

Manifest Quasi-Universals and Embedding Conceptual Clusters: The Case of *Qíng* 情

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Abstract

We start this article with a discussion of the problematics involved in translating into modern English a (modern) Chinese text concerning a classical Chinese notion, namely *qíng* 情. Then, we suggest that it is *necessary* to distinguish between two levels on which a language is used. The first is the manifest level, where one finds family resemblance between, say, Chinese *nù* 怒 and English “anger”. The second is the generic level, where one finds *qíng* in classical Chinese, *qínggǎn* in modern Chinese, and emotion(s) in English. We argue that the meanings of words at the generic level can only be accessed via the manifest level. It is misleading to directly identify and compare notions at the generic level (in this case, emotion(s) in English and *qíng* in Chinese). We call the connections at the manifest level “quasi-universals”, and we refer to the notions at the generic level as “embedding conceptual clusters”.

Keywords: translation, Chinese, *qíng*, quasi-universals, embedding conceptual clusters

Manifestne kvaziuniverzalije in vdelava konceptualnih skupkov: primer *qíng* 情

Izvleček

Članek začneva z razpravo o problematiki, ki je povezana s prevajanjem (sodobnega) kitajskega besedila v sodobno angleščino, in sicer na primeru klasičnega kitajskega pojma *qíng* 情. Nato predlagava razlikovanje med dvema ravnema, na katerih uporabljamo jezik. Prva je manifestna raven, kjer najdemo družinsko podobnost med, recimo, kitajskim *nù* 怒 in angleško besedo »jeza«. Druga je generična raven, kjer najdemo *qíng* v klasični kitajščini, *qínggǎn* v sodobni kitajščini in čustvo(a) v angleščini. Trdimo, da je do pomenov besed na generični ravni mogoče dostopati samo prek manifestne ravni. Zavajajoče je neposredno identificirati in primerjati pojme na splošni ravni (v tem primeru čustva v angleščini in *qíng* v kitajščini). Povezave na manifestni ravni imenujemo »kvaziuniverzalije«, pojme na generični ravni pa »vgrajevanje konceptualnih skupkov«.

Ključne besede: prevod, kitajščina, *qíng*, kvaziuniverzalije, vdelava konceptualnih skupkov

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Introduction

This article is motivated by observations such as the following. The entries on transculturalism and intercultural philosophy in *Wikipedia* do not contain the word translation or one of its congeners.¹ In a recent publication in this journal, subtitled “The Post-Comparative Turn and Transculturalism”, we find the remark that translation studies might reveal the philosophical significance and uniqueness of non-Western texts or utterances (Silius 2020, 264). But this kind of statement concerning translation (or the absence thereof) on behalf of some post-comparative approach (in philosophy or elsewhere) overlooks the fact that meaning and translation are dependent on the dominant language being used. Whether it is traditional comparative (or area) philosophy or some post-comparative turn, it is almost always assumed that translation (if mentioned at all) may be difficult, but not problematic in any fundamental sense. That is to say, the fact that different traditions (or groups of people) employ different (and dynamic) languages is not taken seriously.

This is the background motivating the work on this article. We start with discussing a number of problems encountered when translating into modern English a (modern) Chinese text, dealing with the classical Chinese notion of *qing* 情. By using as a foil the published translation (in English) of an article originally written in modern Chinese by Tang Yijie 湯一介,² we make some remarks concerning how to present some subject matter treated in a particular language in another language. Obviously, we assume that any kind of comparative study—postcomparative, transcultural or otherwise—must provide justification for the method used to say something in one language about what has already been said in another language. In this article we focus on Chinese (classical and modern) and English, but the principles of interpretation we propose apply to any other communicative interaction between different languages *cum* lifeworlds.³

In particular, we argue that it is *necessary* to distinguish not only more than one language (for example, classical Chinese, modern Chinese, and modern English),

1 In Wikipedia the entry “comparative philosophy” redirects to “intercultural philosophy”.

2 The translation of Tang’s paper was first published in *Philosophy East and West* in 2003 and as part of a book in 2015. As translators of the text are given Brian Bruya and Haiming Wen. No information is given on a possible publication of an earlier Chinese text on which this translation was based, but we identified it as Tang (2001). The article in *Philosophy East and West* (Tang 2003) was reprinted without changes in Tang (2015). As our subject is “problems of translation” we will not consider the original Chinese version of the text (Tang 2001) except for saying that it seems easier to follow than the English translation.

3 In order not to make things overly complicated, in this article we will not consider other versions of the Chinese or English language(s)/dialects/idiolects.

but also two levels on which these languages are used. First, the manifest level, where one finds “family resemblance” (henceforth: FR) between, say, classical or modern Chinese *nù* 怒 on the one hand and English “anger” on the other. Second, the generic level, where one finds *qíng* 情 in classical Chinese, *qínggǎn* 情感 in modern Chinese, and “emotions(s)” in English.⁴ We argue that in explaining, for example, the classical Chinese word *qíng*, there is no need to use the English word(s) emotion(s/al). With rare exceptions, words at the generic level should not (and cannot) be translated and must be accessed via connections between the manifest levels of the two (or more) traditions. It is more efficient and less imperialistic to establish connections between concrete manifestations that go under the generic label of *qíng* in classical Chinese (for example, a conceptual cluster embedding classical uses of *nù*) and emotions in English (in this case a conceptual cluster embedding “anger”). We have called these connections at the manifest level “quasi-universals” (henceforth: QUs) in earlier publications (van Brakel and Ma 2015). They can be justified in terms of the empirical fact (as well as transcendental precondition) of mutually recognizable human practices (Ma and van Brakel 2016b; 2018).⁵

Different (Meta-)languages

Tang’s text focuses on the pre-Qin Ruist’s view that “*xíng* [性] is quiescent, *qíng* [情] is active”—which, the author says, is an idea that is without a doubt of more profound theoretical value than “*xíng* is good, *qíng* is bad” [65].⁶ Tang’s text also contains an explanation of the passage “*Dao* begins in *qíng*, and *qíng* arises from *xíng*” in the recently excavated text *Xíng zì mìng chū* (性自命出, henceforth: XZMC) as well as a discussion of classical *qíng* and desire (*yù* 欲). However, our interest in the main content of this text is limited. We try to find out how the words emotion(s), *qíng*, and congeners are used in the translated text.

4 There is no simple translation of *qíng* 情. In this article we will not address the very difficult question of whether *qíng* should be taken as a homonym or as a hybrid term. In terms of the “easy” homonym discourse favoured by all dictionaries we know of, we limit our discussion to one of the two meanings of *qíng*, not considering the fact that in many Warring States sources the translation of *qíng* should be something like circumstances, situation, fact, condition. See, for example, authoritative translations of *qíng* for the *Analects*, the *Zhuangzi*, the *Sunzi*, the *Mozi*, the *Shangjunshu*, the *Zuozhuan* and other sources.

5 For a summary of our approach, see Ma and van Brakel (2022).

6 Numbers in square brackets refer to page numbers in Tang (2015). Indented lines with number in square brackets on the right-hand side are citations from Tang (2015) as well. When citing from Tang’s article and for Chinese names we do not give *pinyin* tone marks, but we do when the *pinyin* word is part of our own text.

In the first (translators') note of the article, we are told that "the terms *qing* and *xing* will remain untranslated throughout this article" [55]. To leave *qing* untranslated can only mean that we must assume that emotion (or *qínggǎn* in modern Chinese) and (classical) *qíng* do not have the same meaning. Given the announcement that *qíng* will not be translated, it may come as a surprise that the text contains not only almost 200 occurrences of the word *qíng*; but also twenty-four times the plural "emotions", eleven times the singular "emotion", nine times "*qinggan* (情感)", two times "*ganqing* (感情)", two times "emotional" and one time "emotionlessness."

