

墨子

Mozi A Study and Translation of the
Ethical and Political Writings

John Knoblock and Jeffrey Riegel

CHINA RESEARCH MONOGRAPH 68

This Book Is Dedicated to the Memory of John Knoblock

未敗墨子道
雖然歌而非歌哭而非哭樂而非樂
是果類乎

I would not fault the Way of Master Mo.
And yet if you sang he condemned singing, if you cried
he condemned crying, and if you made music he
condemned music.

What sort was he after all?

—*Zhuangzi*, “In the World”

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CENTER FOR CHINESE STUDIES

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Preface

The authors of the *Mozi*, an anthology of enormous scope and great importance, can be credited with having produced, during the Warring States period (453–221 B.C.E.), the earliest extended philosophical discourse in China on a remarkably varied set of topics that range from aggressive warfare, fatalism, music, and prolonged mourning for the dead—all of which the authors vehemently opposed—to meritocracy, uniform adherence to government directives, frugality, love for others, and a belief in divine agency—all of which they fervently embraced. The philosophy found in the *Mozi* speaks in favor of such conservative values as obedience to the will of Heaven and respect for one's elders and superiors, while at the same time encouraging the individual to endeavor to change the world, to widen his sense of moral responsibility so that it might extend well beyond the narrow confines of family and local community. The work's emphasis on the efficacy of collaborative human effort and its passionate arguments in favor of impartial treatment of others are two of the most notable features of Mohist philosophy.

Although various parts of the *Mozi* were evidently composed by several anonymous authors over a period of many years, the seeds of the text's philosophy, embedded in most of its chapters, are the teachings, slogans, and arguments of Mo Di, or Master Mo. A fifth-century B.C.E. thinker of obscure and possibly plebeian origins, Master Mo became the founder and patriarch of a closely knit and tightly organized intellectual lineage and social movement—according to some accounts, a religious and quasi-military movement—that had a profound effect on Warring States thought and society.

The documents that now make up the text date from the late fifth to the late third century B.C.E., when formerly independent and belligerent states and principalities had been forcibly welded together into a single empire. The text consequently both reflects and is a product of the social upheaval and intellectual changes for which the period is noted. In addition to the discursive writings,

the anthology includes an elaborate lexicon, representing an almost obsessive concern with the precise use of terminology, not only for the purposes of logical argumentation, but also for description in such specialized areas as optics, construction, and commerce. Yet manifestly clear in the diverse contents of the *Mozi* is the characterization of Master Mo as unshakably wedded to a code of guiding moral and political principles. The text is not a passive reflection on the meaning and value of these principles but is instead a call, sometimes stated with great urgency, to Mozi's followers to forcefully and faithfully defend his doctrines against attack and to the ruling elite to examine the mistaken policies they impose, to consider their unfortunate consequences, and then to reform themselves and their governments along the lines Master Mo articulates.

This volume is a study and translation of thirty-six chapters in the *Mozi* that are concerned largely with political and ethical philosophy; the remaining seventeen chapters are related to military defense and logic. The story of how this book came to be is complicated. Sometime in the late 1980s, while John Knoblock was working on his monumental study of the *Xunzi* and before he and I had begun collaborating on our translation of the *Lüshi chunqiu*, he showed me some rough translations of the chapters of the so-called Mohist *Analects*, that is, chapters 46 through 50, and suggested that we collaborate on an anthology of readings from early Chinese philosophy that would include chapters from the *Mozi*. Over the course of the following decade we talked about the project as something we might do after work on the *Xunzi* and *Lüshi chunqiu* was completed. In the wake of John's death in 1999, while helping his family sort through his books and papers, I discovered that in his home computer files were, among other things, a translation and critical edition of the thirty-six chapters from the *Mozi* devoted to political and ethical philosophy. I do not know what John intended to do with the material—he had never mentioned wanting to publish a volume on the *Mozi*—but I decided that his translations could become just that. With the encouragement of John's family and friends, most notably his brother Phil and his colleague Jane Connolly, I decided to complete the work in his memory.

In Beijing on sabbatical leave during the academic year 2002–2003, I went through John's translation and critical edition word by word. Although there is much that remains in the present translation of John's diction and distinctive style of writing, I have made countless changes based on my understanding of the language of the *Mozi*. As a result, there are parts of the translation as it now stands that John would not recognize; in some instances, he might not agree with my final rendering of some of the *Mozi*'s technical vocabulary and its more problematic passages. I also reedited the Chinese text and, in the process,

significantly revised decisions John had taken, and changed completely the text-critical conventions used to indicate interpretations and emendations, deciding that it was best not to suggest that I was reconstructing an original text of the *Mozi*. Early manuscripts excavated in recent years provide ample proof that the notion of a strict Chinese orthography did not exist in Warring States times; hence, the identification of “graphic errors” or “loan characters” can be controversial. For the most part I emend what I take to be scribal errors introduced into the text during its later transmission. Otherwise, the notes repeat glosses proposed by other scholars—primarily those quoted in Sun Yirang’s edition of the *Mozi* as well as Wang Huanbiao’s commentary—that I find best enable us to make sense of the odd and puzzling graphs so often encountered in the *Mozi*.

