

Xiong Shili's *Ti-yong* Metaphysics and Buddhist Philosophy

The Tang Chun-I Visiting Professor Chinese University of Hong Kong 2020

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PHIL5180/7180

Class schedule:

13 Nov (Fri):

20 Nov (Fri):

27 Nov (Fri):

4 Dec (Fri):

Required Reading:

- John Makeham, "Introduction," John Makeham, ed., *Transforming Consciousness: Yogācāra Thought in Modern China* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014). Ebook available CUHK Library.
- John Makeham, "Translator's Introduction," *New Treatise on the Uniqueness of Consciousness* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015). Available on Blackboard.
- SANG Yu, "The Philosophical Background to the Development of Xiong's *Ti-yong* Metaphysics," in SANG Yu, *Xiong Shili's Understanding of Reality and Function, 1920-1937* (Boston: Brill, 2020). Ebook available CUHK Library.
- John Makeham, "Xiong Shili's Critique of Yogācāra Thought in the Context of His Constructive Philosophy," in John Makeham, ed., *Transforming Consciousness: Yogācāra Thought in Modern China* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014). Ebook available CUHK Library.

Further Reading:

- SANG Yu, *Xiong Shili's Understanding of Reality and Function, 1920-1937* (Boston: Brill, 2020). Ebook available CUHK Library.
- John Makeham, *New Treatise on the Uniqueness of Consciousness* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015). Available on Blackboard.

Course Description:

Xiong Shili 熊十力 (1885-1968) is typically regarded as one of the most important Chinese philosophers of the twentieth-century. He is also recognized as a founding figure of the modern New Confucian school of philosophy. Xiong's "ultimate concern" throughout his long and productive intellectual career was to show that "Reality and function are non-dual" (體用不二). For Xiong, Reality is the "locus" that ontologically grounds the phenomenal

(function; 用) yet is not different from the phenomenal. This course will investigate the development Xiong Shili's *ti-yong* metaphysics, with a particular focus on highlighting its sustained theoretical engagement with Buddhist philosophy (in particular, Yogācāra, Madhyamaka, Huayan and Tiantai, as well as the *Dasheng qixin lun* 大乘起信論 [Treatise on Awakening Mahāyāna Faith]), focussing on the period from the early 1930s to the late 1950s. The lectures will make extensive use of close readings of selected passages of Xiong Shili's writings, translated into English with the original Chinese text.

1. Friday 13 November 2020. Lecture One. Immanent Transcendence--A Philosophical Background to Xiong Shili's *Ti-yong* Metaphysics

Xiong Shili was heir to a body of philosophical traditions, in which the *ti-yong* polarity featured centrally in repeated attempts, since at least the fifth century, to answer the question, “How can the unconditioned (the absolute, suchness [真如], principle [理]) be realized if our cognitive awareness is circumscribed by the conditioned nature of human existence?” This lecture will examine how the *ti-yong* paradigm was used to convey the idea of immanent transcendence (內在超越) in early Buddhist writings and also Neo-Confucian Zhu Xi's (1130-1200) writings. The presentation will argue that the Buddhist text, *Dasheng qixin lun* 大乘起信論 [Treatise on Awakening Mahāyāna Faith], played a pivotal intermediary role in that process of conceptual elaboration. The theoretical issues explored provide an important context in which to locate some of the resources that Xiong was able to draw upon in developing his own distinctive *ti-yong* metaphysics.

Required Reading:

- "Introduction" to John Jorgensen, Dan Lusthaus, John Makeham, and Mark Strange, eds. and trans., *Treatise on Awakening Mahāyāna Faith* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019). Ebook available CUHK Library.
- John Makeham, "Monism and the Problem of the Ignorance and Badness in Chinese Buddhism and Zhu Xi's Neo-Confucianism" in John Makeham, ed. *The Buddhist Roots of Zhu Xi's Philosophical Thought* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018). Ebook available CUHK Library.
- Karl- Heinz Pohl, “‘Immanent Transcendence’ in the Chinese Tradition: Remarks on a Chinese (and Sinological) Controversy,” in Nahum Brown and William Franke eds., *Transcendence, Immanence, and Intercultural Philosophy*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016). Ebook available CUHK Library.