We will distinguish between the following (different) languages:⁷

- L1. classical Chinese, which language contains the word and/or character *qíng* 情.
- L2. modern Chinese, which contains, *inter alia*, the words *gǎnqíng* and *qínggǎn*, but not *qíng* on its own.
- L3. the metalanguage at work in the published English translation of Tang's article. This language contains a number of Chinese words.
- L4. our metametalanguage, in which we try to keep a strict distinction between L1, L2, and L3.

We will assume that *xìng* (also not translated in the article) may refer to either classical or modern Chinese. Consider examples from modern and classical discourse respectively:⁸

Human emotion arises from one's inner *xìng*. [59]

Qing arises from *xìng* 情生於性. [55, 56, 59, 65]

We will assume that *xìng* is one and the same word in both classical and modern Chinese.

Now first consider the title of the English translation: "Emotion in Pre-Qin Ruist Moral Theory: An Explanation of 'Dao Begins in *Qing*'." What would have been the word corresponding to "emotion" in Tang's Chinese original of this text? Should it be *qíng* or *gǎnqíng* 感情 (or *qínggǎn* 情感)? It is not obvious how to answer this question. First of all, it cannot be *qíng*, because that word would not have been translated. Secondly, it cannot be *gǎnqíng* or *qínggǎn* either, because these are

7 In a metalanguage one talks about another language. For example, in L3 one talks about L1; in L4 we talk about L1, L2, and L3.

8 We assume that all uses of *xìng* assume that *xìng* means "inner *xìng*".

words in modern Chinese, whereas the title clearly points to classical Chinese as the subject matter. We will assume that Tang’s article is about *qíng*, a concept in classical Chinese, not about emotion (*gǎnqíng*).⁹

Family-Resemblance-Concepts and Quasi-Universals

As we have argued in earlier publications, the necessary condition of interpretation that has most impact on the practice of interpretation is family resemblance. It consists of three interrelated parts:¹⁰

- The investigator *must* assume that *all* concepts in *whatever* tradition are FR-concepts. Concepts can be *stipulated* to be exact and precise, but the stipulation itself involves FR-concepts.¹¹
- The investigator *must* assume mutually recognizable human practices (henceforth: MRHPs). Similarities and differences are grounded in FRs of forms of life. Considering a limited number of traditions at a time will always show some MRHPs.
- Extending FR-concepts across traditions forms the basis of quasi-universals (QUs). The latter are working hypotheses that connect conceptual schemes from a limited number of traditions. Assuming the availability across traditions of QUs is a *necessary* condition for the practice of interpretation.¹²

The phrase “family resemblance” and the implicit reference to Wittgenstein is omnipresent throughout the humanities and also in comparative philosophy.¹³ Baker and Hacker (2009, 214) suggest that Wittgenstein’s aim was only to provide a critique of essentialism of meanings—not to offer “family resemblance” as

9 Actually, the title of the original Chinese text (Tang 2001) is rather different from the translation. This is the first of many examples where the translation causes more trouble for understanding than the original.

10 Large parts of this section are borrowed from Ma and van Brakel (2022, 37–39). For an overview of the necessary conditions for interpretation, see Ma and van Brakel (2016b).

11 Limiting “meaning” to the extension of a word-meaning, one might argue that number words are universals (not FR-concepts).

12 For a detailed discussion of the variety of options for the extension of FR-concepts see van Brakel and Ma (2015, 483–94). Concepts of the other tradition can also be learnt in various ways from scratch, but this is only possible against the background of a host of extended FR-concepts.

13 See Ma and van Brakel (2016a, ch. 4; 2016c). We use the phrase “family resemblance” as a technical term (defined by us). It does not have the colloquial meaning of the resemblance of members of the same family.

an alternative. However, we do consider FR across the board a (necessary) alternative. Moreover, Wittgenstein's account of FR is restricted to a single language or form of life. We consider translation (interaction between different forms of life).

An FR-concept has no fixed boundaries, and this is already implicit in the notion of family resemblance. Moreover, our notion of FR-concept has no centre of meaning (essence or prototype) either. Centre and border are interdependent. Because FR-concepts have no essences (no "cores") and no strict borders, they can be extended across traditions, which makes it possible to construct quasi-universals. For example, both *nù* and anger are FR-concepts. There are many differences between *nù* and anger, but FR (anger) can be extended to include many features of *nù*, and FR (*nù*) can be extended to include many features of anger.

A quasi-universal, for example "*nù*//anger", has two sides, in (classical) Chinese and English respectively.¹⁴ A Chinese concept shows similarities to a European concept as judged from the background of European conceptual schemes; and a European concept shows similarities to a Chinese concept as judged from the background of Chinese conceptual schemes. The similarities as seen from the Chinese and European side respectively are not the same, although there can be family resemblances.

Family resemblance between the MRHPs of a small number of traditions suffices to construct QUs that connect FR-concepts in these traditions. Very different practices can be recognized as human practices because they show some similarity to practices the interpreter is familiar with. No attempt is made to look for "universally" recognizable human practices.

Extension of *Qíng*: Five, Six, and Seven *Qíng*

Is the translation of Tang's article perhaps, *sotto voce*, presupposing that the meaning of *qíng* and emotion is the same (and similarly for *nù* and anger, and so on)? This seems to be confirmed by the following citation, which we will quote in full (including all characters, *pinyin*, and English emotion words):

"*Qíng*" typically refers to the "seven *qíng*" (delight, anger, grief, fear, love, dislike, desire [*xi, nu, ai, ju, ai, wu, yu* 喜怒哀懼愛惡欲]), the "six *qíng*" (delight, anger, grief, enjoyment [*le* 乐{樂}], fondness [*hao* 好], dislike) or the "five *qíng*" (delight, anger, grief, enjoyment, resentment [*yuan* 怨]), ... [56–57]

14 In our text the symbol // refers to the relation in QUs between manifest concepts in two (very) different languages.

By specifying the correspondence of Chinese character, *pinyin* (without tone mark), and English emotion word, the author or translators, perhaps unintentionally, may suggest there is a one-to-one correspondence between Chinese characters, their *pinyin* renderings and specific English words.¹⁵

Note by the way that the way of writing in the citation seems to assume a standardized translation of the Chinese characters. For example, it is in fact *stipulated* that *xǐ* 喜 means delight, *nù* 怒 means anger, and so on. However, there is a range of alternative translations of these characters in the secondary literature. For example, not only *xǐ* but also *lè* is sometimes translated as delight and *xǐ* is sometimes translated as joy.¹⁶ If we “correct” things by writing instead of delight, say, “whatever *xǐ* means”, we are back at assuming one-to-one correspondence between elements of *qíng* and emotion, respectively.

The most often cited example of “six *qíng*” in classical sources is 好惡喜怒哀樂 (*hào wù xǐ nù āi lè*), mentioned in the *Zuozhuan*, the *Lunheng*, the *Guanzi* and the *Xunzi*.¹⁷ This is the same list as the one Tang mentions, except for the sequence of the characters. Tang also notes that “Wang Chong spoke about the ‘six *qíng*’ as follows: ‘Of *qíng*, there are fondness, dislike, delight, anger, grief, and enjoyment,’ not listing desire as one of the *qíng*” [62]. This is again the same list. Finally, Tang notes that the “Xing *qíng*” chapter of the Han dynasty *Baibu Tongyi* 白虎通義 also mentions the “six *qíng*” [62n16]. The latter is the only list of six *qíng* we know of which contains *ài* 愛//love.¹⁸ 喜怒哀樂愛惡 [*xǐ nù āi lè ài wù*].¹⁹

15 We are only saying that the text just cited *suggests* a one-to-one correspondence of “delight”, “*xǐ*”, and “喜”, and so on. Formally, the simple fact that both the words *qíng* and emotion are used in the translated text (hence, presumably, not having the same meaning) suggests that no one-to-one correspondence is presupposed. However, as subsequent sections of our text show, the use of both *qíng* and emotion in the translated text is not consistent. Anyway, we assume that writing things like “resentment [*yuàn* 怨]” seems to presuppose one-to-one correspondence.