During my sabbatical in Beijing I also drafted additional notes that provide information on proper names, technical terms, canonical sources quoted in the *Mozi*, and the relationship between the *Mozi* and other early Chinese literary and philosophical texts. I compiled the bibliography with the help of Han Baosen 韩宝森. With regard to primary sources, I have relied where possible on the editions in *Hanji dianzi wenku* (hanji.sinica.edu.tw/index.html), the database compiled by Academia Sinica, Taiwan. In the years following my sabbatical, I reviewed the secondary literature on Mohist thought, taught a graduate seminar on the text at the University of California, Berkeley, and after relocating from Berkeley to the University of Sydney in 2007, started work on the general introduction, the shorter introductory essays preceding individual chapters and the triads of the “core chapters,” and the three appendixes.

The general introduction covers the life of Mozi, the nature of the Mohist school, the creation of the book *Mozi* by Liu Xiang, the fate of Mohism in later Chinese history, and the structure and philosophy of the text’s political and ethical chapters. In the introductory essays I discuss the main ideas of each chapter, analyze technical vocabulary that appears in it, and suggest how it relates to other parts of the *Mozi* as well as to the text’s overall philosophy. The first appendix is devoted to a summary of A. C. Graham’s contribution to our understanding of the composition of the core chapters; the second is an analysis and translation of a recently excavated manuscript relating to the Mohist belief in the existence of ghosts and spirits; and the third provides an analysis of the *Mengzi* 3A5 argument between Mengzi and the Mohist Yi Zhi.

I never had the opportunity to discuss with John Knoblock the various topics covered in my introductions, notes, and appendixes. The opinions expressed there are thus mine and not his, and they are influenced by the groundbreaking scholarship of Watanabe Takashi. In spite of my alterations to his translation,

and the general interpretive framework that I have provided, I believe that John would not mind being identified as coauthor of this volume.

Earlier translations of all or part of the *Mozi* include the complete translation (into German) by Alfred Forke; the translation of the ethical and political chapters by Y. P. Mei (identical with the material translated in the present volume); the translation of samples of the core chapters by Burton Watson; another sample of this material by P. J. Ivanhoe; a translation of the chapters devoted to military defense by Robin Yates as part of his doctoral dissertation; a translation of the logic chapters by A. C. Graham; and a recent complete translation of the text by Ian Johnston. These translations are cited in the bibliography and discussed in my general introduction to the volume. Johnston's complete translation appeared in 2010, after I had completed most of the work on this volume. I have published a short review of it but do not think it appropriate either to comment on its accuracy in these pages or take it into account in my own work. I remain committed to the decision I took at the beginning of this project to translate only the political and philosophical chapters. I am still firmly in agreement with Y. P. Mei's sage assessment that the textual condition of the "logic chapters," chapters 40 through 45, is too poor to permit a confident rendering of their contents. I have attempted to distinguish my study and translation of the ethical and political chapters from the work done by previous scholars (Forke, Mei, Watson, Ivanhoe, and Johnston) by providing a more detailed and authoritative analysis of textual problems, more thorough identification of personal names, place-names, and technical terms, and more comprehensive introductory materials, in order to give readers a better understanding of Mohist philosophy, the complexities of its argumentation, and its place in early Chinese intellectual history.

Those who have helped and supported me in this work span three continents. I will mention first relatives and friends in North America: Marty Backstrom; my sister and brother-in-law, Richel and Gerry Serody; my friends Tony Newcomb, Tom Grey, Ralph Hexter, and the late Ted Rex; and my brothers Joe and Eddie Winston and their wives, Sally and Cheri. My teachers at Stanford, Al Dien and David Nivison, are friends as well as mentors whom I try to emulate in my life and work. In Australia, I have been fortunate to have Chea Bunthong watching over me, and I have enjoyed the wonderful hospitality and company of colleagues and friends Mabel Lee and David Goodman, John Yu and the late George Souter. My life in Australia has been greatly enhanced by having made the acquaintance of Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir, governor of New South Wales and former chancellor of the University of Sydney, and of Stephen Garton, provost and deputy vice chancellor of the University of Sydney. The most pleasant times I have spent in China I owe to the companionship

of my good friend Ren Mingliang 任明亮 and my cousin the late Michelle Blumenthal.

I am also very much indebted to colleagues who contributed their time and efforts to improving the quality of my work. Two anonymous readers—one contracted by the University of Washington Press and the other by the Institute of East Asian Studies at the University of California, Berkeley—made numerous invaluable suggestions. Michael Nylan of Berkeley's History Department provided me with a long list of helpful changes and additions. I am also grateful to Kate Lawn Chouta, head of the publication division of the Institute of East Asian Studies, for her help in preparing the final copy, and to Deborah Rudolph for her extraordinarily thorough copyediting of the manuscript. Peter Zhou and the staff at Berkeley's East Asian Library as well as Nancy Li and others at the East Asian collection of the Fisher Library, University of Sydney, have been extremely responsive to my numerous requests for assistance. Any errors of fact or interpretation that remain in this work are the result of my own carelessness and lack of insight.

I am thankful both to the University of California, Berkeley, and to the University of Sydney for providing me with generous financial support during the years I have been working on this volume. At Berkeley I received a Humanities Research Fellowship, sabbatical leave, and numerous grants from the Center for Chinese Studies. At the University of Sydney, the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, under the successive leadership of Deans Stephen Garton and Duncan Ivison, provided me with the funding (and the time) required to do necessary research, including a six-month sabbatical in China and subsequent return visits to use libraries and consult with colleagues. I would like also to express my sincere thanks to Yeh Wen-hsin, director of Berkeley's Institute of East Asian Studies, and Marty Backstrom, its associate director, for agreeing to publish a work that other university presses might have regarded as too great a financial risk.

