that are otherwise not provided herein, see my "Boundaries of the *Ti* Body," *Asia Major* 3d. ser. 21 (2008): 293-324.

<sup>3</sup> For locating passages, I am indebted to the National Palace Museum's Hanquan 寒泉 database at <http://210.69.170.100/s25/> and the Thesaurus Linguae Sericae at Heidelberg University.

*Odes* and is found in less than ten passages of the *Book of Documents*. Appearing only a single time in the received version of the *Daodejing*, *ji* occurs in roughly twenty to thirty entries in each of the following texts: the *Analects*, *Mozi*, *Guanzi*, *Mencius* and *Book of Rites*. It occurs around fifty to sixty times in the *Xunzi*, the *Zhuangzi*, and the *Han Feizi*. These numbers are actually somewhat inflated, for *ji* 己 is often a variant for several other characters. It is sometimes a variant of the graphically similar *yi* 已, which has several meanings associated with duration of time and might be used as a final particle. *Ji* is also a variant of the hemerological unit *si* 巳, as is seen frequently in the *Zuo Commentary* to the calendaric *Spring and Autumn Annals*. In the following analysis, when I have not been able to determine which character is intended, I have omitted it from consideration.

At first glance the character *ji* seems in many instances to function like a pronoun when translated into English, in which case it is often translated as something such as "oneself," "himself," "herself," or "themselves," or it might be translated simply as "him," "her," or "them." I have often done so myself below, emphasizing the presence of the character *ji* by placing "-self" or "-selves" in italics. When used in the sense of a pronoun, however, *ji* actually has a stronger meaning than that associated with an ordinary English-language pronoun. An English pronoun refers back to a noun or a nominal prototype, and sometimes that noun is a human being. But it is intriguing that in the case of the *ji* self, the word to which *ji* refers is *always* a human being (other than in the special case of the humanized animated creatures in the *Zhuangzi*). It almost never refers to an inanimate object or thing. More interestingly, *ji* almost never refers to a person who is a family member; it almost always occurs in instances where the actors are not related to one another. So *ji* is not just a pronoun; it has more complex fields of significance that I will attempt to unravel below.

The *ji* self is one of the least somatic aspects of a person's identity, and it is far less material than, for example, the *xing* 形 form, which is

the physical frame, shape, or mass of the body. The *ji* self is far more socially and conceptually constructed than is the *xing* form, which bears little of a person's social identity. This self cannot readily be located in, or associated with, the head, the heart or mind (*xin* 心), the torso, or any other region or fragment of the body. Neither is it associated with any of the body's substances or energies, such as blood, *qi* 氣, essence (*jing* 精), or spirit (*shen* 神). *Xing* forms, in contrast, exist at the same subtle level of existence as the energies of *qi*, essence, and spirit, as described, for example, in such texts as the "Inner Training" (*Nei ye* 內業) of the *Guanzi* 管子.<sup>4</sup> The form is not associated with values or mores, and it has little to do with conduct; the *ji* self, on the other hand, is the site of such values as reverence, humaneness, and shame. The *xing* form does not experience feelings, emotions, or desires; the *ji* self, on the other hand, is the place where feelings such as worry or anxiety (*you* 憂) are located within a human being. Mencius, for example, says that Yao was very worried in himself (*wei ji you* 為己憂) about finding a Shun.<sup>5</sup> The self is also the main site of desire (*yu* 欲) within a human being. Forms are discrete entities, for one's form does not overlap with the forms of other people. The *ji* self is coextensive with the form and does not extend beyond it (the *shen* and particularly the *ti* bodies, in contrast, might extend beyond it), but it is not clearly situated spatially in the actual mass of the physical frame. Like the *xing* form, the *ji* self is a discrete phenomena, for a person has only one *ji* self that does not ontologically coincide with that of another person.

Internally, the *xing* form can also be understood as an inner structure or template that is not visible to the eye; in the sense that it can be aligned or made upright (*zheng* 正), either metaphorically or through body placement, it bears some similarities to the *ji* self. In such texts as the "Inner Training," aligning the form (*zheng xing*) is sustained by

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<sup>4</sup> See H. Roth, *Original Tao*, New York 1999. For a Chinese edition of "Nei ye" I have used Roth. All translations below are my own unless otherwise noted.