16 Furthermore, using the *pinyin* *ai* is ambiguous. It can mean, in the present context, something like love (*ài* 愛) or something like grieve (*āi* 哀). In the translated text, *pinyin* is sometimes given without a character provided (as in the case of *bēi* 悲). Remember that the use of *pinyin* does not suffice to uniquely identify text. For example, the text under consideration contains several different characters for *wu*: *wù* 物, *wú* 無 [无], and *wù* 惡.

17 Translated works are listed in the list of references under the name of the translator. Classical texts are cited following the version in the Chinese text project (CTP: <https://ctext.org/>). Reference is made to chapter numbers and section numbers according to CTP.

18 As far as we know *ài*//love occurs in three lists of *qíng*—in the *Liji* 禮記, the *Baibutong* 白虎通 and the *Xunzi* 荀子. The latter is not mentioned in Tang’s paper.

19 There are other lists of *qíng*, not mentioned by the author. For example: 善惡喜怒哀樂 (*shàn è xǐ nù āi lè*); in the *Qian Han Ji* 前漢紀.

The character or word for love, *ài* 愛, also occurs in a famous list of seven *qing*,²⁰ which can be found in the *Liji* and in the following citations:²¹

何謂人情？喜怒哀懼愛惡欲七者，弗學而能。 [*Liji*, chapter “Li Yun”]

What is human *qing*? Delight, anger, grief, fear, love, dislike, desire. These seven are innate abilities. [61, citing the *Liji*]²²

What are the feelings of men? They are joy, anger, sadness, fear, love, disliking, and liking. These seven feelings belong to men without their learning them. (Transl. Legge 1885 [in CTP])

In the *Xunzi* there is also a list of seven *qing*:

喜、怒、哀、樂、愛、惡、欲，以心異。 [*Xunzi*, 22.2]

Happiness, anger, sorrow, joy, love, hate, and desire are differentiated by the heart. (Transl. Hutton 2014, 238)

However, it did not receive much attention, being overshadowed by the list of seven in the *Liji*.

Lists of eight *qing* occur as well, but they are better interpreted as lists of four binomes. For example:

其用於人理也，事親則慈孝，事君則忠貞，飲酒則歡樂，處喪則悲哀。 [*Zhuangzi* 莊子, 31.2]

Truth is to be prized! It may be applied to human relationships in the following ways. In the service of parents, it is love≈filial piety [*cíxiào*]; in the service of the ruler, it is loyalty≈integrity [*zhōngzhēn*]; in festive wine drinking, it is merriment≈joy [*huānlè*]; in periods of mourning, it is sadness≈grief [*bēiāi*]. (Transl. Watson 1968, 276)

Note that the *qing*-binomes in this citation are near-synonyms, not contrasts such as like\dislike (*hàowù*) or sad\happy (*āilè*).²³ This will be called hendiadys, which is more common in (classical) Chinese than in European languages.

20 This list of “seven *qing*” is also included in the citation at the beginning of this section without giving a reference.

21 Note that Legge twice inserts “feelings” in his translation. In the translation of Tang’s article, *qing* is left untranslated when citing the list of *qing* from the *Liji*.

22 Using the phrase “innate abilities” in the translation might be disputable.

23 To indicate contrast between the two concepts we use the symbol \ and to indicate near-synonyms or hendiadys, we use the symbol ≈.

Tang mentions a list of five *qíng*, but this list does not occur in the extensive collection of texts in the Chinese Text Project available on the internet (*ctext.org*). It is mentioned in Lynn (1994, 13), but it is rare when compared with lists of six or seven.

In Tang's article there seems to be some emphasis on six *qíng*. The seven *qíng* in the *Liji* are mentioned only once. That the list of seven often occurs in a number of post-Han sources is not mentioned. Xunzi (with six *qíng*) is mentioned twice, Wang Chong and the *Baihutong* are both mentioned, also with lists of six. On the other hand, the author writes (as many other commentators do): "since ancient times, people have spoken of the 'seven *qing* and six desires'".²⁴ This seems to support highlighting seven *qíng*.

We suggest that there is consensus in the literature that "seven *qíng*" was the most influential list, perhaps adding Mengzi's four sprouts, but not "five *qíng*" or "six *qing*". Chen Lai (2004, 93) wrote:²⁵

Chinese philosophy fundamentally considers the emotions to be happiness, anger, sorrow, fear, love, hate, and desire. Therefore, an important meaning of "emotion" is human emotional activity, considering the seven emotions to be the concrete content. (Transl. R. W. Forster)

Zhang Dainian (2002, 383) remarks: "Tradition provides two lists of emotions: one with seven members and another, found in the Mencius and promulgated by Zhu Xi with four." This is correct, but it is rarely emphasized that a list of "four emotions" can mean two different things. Either it might refer to the often-mentioned four-character list of *xǐ, nù, āi, lè* 喜怒哀樂 or it could refer to Mengzi's conceptually rather different list of *cèyǐn* 惻隱, *xiūwù* 羞惡, *círàng* 辭讓, and *shìfēi* 是非.²⁶ Mengzi did not refer to his four sprouts as *xìng* or *qíng*, but Zhu Xi did in his commentary on the four books (of which the *Mengzi* was one):

惻隱、羞惡、辭讓、是非，情也。仁、義、禮、智，性也。(Zhu Xi 2011, 221)²⁷

24 Perhaps this saying derives from traditional Chinese medicine.

25 The name of the translator is added at the end of Chen Lai's text.

26 Chen Lai (2004, 94) suggests that the four sprouts are the manifestations of *lǐ* 理—the "seven emotions" the manifestations of *qì* 氣. Other commentators have suggested that Mengzi's four sprouts underlie moral emotions, whereas the list of seven would be non-moral emotions.

27 There are numerous alternative translations of the four sprouts [*duān* 端] and similarly for the four corresponding principles. There is no consensus as to what is *qíng* and what is *xìng*. Soon after Mengzi (well before Zhu Xi), the list of four *xìng* was extended to five *xìng*, with *xìn* 信 being added (Yang Xiong 揚雄 53 BCE–18 CE; Ban Gu 班固 32–92 CE).

The seeds of compassion, disdain, respect and (dis)approving [*cèyīn* 惻隱, *xiūwù* 羞惡, *círàng* 辭讓, *shìfēi* 是非] are *qíng*. The principles of benevolence, righteousness, ritual propriety, and wisdom are *xìng*. (Our translation)

Manifest and Generic Levels of Description

A second major assumption of our proposed approach to (post-) comparative philosophy is that we draw a crucial distinction between manifest QUs on the one hand (for example, {*nù*/anger}) and categorial or generic concepts on the other hand, for example, *qíng*. That is to say, we emphasize that the meaning of *qíng* can be addressed at two levels in Chinese: the embedment of *qíng* among *qì* 氣 (“energy field”), *xìng* 性 (“nature”), *dé* 德 (“virtue”), *shìfēi* 是非 (“right/wrong and or true/false”), and so on, its connotation on the one hand and, on the other hand, its extension (lists of specific *qíng* of which examples were given in the previous section). No connection should be imposed on *qíng* and emotion. The connection between the Chinese and English discourse is made via observed family resemblances at the manifest levels of concrete elements of *qíng* and emotions, respectively. That is to say, following Wittgenstein (2009, §66), we distinguish between FR-concepts fitting “in the small” and fitting “in the large”. Similarities in the small refer to manifest similarities that can be referred to with reference to real or constructed (imagined) MRHPs. Similarities in the large refer to similar ways of fitting generic concepts in the relevant embedding forms of life. Usually generic concepts cannot be easily connected across traditions, and often are best left untranslated.