My final expression of gratitude is to John Knoblock. Quite apart from his substantial contributions to the translations in this volume, John remains an ever present influence on my intellectual and personal life.

J. R.

Abbreviations and Conventions

Abbreviations

JR	Jeffrey Riegel
<i>LSCQ</i>	<i>Lüshi chungiu</i>
<i>QSZY</i>	<i>Qunshu zhiyao</i>
<i>TPYL</i>	<i>Taiping yulan</i>

Conventions

For the Chinese text, I have generally adopted the readings and paragraph divisions of Sun Yirang's *Mozi xiangyu*. Any changes to that text are indicated using the conventions described next. But in questions of punctuation of the Chinese text, especially when it identifies direct quotation, I generally follow Wang Huanbiao's *Mozi jiaoshi*. Both works can be found in the bibliography. My overall goal with regard to the Chinese text of the *Mozi* included in this volume has been to replicate as closely as possible the graphs that appear in Sun's edition. I have been occasionally frustrated in realizing this goal by limitations in the available fonts. Where there are variant forms generally recognized as the same word, I have adopted the form found in the available fonts. Graphs that have no accepted variant have been created. Because this translation provides the Chinese text with full emendations justified by textual notes, these emendations are incorporated but not indicated in the English text. All dates are B.C.E. unless otherwise designated.

The following editorial conventions are observed in the notes to the *Mozi*:

- (X) Enclosed graph or graphs (usually excrescent) should be deleted from the text.
- [X] Enclosed graph or graphs should be inserted into the text, on the basis of the reading of a parallel text.

- <X> The enclosed graph or graphs should be inserted into the text, usually from a different place in the text.
- {X} The text enclosed by these brackets has been substantially emended following an authority named in the footnote.
- (X) Enclosed graph or graphs should be understood as the graph or graphs that follow. In these instances, “GE” signifies graphic error and “TA” signifies taboo avoidance.
- This symbol indicates a lacuna of one character in the text.

In the use of these conventions it is assumed that the textual changes and emendations they involve are necessary due to scribal errors introduced into the text during its later transmission. They are not intended to be understood as corrections to original or early Warring States manuscripts of the contents of the *Mozi*.

It is also assumed that in the scribal practices of the Warring States, there was a degree of free variation in the graphs used to represent words. Thus the way graphs were written in early manuscripts may not correspond to what is now regarded as proper orthography. This does not mean, however, that graphs that deviate from the accepted orthography should be regarded as wrong and duly corrected within the body of the Chinese text. Any problematic graph or graphs are identified by a note reference letter; the corresponding note provides the proposed alternative graph or graphs followed by the name of the authority responsible for the identification. Occasionally abbreviations indicate why, according to that authority, the graph in question should be read as another: “GV” signifies graphic variant, “LC” signifies loan character, “SF” signifies short form, and “TV” signifies textual variant.

Several different note styles are adopted in this book. Notes to the introduction appear at the bottom of the page as do notes to the essays that introduce translated chapters; text critical notes identified by letters of the alphabet appear after each section of Chinese text; notes to the translation are given as “Additional Notes” at the back of the book.

Introduction

I. Portrayals of Mozi

1. Dates and Birthplace

The details of the life of Mozi 墨子, or Master Mo, are largely unknown to us. The exact dates of his birth and death as well as the precise identity of his native place, if these were ever definitively known, ceased to be transmitted by the late third century B.C.E.¹ Passages in the text of the *Mozi* indicate that his personal name was Di 翟.² They further suggest that he was a native of the state of Lu 魯³—Confucius’s native place—and that the period during which he was active falls largely in the middle of the fifth century—not long after the death of Confucius, and spanning the juncture that marked the end of the Spring and Autumn period and the beginning of the era of the Warring States (453–221 B.C.E.).⁴ Attempts to provide more precise dates for Mozi’s birth, death, and the

1. Mozi and his followers figure prominently in the contents of the *Lüshi chunqiu* (hereafter *LSCQ*), compiled in 239 on the eve of the founding of the Qin empire. Sources that date to the subsequent Han dynasty contain only brief references to Mozi, devoid of facts that relate to his life. This review of the circumstances of Mozi’s life follows the assessment given by Graham, *Later Mohist Logic*, 3–7.

2. The passages are from chapters 46 through 50. As Graham, *Later Mohist Logic*, 3, notes, these chapters “have the look of later dramatizations of issues arising within the school.” The extremely brief biographical notice found in the *Shiji* of Sima Qian gives Mozi’s full name as Mo Di; see *Shiji*, “Mengzi Xun Qing liezhuan 孟子荀卿列傳,” 74.2350. Sima Qian’s twenty-four-character passage about Mozi is attached to his somewhat fuller account of Mengzi and Xunzi.

3. Arguments in favor of Lu are presented in Sun Yirang, *Mozi xiangu*, 630, and Fang Shouchu, *Mo xue yuanliu*, 7–9. The textual evidence they and other authorities adduce suggests only that Mozi resided for a time in Lu, not that he was a native of the place. The biographical notice found at *Shiji* 74.2350 identifies Mozi as a native of the state of Song.