<sup>5</sup> Mencius 3A.3. For a Chinese edition of the *Mencius*, I have used D.C. Lau, *Mencius*, Hong Kong 1984.

following the Way and is partnered with "cultivating the mind" (*xiu xin* 修心).<sup>6</sup> Alignment of the *ji* self occurs almost solely in the *Mencius*, where it seems to be used metaphorically and is not associated with body placement. In the *Mencius*, the state of alignment, straightness, or uprightness is often contrasted with a negative state of crookedness or twistedness (*wang* 枉). Warning against twisting the Way, Mencius notes that "it has never happened someone who is twisted themselves (*wang ji*) could straighten others (*zhi ren* 直人)."<sup>7</sup> Here, qualities within the self are juxtaposed to those of others: this positioning is very characteristic of the self, as will be seen below.

The *ji* self has no visual marks or attributes, and there are few if any passages that describe how it might look, either stationary or in motion. The *xing* form, however, is visible: beautiful, monstrous, immolated, and deformed bodies populate the *Zhuangzi*, for example, and these visible bodies are usually referred to as *xing* forms.<sup>8</sup> Yet there is also another aspect of the human being that is associated with visibility and display: the *gong* 躬 body, which is particularly associated with action and ritual performance. The *gong* body performs ritual publicly and visibly before an audience; its actions and gestures are learned and nonspontaneous, and it toils and labors ritually on behalf of a larger community. Confucius admires this kind of body; Zhuangzi derides it as artificial and contrived. The term *gong* is used for the bodies of the queen and her attendants when they are performing silkworm-raising rituals, and for the body of the ruler when he is plowing the fields ceremonially. Yet even though *gong* can often be translated as "herself" or "himself" in these usages, as for example "the queen herself performed the ritual," the term *ji* is rarely used in these situations. The aspect of body, person, or selfhood that labors ritually on behalf of its community performs without concern

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<sup>6</sup> *Guanzi*, "Nei ye." See also Roth 1999, 56-57.

<sup>7</sup> *Mencius* 3B.1. On aligning the self, see also 7A.19 and 7B.4.

<sup>8</sup> For the significance of the *xing* form in the *Zhuangzi*, see my "Concepts of the Body in the *Zhuangzi*," in V. Mair, ed., *Experimental Essays on Zhuangzi*, 2d ed., Dunedin, Florida, 2010: 212-228.

for personal interest or profit, and it is usually called *gong*. The *ji* self, on the other hand, is not infrequently associated with personal interests as opposed to the interests of others. The queen performing silkworm rites and the ruler conducting the ceremonial plowing are not doing so for their own personal interest; they have already, to borrow an expression from the *Analects*, "disciplined the (*ji*) self and returned to ritual" (*ke ji fu li* 克己復禮).<sup>9</sup>

Although the *ji* self is individuated, it exists primarily in relation to others, that is, to other human beings (*ren* 人), and it is strongly defined by relations with others. For this self is rarely found without an "other" (*ren*), and this is the case across most early texts. The term *ren*, or person, moreover often implies a person of a certain stature in society, and it does not usually refer to just anyone of any rank. The identity of the other is usually not clear, and precisely how self and other should relate to one another is often equally uncertain. Perhaps precisely because of this uncertainty, space between self and other must be negotiated with care; one should protect one's self (*bao ji* 保己).<sup>10</sup> Relationships between self and other are often shaped by the potentiality for comparison or even competition, either explicitly or implicitly. Negotiations between self and other reflect uncertainty regarding degrees of distance, intimacy, worth, or similitude; they also reflect anxiety about the depth of mutual understanding (*zhi* 知) between people. Many passages are fraught with concern about the contents of one person's *ji* self with regard to other people. Is what I myself have--abilities, learning, and so on--the same as what others have? Is it more or less, better or worse? Is what I have, or is what I am, adequately recognized, appreciated, or understood by others? Are others the same as or different from my self? If we differ, who is

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<sup>9</sup> *Analects* 12.1. This expression is discussed further below. I have followed the Chinese version of the *Analects* in R. Ames and H. Rosemont, *The Analects of Confucius: A Philosophical Translation*, New York 1998.

<sup>10</sup> *Zhuangzi*, "Ze yang" 則陽. I have followed the Chinese edition of the *Zhuangzi* in Guo Qingfan's 郭慶藩 *Zhuangzi jishi* 莊子集釋, Beijing 1961. See also V. Mair, *Wandering on the Way*, Honolulu 1994, 255.