“Categorial” or “generic” may also be called “overarching”, or, in some contexts “embedding”. Examples of categorial or embedding concepts in English are “emotion” or “virtue”. A straightforward explanation could also be put in terms of the qualifiers manifest and embedded. For the distinction small\large (manifest\embedded), one can also draw an analogy with the philosophy of science: the distinction of observation and theoretical language. Observation language is often assumed to be universal. Theoretical language is different in different paradigms or traditions.

When we compare the Chinese conceptual cluster of *nù* and the Western range of “anger” we can see that further sophistication of the functioning of manifest QUs illustrate their eventual dependence on embedding generic concepts. We consider that the connection of classic *qíng* and modern emotion (or *gǎnqíng*) can be made via the level of specific *qíng* and specific emotions. The meanings of one pair (say *nù* and anger) do not coincide, but in some cases we can find support

for discerning the family resemblance of manifest concepts across traditions, for example QU {*nù*//anger}.

There are no fixed rules to separate manifest and generic concepts. It is meant to be a helpful tool, which has to be adjusted for each particular investigation. Special discussion is due for {*yù* 欲//desire} and a few others, because they do not easily fit into either the manifest or the embedding generic level. That is to say, *yù* can be assumed either to be one of the *qíng*, or it can be regarded as an alternative expression for *qíng* (or even as a synonym of *qíng*).²⁸ Different language pairs usually allow the construction of different QUs.²⁹

As interpretation of a particular tradition becomes more sophisticated, it may transpire that most (or all) of everyday language using only manifest concepts is “tainted” by the holism within ordinary language and the holism between ordinary and sophisticated language. For example, the apparently simple QU {*lè* 樂//happiness} will break down if the background of interpretations of *qíng* and of binomes containing *lè* are considered.³⁰

Avoid Using the Root “Emotion”

The Word “Emotional” is not Needed

Consider the word emotional, which occurs two times in the translation of Tang’s text, claiming that the XZMC is cited:³¹

28 The word “synonym” hides a number of differences between English and (classical) Chinese. The two characters, *yù* and *qíng*, may be considered a case of hendiadys: the use of two near-synonyms for stylistic reasons, although one character would suffice to convey the intended “literal” meaning (Rouzer 2007, item 65). For example, in a passage in *Zhuangzi* 31.5, Legge translated *bēi āi* 悲哀 as sadness and sorrow; the word “sorrow” would suffice in English (as in Legge’s translation of the next clause). He could also have translated *bēi āi* as grief and pity or worry and anxious (instead of sadness and sorrow). There is interdependence of meaning between *bēi* and *āi*. The choice of particular English word(s) for the translation is rather arbitrary; perhaps guided by the particular context of use of *bēi āi* (which concerns the mourning rites).

29 Consider English “games”, German *Spiele*, and modern Chinese *yóuxì* 遊戲. Games//*yóuxì*, *Spiele*//*yóuxì*, and games//*Spiele* are three different quasi-universals.

30 Background of *lè* 樂 includes: binomes such as *āilè* 哀樂, *hàolè* 好樂, *bēilè* 悲樂, *yōulè* 優樂, *xilè* 喜樂; *lè*’s relation to music (*yuè* 樂); *lè*’s distinction from *xì* 喜 and other characters that are located in the (English) semantic field of “joy”; parallel constructions of the *qíng* and the four seasons; *lè*’s relation to *wúwéi* 無為 (or *wúqíng* 無情) and serenity (*tián* 恬); the distinction of *rénlè* 人樂, *tiānlè* 天樂, and *zhìlè* 至樂, and so on.

31 The character for *bēi* is not given in the text; we will assume it is 悲. We assume that on the line for [59] “*wù*” is a mistake and it should be “*xì*” (although it is true that the *qì* of *wù* is also *xìng*, assuming *wù* stands for 惡).

Emotional (*wu, nu, ai, bei*) *qi* is due to *xing*. [59]

Emotional (*xi, yue, nu, ai, bei*) *qi* is due to *xing*. [60]

For comparative purposes we add a third version, also a citation from the translation of Tang's article:

The *Xingzi mingchu* says: “the *qi* 气 {氣} of delight, anger, grief, and sadness is due to *xing*.” [57]

We think the third version is the (approximately) correct translation. The original text in the XZMC is, presumably,³²

喜、怒、哀、悲之氣，性也。 [XZMC, slip 2]

The Chinese text brings out a serious issue. Why is the word “emotional” added in the English translation on pages 59 and 60? Compare some other translations in English (see below). Without exception, in these alternative renderings something is said about *xi*, *nù*, etc, not about emotions (or *qíng*, for that matter).

The citation from page 60 presents the same phrase as in the previous line ([59]), but now not only with *xi* replacing *wu*, but also with *yue* being added; hence a list of five *qíng*.³³ We have no idea where this *yue* comes from, as there is no reference to a source. The author is citing XZMC. Therefore, we think it is plausible that “(*xi, yue, nu, ai, bei*)” is a mistake and the reference, in all three cases, is to the passage on slip 2 of the XZMC text just cited.³⁴

It is of some interest to give a few alternative translations of the Chinese text on slip 2 of the XZMC because it shows that one and the same Chinese text may lead to seven different translations, as one can see below. Note that the word “emotional” isn't used even once by any of the translators.³⁵

32 For the text of XZMC, we follow the version and its English translation in Middendorf (2008). As is well known, any “original” Chinese text of this period is already an interpretation. (The excavated text is damaged, etc.)

33 It is the only occurrence of *yue* in the text; the character referred to might have been 悅 (although this is not relevant if it is a mistake).

34 Other issues may be raised. For example, one might wonder what the difference is between *āi* 哀 and *bēi* 悲—both might be translated as *either* grief *or* sadness (*āibēi* 哀悲 is a case of hendiadys or near-synonyms).

35 Notice the variety of translations of *qi*, *xing*, *xi*, *nù*, *āi*, *bēi*.

喜、怒、哀、悲之氣，性也。及其見於外，則物取之。[XZMC, slip 2]

Andreini (2006, 154): Natural dispositions are made up of the vital breaths of pleasure, anger, grief and sadness. Having reached the moment when it (“*xing*” or “pleasure, anger, grief and sadness”) become externally visible, it means that things have taken hold of it (or them).

Chan (2009, 365): The *qi* of happiness, anger, sadness, and grief is (called) none other than nature. When it (that is, the *qi*) appears on the outside, it is because (external) things have laid hold of it.

Cook (2012, 1058): The vital energies of joy, anger, grief, and sorrow are [human] nature; once they manifest externally, things take hold of them.

Goldin (2000, 119): The *qi* of happiness, anger, grief, and sorrow is the *xing*. Once it is apparent externally, objects take hold of it.

Middendorf (2008, 152): The energetic [constellations] of delight, grief and sadness are [part of human] nature. When it comes to their external manifestation, then it is because things (took hold of) evoked them.

Perkins (2009, 119): The *qi* of pleasure, anger, grief, and sorrow is *xing*. Their appearing on the outside is because things stimulate them.