4. It is extremely telling of the paucity and poor quality of the evidence available in the Han dynasty (206 B.C.E.–220 C.E.) that Sima Qian (*Shiji*, “Mengzi Xun Qing liezhuan,” 74.2350) could not determine whether Mozi was contemporaneous with Confucius or lived after him. The *suoyin* commentary to this *Shiji* passage quotes the Han bibliographer Liu Xiang (79–6) to the effect that Mozi was contemporaneous with second-generation followers of Confucius’s teachings; i.e., with the disciples of such disciples as Zixia. Confucius’s traditional dates are 551–479, but the evidence in support of these dates is problematic, as Sun Yirang, *Mozi xiangu*, 642, notes. See the discussion in Riegel, review of *China in Antiquity*, 789–92.

major events of his life all have involved allotting him an improbably long life span.⁵

2. Master Mo and Master Kong

Whatever the exact period of his activity, Mozi established himself as a fierce opponent of the teachings of Master Kong 孔子 (Confucius) and his followers—a group the Mohists called the Ru 儒—and of their version of the cultural legacy of the Zhou 周 dynasty. An early Han 漢 dynasty source, the *Huainanzi*, explained Mozi's familiarity with Ru teachings and his aggressive repudiation of them by claiming that he had once “studied the curriculum of the Ru” and had “received the arts of Confucius,” but that he found the rituals and practices so complex, wasteful, and harmful that “he turned his back on the Way of the Zhou and adopted the principles of governance of the Xia.”⁶ But this account reflects the view of the *Huainanzi* more generally that historical change, particularly the rise and fall of schools of thought, was informed by antagonism and competition rather than by reconciliation and collaboration.⁷ Another tradition, recorded in the more syncretic *Lüshi chunqiu*, has it that Mozi studied Zhou rituals in Lu with the descendants of Scribe Que 史角, who had been sent to Lu by an early Zhou king to explain the proper rites for sacrifices.⁸ Far from suggesting that Mozi turned his back on the Zhou, this text implies that he studied the Zhou cultural legacy and thus provides a rationale for the fact that although the *Mozi* is indeed marked by aggressive attacks on the Ru (and on others), it celebrates the founders of the Zhou dynasty as moral exemplars and cultural heroes.

3. Master Mo and the Xia Legacy

Though the *Huainanzi* claim that Mozi was once a student of Confucius and the Ru school is unreliable, it is part of a characterization, especially popular in the third and second centuries B.C.E., that Mozi and his followers were preservers of the legacy of the Xia 夏 dynasty and in particular of Yu 禹 the Great, founder of the dynasty and mythic controller of the floods.⁹ This characteriza-

5. Sun Yirang, *Mozi xiangou*, 643–54, constructs a chronological table that dates Mozi's life to the years 468–376; Fang Shouchu, *Mo xue yuanliu*, 10–14, dates Mozi to 490–403; Qian Mu, *Xian Qin zhuzi xinian*, 119–21, 556, 566, gives as approximate dates 478–392.

6. *Huainanzi*, “Yaolue 要略,” 21.709, preserves this tradition; see also Major et al., *Huainanzi*, 864.

7. This is clearly illustrated by another *Huainanzi* passage that explains that Mozi formulated his teachings in opposition to Confucius only to have his own philosophy refuted by Yang Zhu. See *Huainanzi*, “Fanlun 汎論,” 13.436; Major et al., *Huainanzi*, 501.

8. *LSCQ*, “Dangran 當染,” 2.96; Knoblock and Riegel, *Annals*, 90.

9. This characterization is not, however, borne out by the text of the *Mozi*. In virtually every significant

II. The Mohist School

1. The Three Branches of Mohism

The passage in the *Zhuangzi* chapter “In the World” that speaks of the discipline and loyalty Mozi expected of his followers sheds additional light on the strict, quasi-religious organization of the Mohist school.²⁷ It identifies as Mozi’s chief disciple one Qin Guli 禽滑釐, the leader of the Mohist army in the story of the defense of Song.²⁸ Many other sources confirm that Master Qin was Mozi’s closest colleague and the one most willing to undergo the exhausting labor involved in the Mohist way of life. When Qin Guli began his studies with Mozi, he is said to have spent three years serving Mozi personally and engaging in so much hard labor that even Mozi took pity on him.²⁹ That Master Qin became a prominent teacher in his own right is confirmed by a passage in the “Master Gengzhu” chapter, where he is referred to as “our Master Qinzi,” a title that would have been used only by a master’s disciples.³⁰ In its account of the early master-disciple lineage within the Mohist school, the *Lüshi chungiu* says that Xu Fan 許犯 studied with Qin Guli and Tian Xi 田繫 studied with Xu Fan.³¹ It is possible that Tian Xi was still active in the early third century.

After naming Qin Guli, the *Zhuangzi* then states that Mozi’s followers were divided into three branches: (1) the disciples of Xiangli Qin 相里勤; (2) the followers of Wu Hou 五侯; and (3) the Mohists of the south 南方之墨者—Kuhuo 苦獲, Jichi 已齒, Master Dengling 鄧陵子, and others.³² In the “Eminent Learning” chapter of the *Hanfeizi*, the three lineages are given as the Mohists of the Xiangli lineage 相里氏之墨, the Mohists of the Xiangfu lineage 相夫氏之墨, and the Mohists of the Dengling lineage 鄧陵氏之墨.³³ Nothing further is known of the origins of these lineages. Two of the names,

the tradition of Mozi the magician occurs in the *Huainanzi* story in which Mozi fashioned a wooden bird that flew for three days without alighting. See *Huainanzi*, “Qisu 齊俗,” 11.369; Major, *Huainanzi*, 421.

27. *Zhuangzi* 10B.1079.