Further Reading:

- Brook Ziporyn, "The *Ti-Yong* 體用 Model and Its Discontents: Models of Ambiguous Priority in Chinese Buddhism and Zhu Xi's Neo- Confucianism," in John Makeham, ed. *The Buddhist Roots of Zhu Xi's Philosophical Thought* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018). Ebook available CUHK Library.

- John Jorgensen, Dan Lusthaus, John Makeham, and Mark Strange, eds. and trans., *Treatise on Awakening Mahāyāna Faith* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019). Ebook available CUHK Library.

1. Friday 20 November 2020. Lecture Two. Why Reality Cannot be Sought Independent of Phenomena

The focus of this lecture is Xiong's ontology and draws its findings principally from his *New Treatise on the Uniqueness of Consciousness* (新唯識論; 1932 literary edition). The presentation seeks to explain why Xiong insisted that Reality (實體; 體) cannot be sought independent of phenomena despite his also claiming that phenomena are not real. The lecture first investigates Xiong's views on a range of related issues that shed light on his understanding of the relation between the ontological (or noumenal) and the phenomenal: Reality and its relation to mental and material dharmas (心、色法); productive power (功能) and its relation to habituated tendencies (習氣); the nature (*xing* 性) and its relation to form-and-vital stuff (形氣); as well as principle (理) and its relation to vital stuff (氣). In each of these pairs, the former term is associated with the ontological and the latter term is associated with the phenomenal. The Confucian dimension of Xiong's metaphysical syncretism is represented in his accounts of the nature and form-and-vital stuff; and *li* and *qi*; that Fundamental Reality is actively creative and morally inflected; and in his use of the *Book of Change*. I argue that Xiong was logically compelled to identify the ontological with the phenomenal, insisting that phenomena are not different from ontological Reality (even if we experience them differently); that one cannot talk of the nature independent of the psycho-physical; and that the nature includes vital stuff within it. In doing so, he sought to account both for the ontological—what is—as well as the phenomenological—how we experience—exclusively privileging neither. To privilege either would be to undermine it, by falling into the trap of either eternalism (常見) or of nihilism (斷見), a major concern of Buddhist theorists.

Required Reading:

- Xiong Shili, "Transformation" (轉變) chapter and "Productive Power" (功能) chapter of *New Treatise on the Uniqueness of Consciousness* (pp. 94-160). Available on Blackboard.
- SANG Yu, "The Development of Xiong's Conception of Reality and Function between 1927 and 1937," in SANG Yu, *Xiong Shili's Understanding of Reality and Function, 1920-1937* (Boston: Brill, 2020). Ebook available CUHK Library.

Further Reading:

- 熊十力, 〈轉變〉、〈功能〉兩篇,《新唯識論》(1932年文言本),《熊十力全集》第2卷,(武漢:湖北教育出版社,2001年). Available on Blackboard.

1. Friday 27 November 2020. Lecture Three. Xiong Shili 's *Record to Destroy Confusion and Make My Tenets Explicit*

1950 marks the start of a decade in which Xiong's articulation of the core metaphysical tenet of "the non-duality of *ti* and *yong*" (*ti yong bu er* 體用不二) underwent some profound changes. This lecture focuses on Xiong's 1950 book-length rejoinder to a lengthy 1948 review of his magnum opus, the *New Treatise on the Uniqueness Consciousness* (新唯識論; vernacular edition, 1944), by the cleric Yinshun 印順 (1906-2005). The title of Xiong's rejoinder is *Cui huo xian zong ji* 摧惑顯宗記 (Record to Destroy Confusion and Make My Tenets Explicit). *Cui huo xian zong ji* represents a unique retrospective summation of what Xiong himself then regarded as the most important philosophical accomplishment of the *New Treatise* (1944); a work in which he was "finally able to bring to completion that which the Mahāyāna bodhisattvas had left uncompleted." This lecture draws on the detailed arguments and explanations provided in Xiong's responses to Yinshun to focus on Xiong's own assessment of how his *New Treatise* was able to address the shortcomings of the two major traditions of Mahāyāna Buddhist doctrine, which, following Buddhist doxographers in the Tang period, he refers to as the Emptiness school (空宗) and the Existence school (有宗). I begin with an account of his understanding and criticism of the Emptiness school, followed in the second section by his assessment of what the Existence school got right and where it too fell short. The third section then demonstrates Xiong's affirmation that the core metaphysical tenet of the *New Treatise* is squarely aligned with the Tathāgatagarbha (如來藏) tradition of Mahāyāna Buddhism. With the preceding sections serving as an extended but necessary background, the fourth and final section explains what the significance of the *Treatise* was to Xiong's own philosophical project, informed by his reflections on the aims and achievements of his main pre-1950 writing, the *New Treatise* (1944).