Virág (2014, 214): The *qi* of joy and anger, sorrow and sadness (*xi nu ai bei zhi qi* 喜怒哀悲之氣) are the realm of the inborn nature. As for their becoming manifest outside, it is due to things grabbing hold of them (*wu qu zhi ye* 物取之也).

There is no need to add the word “emotional” in the translation, and doing so may consider as an example of transcendental pretense.³⁶

No Need for the Word “Emotions”

In the translation of Tang’s article, the plural “emotions” is often specified with a list of particular *qing* added in brackets, for example:

The *qing* of emotions (*xi nu, ai, le* 喜怒哀乐) emerges out of human *xing*. [56]

... and then the emotions (*xi, nu, ai, le*) are manifested externally ... [64]

36 See Ma and van Brakel (2016a, 215–18) for this expression.

Such an addition in brackets also occurs in citations incorporated in Tang's article. For example,

"Fondness, dislike, delight, anger, grief, and enjoyment" refer to the emotions (*qinggan*) that naturally issue from within the person. [57, citing Xunzi's list of six *qing*]

He Yan [何晏] believed that sages do not have emotions (*xi, nu, ai, le*), and he discussed it with great precision [64, citing He Shao {何邵}]

Qing is the category of the emotions (*xi, nu, ai, wu*); *qing* as such is human desire. [63, citing the *Da Dai Liji* 大戴禮記]³⁷

We wonder again why the word "emotions" is needed. The connection between modern English and classical Chinese can be made via QUs at the manifest level of MRHPs; not in saying something about *qing* or emotion(s).

There are a few occurrences of "emotions" without a specification in brackets. We will assume that the meaning is still the same: "emotions" (plural) refers to an indefinite list of specific *qing*. That is to say, we assume (the author must assume) that for the extension of classic *qing* we can say that *qing* includes (in its extension),³⁸ *xi* 喜, *nu* 怒, *le* 樂, *ai* 愛, *si* 思, *kong* 恐, *wu* 惡, *yuàn* 怨, *yōu* 憂, *huàn* 患, *fèn* 憤, *fèn* 忿, *bēi* 悲, ... which, via the respective quasi-universals, is also, at least partly, a list of specific emotions. That is to say, we assume that there is an undetermined list of *qing*, which leaves open the possibility that a particular case of *qing* is not recognizable as an emotion word in English.³⁹ The choice or construction of QUs is of a pragmatic nature depending on the particular investigation and specific decisions have to be made concerning the separation (or overlap) of QUs (hermeneutic relativity).⁴⁰

No Need for the Word "Emotion(s)"

There are in total eight occurrences of *qinggan* appearing in brackets after "emotion(s)". We will assume that these cases should be taken as statements in modern

37 It is not clear how to understand *wu*. It could be *wù* 惡 ("dislike" or "hatred"); it could also be a mistake and the text in brackets should read: "*xi, nu, ai, le*."

38 Cf. "human *xing* can express all manner of emotions" [60]. We assume "*ai, le*" is short for "*xi, nu, ai, le*," which is short for "*xi, nu, ai, le, hao, wu*" (or "*hao, wu, xi, nu, ai, le*") and all of them are short for an indefinite list of *qing*.

39 There are a large number of occurrences of *qing* in Warring States sources, where it means something like situation (see note 4).

40 For the phrase "hermeneutic relativity", see Ma and van Brakel (2018).

Chinese. That is to say: We assume that adding *qínggǎn* in brackets (after either singular or plural “emotion(s)”) indicates that the statement has to be taken as an utterance in modern Chinese (or even modern “global” theories of emotion, *qínggǎn*). Hence, we assume that an important passage at the beginning of the article is a statement in modern Chinese:

... the human *dao* (the norms of personal and social conduct) exists from the start on account of shared emotions (*qinggan* 情感) among people. [56]

This sentence might be an interesting partial suggestion to provide a basis for explaining communicative interaction between people of different traditions or with different backgrounds, the suggestion being: people can always communicate (to some extent), because they share the same emotions (*qínggǎn*).⁴¹

Sometimes, “emotion [*qinggan*]” is added after *qing* in brackets:

“human desire” referred to selfish desire and differed from human *qing* (emotion [*qinggan*]) [65]

There is no clear distinction made between *qing* (emotion [*qinggan*]) and desire. [65]

It seems a bit odd to claim that *qing* is not translated, but sometimes to specify in brackets that it should be taken to mean emotion.

We find the text easier to understand if in a number of cases the singular “emotion” is read as the plural “emotions” with the same meaning as in the previous section. For example (three times we add a capital “S” to change singular to plural),

Someone who completely comprehends human *qing* is able fully to elaborate human emotionS, and someone who has a firm grasp of ritual propriety (*li* 礼) and *yi* is able to modulate human emotionS. Thus, ritual propriety and *yi* are intimately related to *qing* and are inseparable from the expression of human emotionS. [56]

In the translated text, the two options of adding a specification in brackets (either by a list or by the word *qínggǎn*) are not always clearly distinguished. Consider:

41 Cf. Mengzi’s example of a child risking to fall in a well.

The sage differs from others not in whether he has emotions (*qinggan*).
[64]

He Yan believed that sages do not have emotions (*xi, nu, ai, le*) ... [64]⁴²

These two citations come from the same page where the views of He Yan and Wang Bi 王弼 are discussed. Hence, it is assumed that “emotions” means *qinggan* and has *xi, nu*, and so on as its extension.

The author correctly notes that there is no record in the *Analects* of Confucius having ever directly discussed the topic of *qing*.⁴³ However, the author comments: “the pre-Qin emphasis on *qing* is built on the thought of Confucius” and the author claims that Confucius provides the rationale for saying that love is the most basic emotion. Maybe, but, as to *qing*, this should be understood as Confucius’s interest being in specific emotions such as referred to in the following: “when Yan Hui died, Confucius couldn’t help but grieve” [64].⁴⁴ The word *qing* (or the word emotion) should perhaps not be used at all when highlighting love or grief on behalf of Confucius.⁴⁵

If it is correct that love is the most basic emotion, is it not strange that in lists of six *qing*, a character for love (*ai*) occurs in only one out of five lists of six *qing*?

In addition to nine occurrences of *qinggan*, *ganqing* is used two times. For example:

Based on natural human *xing*, *qing* is human emotion (*ganqing*) that “is aroused into action by contact with things” and expressed externally. [57; elucidation of Xunzi’s “natural *qing*”]

For present purposes, we will not make a distinction between *ganqing* and *qinggan*. Although Chinese-English dictionaries tend to distinguish the entries for *ganqing* (meaning: emotion, feeling, sentiments; affection, attachment, love) and *qinggan* (meaning either the same as *ganqing* or positive or negative psychological

42 In his discussion with Wang Bi, the latter believed that the sage, like human beings, had five *qing* (Zhang Dainian 2002, 385). He Yan disagreed with this.

43 Similarly, Ng (1998, 173–74) acknowledges that Confucius and Mengzi do not discuss *qing* directly but nevertheless ascribes to them a commitment to the need of a full “emotional” life.

44 See *Analects* 11.10: “顏淵死，子哭之慟 (When Yan Hui died, the Master grieved for him with sheer abandon)” (transl. Ames and Rosemont). Note that in the *Analects* a different character is used for “grieved”: *tong* 慟 (“sadness, grief; mourn; be moved”).

45 There are two occurrences of *qing* in the *Analects*. Translations vary but will come in conceptual clusters of Western notions such as duplicitous or really (happened). In the context of the *Analects*, *qing* certainly does not mean something like emotion or feeling, as distinct from a specific *qing* being of importance to Confucius.

reactions to external stimuli), it is difficult to establish accurate distinctions in actual use. According to a recent study using large corpora (Zhang and Ooi 2008), the Chinese terms *gǎnqíng* and *qínggǎn* differ from their English near-equivalents, feeling and emotion, in terms of colligation, collocation, semantic preference and semantic prosody. Certainly, there is a difference in the contemporary use of the two words, but without detailed explanation, it cannot be considered in a comparison of classical Chinese and English and, for present purposes, we assume that both words mean “emotion(s)”.