28. On Qin Guli, see the additional notes, 3.3, n. 34; 46.12, n. 24; and 50.3, n. 9. Sun Yirang, *Mozi xiangyu*, 655–58, collects numerous stories relating to Qin Guli.

29. *Mozi* 56.497–98 (not translated in the present volume). *Shiji*, “Rulin liezhuan 儒林列傳,” 121.3116, claims that before becoming Mozi’s disciple, Qin Guli had received instruction from Master Xia, a prominent follower of Confucius.

30. *Mozi* 46.12. The use of the title suggests that at least parts of the “Gengzhu” chapter were written by Qin Guli’s disciples.

31. *LSCQ*, “Dangran,” 2.96 (Knoblock and Riegel, *Annals*, 90). Qian Mu, “Xu Xing wei Mozi zaizhuan dizi kao,” identifies Xu Fan with the Xu Xing of *Mengzi* 3A.4, but this is disputed by Sun Cizhou, “Xu Xing shifou wei Mojia de wenti.”

32. *Zhuangzi*, “Tianxia,” 29.1003.

33. *Hanfeizi*, “Xianxue 顯學,” 19.1080.

and ladders.⁶² In addition, they seem to have been interested in the problems of describing and measuring, problems that would have arisen in the work of carpenters and other craftsmen.⁶³ The knowledge gathered together in these chapters makes them, in the opinion of many, the most important single document in the history of ancient Chinese science.⁶⁴

III. The Creation of the Text of the *Mozi*

In the period before the Han dynasty, books as we think of them, consisting of chapters somehow relating to one another, were rare. Documents in the form of *pian* 篇, or bundles of bamboo strips, which might have related to a larger whole, seem to have circulated independently.⁶⁵ Thus it is likely that in the period prior to the Han, the arguments, treatises, essays, and dialogues that constitute the present-day text of the *Mozi* were probably not known as chapters of the *Mozi* but as separate documents associated in some fashion to Mozi and his followers. We can gain some insight into the length and format of these documents thanks to recent archaeological discoveries of texts in tombs of Warring States date located in the ancient territory of the state of Chu. Especially relevant because of their Mohist content are two manuscripts now in the collection of the Shanghai Museum: one consisting of a mere five bamboo strips and the other of fifty-three strips.⁶⁶

Lü Buwei's *Lüshi chunqiu* was therefore a remarkable innovation, noteworthy not only for its length but for its overarching plan, which required that the chapters be read together and thus circulate together as part of a grand opus. It was perhaps with the model of this text in mind⁶⁷ that the great Han bibliographer Liu Xiang 劉向 (79–6) compiled the *Mozi* and thereby created the text

62. Sun Yirang, *Mozi xiangyu*, 335–36. See Graham, *Disputers of the Tao*, 163–64.

63. Sun Yirang, *Mozi xiangyu*, 280, distinguishes between the terms for equal height and equal length; 282–83 distinguishes, in terms of their extent, between an enclosed space and its enclosure.

64. Harbsmeier, *Language and Logic*, 326.

65. Some ancient documents were also written on *juan* 卷, silk scrolls. Indeed some Han dynasty examples of *juan*, such as those discovered at the mid-second-century B.C.E. burial site of Mawangdui in Hunan Province, contain several unrelated documents.

66. The shorter of the two manuscripts has been given the title “Guishen zhi ming 鬼神之明” because its contents relate to the Mohist doctrine on ghosts and spirits. See appendix B for a discussion of this manuscript. The other, titled *Rongcheng shi* 容成氏, discusses various Mohist doctrines in language that resembles passages in the *Mozi*. See Chen Jian, “Shangbo jian ‘Rongcheng shi’”; Zhao Ping’an, “Chu zhushu ‘Rongcheng shi’”; and Allan, “Abdication and Utopian Vision.” Whereas both manuscripts provide insights into the original nature of the texts from which the *Mozi* was constructed, neither should be regarded as a fragment of the *Mozi*, i.e., as a part of the text that was lost during its transmission from ancient times to the present.

67. Luo Genze, “*Mozi tanyuan*,” 101.

4. chapters 46 through 50 (the “Mohist *Analects*”) and chapter 39, which appears to bear some relation to them;⁷⁵ and
5. chapters 51 through 71 (the “military chapters,” of which eleven survive).⁷⁶

The present book focuses on the thirty-six chapters that constitute groups 1, 2, and 4—chapters that represent for the most part Mohist social and political philosophy.

We no longer know on what basis Liu Xiang and his colleagues selected documents for inclusion in the *Mozi*. But a survey of the broad range of its present-day contents suggests that they must have regarded the text they created as a compilation or anthology of writings that related not only to Mozi and his first-generation followers, but also to other members of the Mohist intellectual lineage and social movement whose interests and activities had considerably evolved from the moral and political homilies that form the foundation of the core chapters to encompass the highly technical subjects of what are now chapters 40 through 45 and chapters 51 through 71.

IV. Mohism's Fate

1. Mohism in the Han

A common but questionable assumption made with regard to the philosophical schools of the Warring States period is that, with the exception of the Legalists, they were suppressed at the end of the third century B.C.E. as part of a campaign by the First Emperor of the Qin and his prime minister, Li Si, to eliminate groups that might pose a challenge, intellectual or otherwise, to Qin authority. If, as the *Zhuangzi*, *Hanfeizi*, and certain dialogues in the Group 4 chapters suggest, the Mohists had established some sort of base in the northern part of Chu, and if their claims of a private army such as that made in chapter 50 were thought credible, one can imagine that the Qin censors may have specially

include these chapters in their respective translations of the *Mozi*. Harbsmeier, *Language and Logic*, 326–45, devotes a section of his survey to the Mohist logic chapters. Other observations on the use of argumentation in the *Mozi* more generally can be found elsewhere in the volume. For a recent survey of the contents of the logic chapters, see Hansen, “Mohism.”