Suggested Reading:

- 熊十力,《摧惑顯宗記》(1950年),《熊十力全集》第5卷,(武漢:湖北教育出版社,2001年) Available on Blackboard.

Further Reading:

- 印順,評熊十力的《新唯識論》(1948年); <https://cbetaonline.dila.edu.tw/zh/Y0020>

1. Friday 4 December 2020. Lecture Four. "The Non-duality of *Ti* and *Yong*": Huayan, Tiantai; and the Concept of Transformation

The final lecture addresses two distinct topics. The first topic concerns seeks how Xiong drew on Huayan, and later on Tiantai, philosophical resources to articulate changing formulations and refinements of his signature metaphysical doctrine of the "non-duality of *ti* and *yong*." The period covered spans the 1930s to the early 1960s. These resources were grounded in accounts of the relationship between *li* 理 and *shi* 事, which, in turn, were philosophical responses to, and developments of, the account of the relationship between the

unconditioned and the conditioned in the *Dasheng qixin lun* 大乘起信論 (*Treatise on Awakening Mahāyāna Faith*), as encapsulated in its “one mind, two gateways” (一心二門) model. The first part of this lecture will establish the connection between Xiong’s pre-1950 account of the non-duality of *ti* and *yong* thesis and the Huayan doctrine of the non-obstruction of *li* and phenomena (理事無礙). In the 1950s, Xiong’s ontological views changed substantially. The second part will seek to show how Xiong’s late 1950s-early 1960s account of the non-duality of *ti* and *yong* thesis is theoretically grounded in Tiantai accounts of *ti-yong*.

The second topic concerns the role that the concept of transformation played in the articulation of his core metaphysical tenet, “the non-duality of *ti* and *yong*.” It will further propose that Xiong’s understanding of the role of transformation also served as his mature solution to the Buddhist problematic of avoiding the two extremes (二見、二邊) of reification and nihilism, which Xiong characterizes in terms of believing either that things endure over time (continua) or that things cease to exist.

Required Reading:

- Xiong Shili, "Transformation" (轉變) chapter, pp. 94-100, *New Treatise on the Uniqueness of Consciousness* (pp. 94-160). Available on Blackboard.
- 熊十力, 〈轉變〉篇, 40-43 頁, 《新唯識論》(1932 年文言本), 《熊十力全集》第 2 卷, (武漢: 湖北教育出版社, 2001 年). Available on Blackboard.
- 熊十力, 〈轉變〉篇, 71-86 頁, 《新唯識論》(1953 年刪定本), 《熊十力全集》第 6 卷, (武漢: 湖北教育出版社, 2001 年). Available on Blackboard.

Assessment:

Students are required to write one essay, 5,000-6,000 words in length. **The essay is due Friday 11 Dec, 2020.** Students are asked to write on ONE of the following topics:

1. "Xiong Shili's philosophical achievements are best judged to be contributions to Buddhist philosophy rather than to Confucian philosophy." Explain what you regard to be Xiong's philosophical achievements, and why you agree or disagree with this statement.
2. Chen-kuo Lin (林鎮國) once wrote that Xiong Shili's "Confucian identity is constructed through mirrors of language, among which Buddhist language plays the most significant role."* Explain why you agree or disagree with this statement. (*Lin, "Hsiung Shih-li's Hermeneutics of Self: Making a Confucian Identity in Buddhist Words," *NCCU Philosophical Journal*, 8(2002): 87. This article is available on Blackboard.)

NOTE: If you wish to write on a different topic, then you need to discuss that with Professor Makeham first to get his approval **no later** than 20 November, 2020.