A Provisional “Universal” Model

We suggest that apparent repetition (such as “the *qing* of emotions” [56]) is due to the assumption that *qing* can mean one of two things: either the unmanifested, passive, pre-activated *qing* of our inborn nature (*xìng*) or the *qing* that manifests itself as a result of contact with things, thus becoming active (activated).

We suggest the following model of human psychology on the basis of near-consensus in the discussions in English concerning the XZMC.⁴⁶ It would fit everything that is said in terms of emotions and/or *qing* in Tang’s article (and entailing an interpretation of the XZMC that might have been acceptable to Tang):

- Humans have *xìng*, inborn nature containing unmanifested *qing*: *xǐ*, *nù*, etc.
- With respect to a particular language, say Chinese, one should distinguish between *xǐ*, *nù*, etc., the emotions (plural) or referents of *qing* on the one hand, and generic concepts such as *qing* or emotion on the other hand.
- The *qing* (of *xǐ*, *nù*, etc.) can manifest themselves when triggered by the environment (by things [*wù* 物]).
- The word *qing* (or *qínggǎn*) may refer to either activated or non-activated *xǐ*, *nù*, etc.
- The story can be told in terms of (modern) *qínggǎn* or in terms of (classical) *qing*.

46 See for example (already cited), Andreini (2006); Chan (2009); Cook (2012); Middendorf (2008); Perkins (2009).

The first and third items are mentioned repeatedly in Tang's text. First of all, a number of things are mentioned that emerge or arise from *xìng*:⁴⁷ *qíng*, fondness, dislike, ritual propriety, desire, human emotion, and the *qíng* of emotions. Secondly, several times attention is drawn to the interaction with things that cause external manifestations (outward expression).⁴⁸

The text contains several statements in which some sort of connection is made between *qíng* and emotion(s). We find it difficult to understand these "mixed" statements and would prefer to avoid them. Consider:

"That emotions (*hao, wu, xi, nu, ai, le*) are stored [in the body] is called the natural *qíng*." [citing Xunzi, ch. 17] The "natural *qíng*" here [i.e. translating Xunzi's *tiānqíng* 天情] actually refers to emotions (*qínggan* 情感) within the natural *xìng* (i.e., the *qíng* of *xìng*'s emotions [*hao, wu, xi, nu, ai, le*]). [60]

We would say: Xunzi's *qíng* refers to the elements of *qíng* (such as *xì, nù, ...*) that exist in pre-activated form in one's inner *xìng*; They may come out and enter into contact with *wù* 物, which results in their external expressions.

Qíng and *Yù* 欲 ("Desire")

A substantial part of Tang's article is concerned with the difference (if any) of *qíng* and *yù* 欲 ("desire"). Perhaps we can say that in the Warring States period *qíng* and *yù* were closely interdependent. That is to say, we agree that (as many other commentators do):

47 The list that follows is derived from the following passages: Human emotion arises from one's inner *xìng* [59]; desire arises from *xìng*, dislike arises from *xìng*, delight arises from *xìng*, etc. [60]; fondness and dislike are a matter of *xìng* [57]; fondness and dislike are due to *xìng* [60]; Yu cong no. 2 says: *Qíng* arises from *xìng*; ritual propriety arises from *qíng* [59]; Yu cong no. 2 very nearly takes all human emotions and desires to "arise from *xìng*" [60].

48 Cf. the following passages: "What sets the *xìng* to activity are things (*wu* [sic]). It is the outward expression of human *xìng* excited internally by external things that manifests as the various emotions (and desires)" [60– we did not find this text in the XZMC]; "When human *xìng* perceives (*gan* 感) things, the emotions (*qínggan*) that are thus aroused should tally with the cosmic patterning (*daoli* 道理)" [61]; "*qíng* and desire are both generated from activity resulting from the *xìng*'s perception (*gan*) of things" [64]; "human *xìng* is our inner quality, and *qíng* is the revealing of *xìn*'s emotions on becoming active in response to things." [61] [The text may make more sense if we assume that instead of "*xìn*'s emotions" we read "*xìng*'s emotions." However, assuming *xìn* stands for 心, this is not impossible as intended meaning.]

in the pre-Qin classics it is the case either that *qing* and desire have not been distinguished yet or that desire is seen as one way of expressing *qing* [62].⁴⁹

However, there is an important proviso: in saying this, it is assumed that we focus on *yù*//desire as a QU at the embedding level; not the *yù* occurring in lists of *qíng* (which would be lists of *yù* if the latter is a synonym of *qíng*). Hence, we assume that there is a contrast between the following two situations:

Emotion (*qinggan*) and desire (*qingyu*) are different. [65]

In the pre-Qin classics, no clear distinction is made between *qing* (emotion [*qinggan*]) and desire. [65]

We assume that the first citation refers to modern Chinese society, and the second to classical sources (forgetting about the addition in brackets that seems to identify *qíng* and emotion).

If it is difficult to separate *qíng* and *yù* clearly in pre-Han times, it seems odd to categorically declare:

Zhuangzi did not favor emotionlessness, but rather desirelessness. [64]

We suggest that the issues raised by this statement and ascribed to Zhuangzi should be addressed in terms of classical criteria. For example, does “emotionless” stand for *wúqíng* 無情 (no-emotion)?⁵⁰ Instead of advocating “desirelessness” (*wúyù* 無欲 does not occur in the *Zhuangzi*), perhaps Zhuangzi’s advice was:

安時而處順，哀樂不能入也 [*Zhuangzi*, ch. 6.2]

故鹵莽其性者，欲惡之孽 [*Zhuangzi*, ch. 15.2]

Be content with this time and dwell in this order and then neither sorrow nor joy can touch you. (Transl. Watson 1968, 48)

So, he who is slipshod with his inborn nature will find the evils of desire and hate affecting his inborn nature like weeds and rushes. (Transl. Watson, 1968, 220)

49 Cf. the *Han Shu* 漢書: 人欲之謂情 (Human desire I call *qing*).

50 *Wúqíng* 無情 has been translated as: “having no emotions”, “having no feelings”, “having no affections”, “emotionlessness”.

The author seems to assume another case of interdependence with respect to *qíng*, *qì*, and *dé* 德.⁵¹ Consider the following two text blocks:

民有好惡、喜怒、哀樂，生于六氣 [Zuozhuan 10.25]

In the people there are liking and disliking, joy and anger, sorrow and pleasure, emotions that originate in the six vapours. (Transl. Durrant, Li, and Schaberg, 1639)

惡欲喜怒哀樂六者，累德也。

Dislike, desire, delight, anger, grief, and enjoyment—these six are obstructions of *dé* (德). (Zhuangzi, “Gengsangchu”) [62]

Loathing and desire, joy and anger, grief and happiness—these six are the entanglements of virtue. (Transl. Watson 1968, 197)

It is correct to note that in these citations six *qíng* are mentioned together with *qì* and *dé*, respectively, and this may suggest interdependence, but it goes too far to say: “Mentions of the six *qíng* occurred as early as the pre-Qin era” [62], followed by references to the *Zuozhuan* referring to “six *qì*” and the *Zhuangzi* referring to six “obstructions of *dé* (德).” It is literally false that these sources say something about *qíng*, they say something about *xǐ*, *nù*, etc.⁵²

The citation from the *Zuozhuan* is referred to in two places in the article as follows:

The people have fondness and dislike, delight and anger, and grief and enjoyment, which are expressed in the six *qì*. (*Zuozhuan*, Duke Shao year 25). [62]

The *Liyùn* chapter of the *Liji* quotes the *Zuozhuan*, “Duke Shao year 25”, to say: “Nature has the six *qì*, which in people become the six *qíng* and are called delight and anger, grief and enjoyment, and fondness and dislike.” [62n14]⁵³

51 The same “confusion” occurs in the other direction. For example, *liùqíng* 六情 is sometimes translated as “six desires” (of the people)—see Hightower (1952), *Hanshíwàizhuan* 5.16.