75. Graham, “*Mo tzu*,” 337, puts chapter 39 in a group of its own.

76. For a study and translation of the military chapters, see Yates, “The City under Siege.” Forke and Johnston also include translations of these chapters in their respective translations of the *Mozi*. See also Needham and Yates, *Military Technology*, 254–485, which contains numerous translations and insightful discussions of the technical vocabulary of the military chapters.

While Mohist logic had a popular following among intellectuals of the time, the fundamental doctrines of the school could still be viewed as problematic. Guo Moruo 郭沫若 (1892–1978), writing in 1943, excoriated Mozi:

Mozi is from beginning to end a religious figure. His thought is utterly reactionary in nature—unscientific, undemocratic, antiprogressive, unnatural, calling for love that is impartial in name but partial in reality, condemning aggression in name but praising it in fact, condemning fatalism in name but adhering to it in reality. I genuinely do not understand how such an advocate of the elite, such a believer in ghosts and God, a religious thinker excessively despotic and excessively conservative, can be regarded as “a representative of the revolution of the workers and peasants!”¹¹⁸

Guo’s essay is both purposefully provocative and a reflection of the fact that, whether one favored Mohist doctrines or not, in the years leading up to the Communist Revolution, they were seriously taken into account when discussing social and political policy.

Post-1949 scholarship on Mohism remained earnestly engaged with issues of textual interpretation as well as the relevance of Mohist doctrine to contemporary society. New works appeared continually, except during the periods of social and political upheaval that generally disrupted scholarly activity. In most of them the *Mozi* was singled out for its materialism and advocacy of communal effort, though one had to be careful to castigate and hang a placard on those parts of the text that displayed superstition and other forms of feudal thought. As China currently forges ahead with an ambitious program of economic development and social change, interest in Mozi and his school has not waned.¹¹⁹ A proper assessment of the value and impact of Mohist thought with regard to contemporary China is, however, best left to those in a good position to provide it.¹²⁰

V. The Philosophy of the Political and Ethical Chapters

The discussion that follows examines the structure and content of the political and ethical chapters of the *Mozi*—identified earlier as Group 1, Group 2, and

118. Guo Moruo, “Mozi de sixiang 墨子的思想,” in Guo’s *Qingtong shidai*; excerpted in Cai Shangsi, *Shijia lun Mo*, 136–52.

119. This is best reflected by the formation in the late 1980s of the Mozi xuehui 墨子學會, or Mozi Studies Association. To date the organization has held seven (triennial and, more recently, biennial) meetings and has published the conference proceedings of all. Active participation in the association by members of the People’s Liberation Army suggests serious interest in Mohist arguments favoring a strong national defense.

120. See, for example, Zhang Yongyi, *Mozi yu Zhongguo wenhua*, 368–80.

The Syncretic Writings

1. Cherishing Gentlemen

Chapter 1 is written in the form of a memorial or lecture, apparently addressed to a ruler who has newly gained control of a state, counseling that the best way to maintain control in such precarious conditions is to be heedful and respectful of the state's *shi* 士, or “gentlemen,” its educated and skilled elite. These individuals, along with the general population, are a resource that, properly used and employed, can help a ruler change defeat and humiliation into conquest and glory (1.2). Sun Yirang notes that the chapter refers to concepts found in the “Exalt the Worthy” triad. The 1.3 description of the *junzi* 君子, or “superior man,” who “makes things difficult for himself but easy for others,” is consistent with the emphasis in those chapters on the need to lead others by the example of one’s own hard work. Examples of similarities between chapter 1 and other *Mozi* passages include the 1.5 reference to “the Way of an altruistic king” and the 16.5 description of an “altruistic lord”; and the 1.3 advice that a ruler surround himself with “subordinates who rebuke him,” which appears connected to the 49.7B definition of a ruler’s loyal minister as one who will “remonstrate with him at just the right moment.” We are probably meant to assume that *Mozi* is the author of this advice, though his name is not mentioned. In any case, his authorship would be a chronological improbability since the chapter mentions the death of Wu Qi—an event *Mozi* did not live to witness—and also alludes to Meng Ben (1.4), a figure who flourished at the very end of the fourth century.

In addition to having Mohist aspects, chapter 1 reflects some ideas not typical of the contents of the *Mozi*. For example, the 1.3 passage about the hard work of the “superior man” presents this figure as an ideal—something typical of Confucian sources but odd in the *Mozi*, where the *junzi* is an object of scorn. Sun Yirang notes such Confucian influence in the chapter and concludes that it was because of its Confucian content that the chapter was placed at the opening of the *Mozi* by an early editor who fixed the present sequence of chapters in the text. It is also possible to view the 1.3 advice that the ruler encourage his

The Ten Doctrines

Exalt the Worthy

The doctrine of “exalting the worthy” complements the doctrine of “exalting conformity.” A ruler should reward with employment and emolument the most virtuous and skillful individuals in his state, and they, in return, should work hard to fulfill their duties and obey to the letter their ruler’s orders and instructions. Though a full implementation of the two doctrines would have a great impact on a state’s governance and hence on its population at large, the two doctrines are primarily concerned with the practices of a state’s ruling elite, and it is to them that these doctrines are addressed. All three chapters of the “Exalting the Worthy” triad survive. An analysis of their contents suggests that chapter 8 was compiled first, followed by chapter 10, and finally by chapter 9. They are accordingly discussed in that order in the following.