52 The occurrences of six *qíng* in the *Zuozhuan* and the *Zhuangzi* are not identical. The former list is the most common list of six *qíng* already mentioned. The latter is the same as the one that can be found in the *Lǚ Shì Chun Qiū* 呂氏春秋 [惡欲喜怒哀樂 *wùyù xǐnù àilè*]. In passing we may note that this list of 六者 is not referred to as *qíng* but as *dé* (德). This would further support, at the time, interdependence of *dé*, *qíng*, *qì* (and also *zhì* 志).

53 We overlook the different sequence of the binomes. We could not find this passage in the *Liji* (at least not in this form). Making the connection between six *qì* and six *qíng* on the basis of this passage may not be correct. See Durrant, Li, and Schaberg (1638n1010) and note that this recent translation inserts the word “emotions” in the translation (Legge did not).

Although the reference provided seems to be the same for both citations, it is not specific enough. Therefore, we cannot be absolutely sure that the two English texts go back to the same source. One wonders, because in note 14 [62] a connection is made between *qì* and *qíng*. If, as is plausible, the two citations do refer to the same original, we think the elaboration in the note is not a justifiable translation (perhaps based on a speculative interpretation of surrounding text).⁵⁴ We support the translation given on page 62, but not the elaboration in note 14.⁵⁵

Xunzi's Lists of *Qíng*

A passage in the *Xunzi* from chapter 17 (“Tianlun”) is cited twice in Tang’s article:⁵⁶

Fondness, dislike, delight, anger, grief, and enjoyment are stored within (*zang* 臧 [= *cang* 藏]), and this is called the natural *qíng*. [57]

That emotions (*hao, wu, xi, nu, ai, le*) are stored [in the body] is called the natural *qíng*. [60]

We think the first translation is slightly better. The Chinese original is (plus two other translations):⁵⁷

好惡喜怒哀樂臧焉，夫是之謂天情。 [Xunzi, “Tianlun,” ch. 17.4]

Liking, dislike, happiness, anger, sorrow, and joy are contained therein—these are called one’s Heavenly dispositions. (Transl. Hutton 2014, 176)

Love and hate, delight and anger, sorrow and joy—these are described as “the emotions given us by nature.” (Transl. Knoblock 1994, 16)

Apart from the translation on page 60, translators seem to agree that there is no need to insert the word “emotions” (or “feelings”).

The author also cites two times from chapter 22 of the *Xunxi*. Consider the following passage and four slightly different translations:

54 Different editions provide different interpunctuations. We think the text translated by Legge functions as a complete sentence and does not need the surrounding text to speculate on its meaning.

55 We assume “grief” is *āi* 哀, but if only the English word grief is given, it could also refer to *bēi* 悲 (or *tòng* 慟).

56 Compare the respective first sentences in the two citations that follow.

57 Note the difference in the translation of Xunzi’s *tiānqíng* 天情, which we will not pursue.

性之好、惡、喜、怒、哀、樂謂之情 [*Xunzi*, ch. 22, “Zhengming”]

The emotions (*hao, wu, xi, nu, ai, le*) of *xing* are called *qing*. [59]

The feelings of liking and disliking, happiness and anger, and sadness and joy in one’s nature are called “dispositions”. (Transl. Hutton 2014, 236)

The feelings of liking and disliking, of delight and anger, and of sorrow and joy that are inborn in our nature are called “emotions”. (Transl. Knoblock, 1994, 127)

The likes and dislikes, delights and angers, griefs and joys of the nature are called emotions. (Transl. Watson 1963, 139)

Hutton and Knoblock agree, inserting “feelings” in front of “liking and disliking”, but we (and Watson) do not. Why insert words like emotions or feelings in front of a list of concrete *qing*? As one can see from the (better) translation of Watson, there is no need to insert such words.⁵⁸

Comparing the Chinese text and the translations, we can notice that Hutton translates *qing* as disposition.⁵⁹ This was a significant change insofar as it avoids the “bias” of translating *qing* as emotion. We suggest that adding “feelings of” or “emotions” to *xi* etc. is biased as well.

Rather surprisingly, soon after Hutton published his translation of the *Xunzi*, he changed his text in some places, substituting *qing* for his innovative “disposition”. For example in chapter 22:

The liking, disliking, happiness, anger, sadness, and joy belonging to a person’s *xing* 性 (“nature”) are called the *qing*. (Hutton 2016, 203)

Hutton added the following comment:

Since the examples in this list would normally be called “emotions” in English nowadays, thinking of *qing* as “emotions” can seem quite sensible, and perhaps even necessary.

Yet, other uses of *qing* in the *Xunzi* do not fit such an understanding well. For instance, one passage remarks, “As for people’s *qing*, their eyes desire the utmost in sights, their ears desire the utmost in sounds, their mouths

58 By not providing the Chinese text or different translations, one might miss, for example, that there are various options for translating *haowu* 好惡; most pronounced is the choice between love\hate and like\dislike, but there are other options as well; for example, fondness\aversion.

59 Here Duyvendak translates *qing* as sensations, but Knoblock does not agree.

desire the utmost in flavors, their noses desire the utmost in smells, and their bodies desire the utmost in comfort.” ... Likewise ... These examples of *qing* not only differ from those listed in chapter 22, but moreover they are not the kinds of things usually counted as “emotions” by English speakers. (Hutton 2016, 203)

A further discussion of Xunzi’s contribution will follow at the end of the next section.

The Range of the Meanings of *Qing*

There is not much consensus in the secondary literature concerning the range of meanings of *qing*, but all commentators agree that it is much wider than the range of emotion (in English). It might include the range and meaning of all binomes in modern Chinese that include the character *qing* (more than 20 common expressions in modern Chinese).⁶⁰

Middendorf (2008, 128, 133–36) has suggested that *qing* refers to “all types of affective responses as motivational-adaptational behaviour caused by some stimulation”. This would include the most basic drives, sense perceptions, and instinctive responses, “reflexes, appraisals (preferences), dispositions, attitudes (desires, beliefs, judgments), moods, interpersonal stances, emotions”, as well as “higher order functions such as aesthetic emotions and morality”. Ye Zhengdao has claimed that *qing* includes “feeling, wanting, knowing, thinking what is good and bad” (2006, 77). We think all conscious thought can be considered (part of) *qing*. Concrete forms of *qing* always include thought processes. There is no pure, “feel” of *qing*.

What is perhaps common to all interpretations of *qing* is that it is a response to a situation (or disposition to respond to a situation). In what follows, we will give two more examples of neglected passages supporting the wide range of *qing* in Warring States texts.