A problem presented by all three chapters of the triad is that they fail to provide either a definition of what Mozi and his followers meant by *xian* 賢, “worthiness,” or an explanation of how they thought *xian* could be achieved. In the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.E., and no doubt earlier, worthiness was seen to be closely related to *de* 德, “virtue”: those who genuinely possessed or enacted virtue were deemed worthy or excellent individuals. The Ru school emphasis on the role of education and self-reflection in cultivating virtue is largely missing from the *Mozi*. (Although *de* appears frequently in the *Mozi*, it is not a key term in the philosophy of the text. Its occurs most often in the somewhat archaic anecdotes that are quoted to provide proof and precedents for arguments favored by Mozi and his followers.) The Mohists simply take an individual’s worthiness or lack of it as a given. How it is cultivated and achieved is apparently not of great interest. What does interest them is the challenge of getting rulers to treat the worthy with the reverence and generosity they deserve. Their approach to meeting this challenge also distinguishes them from the Ru, for whom properly appreciating the worthy was also an important concern. In the *Analects* of Confucius, in particular *Lunyu* 1.7, we learn that worthiness, like

Condemn the Ru and the “Mohist *Analects*”

Condemn the Ru

The Mohists, from the inception of their school, were critical of the philosophy of the Ru, the term they used for Confucius and his followers. By the mid Warring States period, roughly between 350 to 270, the Ru and the Mo were the leading schools of thought and philosophical adversaries. Ru criticism of the Mohists is typified by Mengzi, who dismisses Mohist doctrines—especially Impartial Love and Moderate Burials—as bizarre and inhuman.¹ Xunzi follows suit. He refers to Mozi’s emphasis on personal effort as “the way of a menial laborer.”² Commenting on Mozi’s condemnation of musical performance, Xunzi says: “One would have expected that Mozi, who condemns music, would have met with some kind of punishment. But all the enlightened kings had already died, and there was no one to put things aright. Stupid fools study him and thereby endanger their own existence.”³ Certain of the triad chapters—for example, chapters 25 and 32—seem intent on matching the vitriol of the Ru. Among the “Mohist *Analects*,” however, chapter 46, “Gengzhu,” contains a measured response to the sulphuric attacks of Mencius and Xunzi. There we see Mozi, over the course of several conversations with Master Wuma, defending his core doctrines against criticism coolly and without resorting to ad hominem attack. The tone is quite different, however, in chapter 48, “Master Gongmeng,” where the antagonism between Mozi and various Ru adversaries, including Gongmeng, is palpable. This antagonism and criticism of the Confucian way of life are the main features of chapter 39. This is one of many reasons why, in terms of its form and content, the chapter should be grouped with “Master Gongmeng” and other chapters of the Mohist *Analects* rather than with the triad chapters with which it shares very little of significance.

Chapter 39, supposedly the surviving member of a pair of chapters written to

1. *Mengzi* 3A.5 and 3B.9.

2. *Xunzi*, “Wangba 王霸,” 7.243 (Knoblock, *Xunzi*, 2:158).

3. *Xunzi*, “Yuelun 樂論,” 14.463 (Knoblock, *Xunzi*, 3:84).

A. C. Graham's Division of the "Core Chapters"

Angus Graham, in his *Divisions in Early Mohism Reflected in the Core Chapters of Mo-tzu*, proposes dividing twenty of the surviving twenty-three triad chapters of the *Mozi* into three groups. He bases his divisions largely on his analysis of differences in lexicon and the use of grammatical particles. Graham calls the groups the Y, H, and J series. He identifies their authorship in correspondence to the three branches of early Mohism mentioned in the *Zhuangzi* and *Hanfeizi*, and he describes their intended audiences: the Y series represents the teachings of a northern sect directed at "fellow thinkers" who oppose Mohist doctrines; the H series represents a northern sect whose teachings are directed at "princes and men of state"; the J series is associated with "Mohists of the South" and addresses southern rulers and thinkers. Having distinguished these three groups, Graham describes their philosophical differences. He characterizes chapters in the Y series as the most radical expressions of Mohist doctrine, those in the H series as somewhat more accommodating of political realities, and those of the J series as compromises determined by expediency. While the H and J series chapters rely on the authority of antiquity, the Y series chapters do not regard political problems as unchanging; they accordingly recommend the solutions of the sage-kings, not because they are ancient, but because they are wise.

When Graham's arguments are examined closely, it is evident that the divisions he draws are not as clear-cut and consistent as he claims. Especially problematic is his decision to separate chapters 14, 17, and 20 from the other core chapters and thus exclude them from consideration. And there are numerous examples of individual chapters that do not display the characteristics of the series to which Graham assigns them. Nevertheless, readers may find it helpful to consult Graham's scheme in sorting out the textual and philosophical complexities of the triad chapters. Because the original monograph is not widely accessible, the series divisions are reproduced here.

An Excavated Mohist Fragment in the Shanghai Museum

In 1994, with the help of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, the Shanghai Museum bought on the Hong Kong antique market over twelve hundred bamboo strips that had in all likelihood been unearthed from a late Warring States tomb in the vicinity of Jingzhou 景州, in Hubei Province—the same area of the Guodian 郭店 site that has yielded a large number of bamboo strips identified with the ancient state of Chu. The Shanghai Museum strips have also been identified with ancient Chu and have been published in *Shanghai bowuguan cang Zhanguo Chu zhushu* 上海博物館藏戰國楚竹書, edited by Ma Chengyuan 馬承源. Volume 5 contains photographs of five bamboo strips of a fragmentary manuscript whose contents bear a resemblance to the Mohist doctrine concerning ghosts and spirits. Volume editors have assigned it the title “Guishen zhi ming 鬼神之明.” The transcription and accompanying notes are the work of Cao Jinyan 曹錦炎, who has published a separate study of the fragment, “Shanghai bowuguan cang Chu zhushu Mozi yiwen 上海博物館藏楚竹書《墨子》佚文” in the journal *Wenwu* 文物 in 2006. (Perkins, “Moist Criticism,” 431, also discusses the fragment.) Because of damage to the strips, an indeterminate amount of the first part of the text is missing; what survives appears reasonably complete. The following is Cao’s transcribed and edited version of the fragment (with minor changes in transcription by the present author marked with an asterisk) and a translation into English.

今夫鬼神有所明有所不明，則以其賞善罰暴也。昔者堯舜禹湯，仁義聖智，天下灑之。此以貴為天子，富有天下，長年有譽*，後世遂之。則鬼神之賞，此明矣。及桀紂*幽厲，焚聖人，殺訐者，賊百姓，亂邦家。此以桀折於鬲山，而紂*首於岐社，身不沒為天下笑。則鬼[神之罰，此明]矣。及伍子胥者，天下之聖人也，

Master Yi *versus* Master Meng

Some of Mozi's second- and third-generation followers were as active as he and his first-generation disciples apparently had been in attempting to spread the word of his teachings and convince opponents of their rightness and efficacy. An example is Yi Zhi 夷之, who sometime toward the end of the fourth century B.C.E. sought an audience with the probably more senior and better established Mengzi. Mengzi politely but firmly turned Yi Zhi away initially, but Yi Zhi persisted and, after much self-righteous harrumphing by Mengzi about his duty to set Yi Zhi straight, an argument took place on another day through an intermediary, Xu Bi 徐辟. That argument constitutes *Mengzi* 3A5, a passage that thus sheds light on how Mohist doctrine—during what Watanabe has identified as the middle period in the development of pre-Qin Mohist thought—was perceived and responded to by its Ru adversaries.¹

Mengzi begins by aggressively accusing Yi Zhi of having provided his parents with a lavish burial, thus treating them in a fashion that Yi Zhi should demean, since Mohists emphasize frugal burials. Mengzi is of course being ironic.² But at the heart of his criticism is not the petty accusation that Yi Zhi has provided his parents with a lavish burial contrary to Mohist practices on moderation but the serious charge that he has treated his parents with favoritism and partiality contrary to the Mohist practices of altruism and treating others impartially. Thus whereas Mohist teachings on the need for frugality in burials had obviously registered with Mengzi, his main philosophical target in 3A5, as elsewhere in the *Mengzi* where he addresses Mohist thought, is the doctrine of *jian'ai*, “impartial love.”³

Yi Zhi replies, via Xu Bi, that, “According to the Way of the Ru, ‘the men

1. *Mengzi zhushu*, 5B.101–2.

2. Robins, “The Moists,” 395, appears to have missed the ironic nature of Mengzi's comment and argues that Mengzi is literally accusing Yi Zhi of being unfilial to his parents.

3. See *Mengzi* 3B9 and 7A26; cf. also the Introduction herein 29.

Additional Notes

Chapter 1

1. According to Sun Yirang, *Mozi xiangyu*, 1, the order of quotations from the *Mozi* in the *Yilin* 意林 of Ma Zong 馬總 (d. 823) confirms that “Qinshi” appeared as the first chapter in the editions of the *Mozi* circulating in Tang and pre-Tang times. We can, in fact, trace the evidence for the position of the chapter back to the late fifth and early sixth centuries, since we know, from its two Tang dynasty prefaces, that the *Yilin* was a Tang abridgment of the *Zichao* 子抄 compiled by Yu Zhongrong 庾仲容 (476–549).

1.1

2. *Shi*, translated here and occasionally elsewhere in the text as “gentlemen,” has in fact a broad range of meanings that, though related, cannot be captured adequately by a single English word. In the present context, as well as in 8.6 and 8.7, it refers to those who are capable, similar to (and in the *Mozi* sometimes linked with) the *xian* 賢—individuals deemed “worthy” because of their capability and steadfastness. Elsewhere *shi* refers to those expected to study and cultivate learning; see, for example, 5.2B. Whether known for their learning or specialized skills, the “gentlemen” were most likely drawn from the lower ranks of the aristocracy; that is, they were born into the social strata above the common people but beneath the families that possessed the hereditary right to rule and hold office. This sense of *shi* is illustrated in 26.3. But this same passage and another at 8.6 demonstrate that *shi* referred, not only to the social status of the gentlemen, but also to their relative positions in government as the officials most directly responsible for governing the common people. See also Bodde, “The State and Empire of Ch’in,” 28: “Most of the upstarts probably came from that lower fringe of the aristocracy known as gentlemen (*shi*)—men of good birth but without titles of nobility, who served as warriors, officials, and supervisors in the state governments and noble households, or who lived on the land which in some cases they may even have cultivated themselves.” As Bodde notes, warriors, soldiers, or “knights” were also referred

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