In chapter 2 of the *Zhuangzi* the following passage occurs, which some translators and commentators have interpreted as including a list of twelve *qing*:

喜怒哀樂，慮嘆變懣，姚佚啟態；... 旦暮得此，其所由以生乎！

Joy, anger, sorrow and happiness, worry and regret, hesitation and fear, frivolity and extravagance, relinquishment and affection ... Once we are

60 For example, *aiqing* 愛情 (romantic love), *qingdiao* 情調 (tone, mood), *qingkuang* 情況 (circumstances), *qingxu* 情緒 (temper), *reqing* 熱情 (enthusiastic), *xinqing* 心情 (state of mind), *shiqing* 實情 (fact).

enlightened, we will understand from where they are born. But for all these emotions, we would not have existed; but for our existence, these emotions would not have appeared.” (Transl. Wang 1963, 17 [ch. 2])

Although the list starts with the well-known *xǐ, nù, āi, lè*, a number of very rare characters appear in this list of twelve, and no two commentators have agreed on their translation. However, there remains the suggestion that the range of *qíng* may be wider than is generally assumed, and there is ample support for reading this passage as being about *twelve qíng*.⁶¹

There may well be more “hidden” references to a wider extension of *qíng* in various places in Warring States sources, which later commentators and editors have dismissed as being corrupt or not relevant. Consider the passage in the *Xunzi* that has been referred to as a list of seven *qíng*. Adding a few characters that occur before and after the list of seven *qíng* one can read:

說、故、喜、怒、哀、樂、愛、惡、欲，以心異 [*Xunzi*, ch. 22.2]

Persuasions, reasons, happiness, anger, sorrow, joy, love, hate, and desire are differentiated by the heart. (Transl. Hutton 2014, 238)

(Speech and phenomena [*shuōgù* 說故]), pleasure and anger, sorrow and joy, love and hate, and desire are differentiated by the mind. (Transl. Knoblock 1994, 129)

Speech, events, delight, anger, grief, joy, love, hate, and desire are distinguished by the mind. (Transl. Watson 1963, 142)

Cheerfulness and gloom, joy and anger, sorrow and delight, love, aversion and desire. ... (Eifring 2004, 28)

Knoblock wonders whether this passage contains corrupted or excrescent words. He briefly discusses the comments of some Chinese scholars (Yang Liang, Wang Xianqian, Yu Chang), who differ widely in their interpretations (Knoblock 1994, 336n29).⁶² Knoblock prefers those options that “seem more harmonious with the other terms in the series”. He also notes that “these characters are not included in the list of emotions given earlier in the book”. We think that there is no need to restrict the meaning of *shuōgù* by trying to map it onto the more familiar

61 This was already suggested in the twelfth century (Luo Miandao 羅勉道; Lin Xiyi 林希逸; Zhao Yifu 趙以夫).

62 Knoblock follows Wang Xianqian who reads *shuō gù* 說故 as *yuè kǔ* 悅苦 (“enjoyment and grief” or “contentment and discontentment”). Fang and Li (2011, 361) translate “固” [same reading as 故 {phonetic loan word of 固}] as happiness.

expressions if one is considering the “forgotten” range of meaning of *qíng*. If one consults the wider context, one notices that the neat parallel between the cited sentence and the five preceding sentences supports that *shuō gù* is part of a list of *nine qíng*.⁶³ The cited sentence lists the emotions that are “differentiated by the heart/ mind”. That fits with the insight that *qíng* “encompass various thought processes” (Chen Lai 2004, 93).

We conclude that Warring States *qíng* covered a rather broad range of meanings (certainly extending far beyond what are today considered as emotions).

Preliminary Conclusions

The foregoing discussion of *qíng* and emotion, using the translation of Tang’s article as a foil, supports the following requirements (for scholarly work on *qíng*):

- strict conceptual separation of, for example, *qíng* and emotion is required;
- every bit of translated text must include the Chinese original;
- if possible, avoid dependence on one source for translations;
- carefully distinguish singular and plural;
- *qíng* on the one hand and *xì, nù, āi, lè* on the other should not be considered synonyms.

In order to avoid some of the pitfalls of translation, it is necessary to assume two levels of description. First, the manifest level, where one finds quasi-universals such as the family resemblance between classical or modern Chinese *nù* 怒 on the one hand and English “anger” on the other hand. Second, the generic level, where one finds *qíng* in classical Chinese, *qínggǎn* 情感 in modern Chinese, and “emotions(s)” in English.

In order to explain classical Chinese *qíng*, there is no need for the word(s) emotion(s, al). It is more efficient and less imperialistic to establish connections between concrete manifestations that go under the labels of *qíng* and emotions in classical Chinese and the English language, respectively, rather than directly identify these two labels.

63 These six sentences list the entities that are differentiated by, respectively, the eye, the ear, the mouth, the nose, the body, and the mind/heart.

Afterword: An Objection?

The most “fundamental” criticism of our general approach might be the objection that because it is rooted in the notions of family-resemblance-concepts and the mutual recognition of human practices, it leaves the application of a concept too unrestricted, not revealing which family-resemblance-concepts are the “objectively” relevant ones. We counter that the final justification of QUs can and must be situated in MRHPs, which is the final ground or justification for both the family resemblance approach to concepts and the construction of quasi-universals. That for any small number of traditions there always *are* some practices that are mutually recognizable is an indisputable fact of human experience, supported by first contacts (Ma and van Brakel 2016a, 123–38), and showing itself in every more or less successful communicative interaction. By considering MRHPs as the final ground of interpretation, we propose to resolve the alleged “problem of relevance”. The application of *relevant* concepts is constrained by the MRHPs acknowledged and presupposed by parties participating in whatever process of communicative interaction that is occurring.

For interpretation to be possible, universality must be assumed for at least some similarities across traditions, based on the “essence” of human beings—always already assumed by classical Chinese scholars as well.⁶⁴ It is necessary to assume that the author or speaker is a human being and engages in practices many of which are immediately recognizable as *human* practices.⁶⁵ No attempt is made to find “universally” recognizable human practices. Family resemblance between the practices of a small number of traditions suffices to construct quasi-universals that connect FR-concepts in these traditions. There are always family resemblances between (human) forms of life, although what the resemblances are in a particular case is relative to the languages and conceptual schemes involved (and hence may be judged differently by different parties).

Elsewhere we have argued that family resemblance across traditions is grounded in the experiential fact and necessary transcendental precondition of the existence of MRHPs, at least for any small group of traditions at a time. It is these cross-culturally recognizable human practices or behaviors of, say, being angry, that justifies recognizing a quasi-universal across traditions, say, angry//*nù*. Note that this is not (yet) a universal. What is required for successful communicative interaction between

64 “四海之内其性一也，其用心各異，教使然也 (All within the four seas share the one nature. That they are different in applying their hearts is brought about by teaching).” (XZMC, transl. Chan 2009, 365)

65 The name of this principle derives from Wittgenstein’s remark: “My attitude [*Einstellung*] toward him is an attitude toward a soul [*zur Seele*]. I am not of the *opinion* [*Meinung*] that he has a soul” (Wittgenstein 2009, §22). For more discussion of this principle, see Ma and van Brakel (2016a: 136–39).

particular groups of people is family resemblance of a substantial number of manifest concepts across these particular traditions (not for all manifest concepts). For another pair or small set of traditions what is workable (that is, what is recognizable in terms of family resemblances across traditions) may be different.

Resting one's case on a principle of MRHPs is not common. In support we give a few brief examples in support of this principle. Usually, the interpretation of MRHPs does not depend very much on the details of its description. In the *Zhuangzi* (ch. 24), meeting with a friend or with an old acquaintance is described as a source of joy (Despeux 2004, 83):

曰：子不聞夫越之流人乎？去國數日，見其所知而喜 [Zhuangzi 24.1]

“Haven't you ever heard about the men who are exiled to Yueh?” said Hsu Wu-kuei. “A few days after they have left their homelands, they are delighted if they come across an old acquaintance. . . .” (transl. Watson 1968, 200)

A modern global citizen would have no problem recognizing this MRHP and can very well grasp the point of the story, even though the translation of *xī* 喜 as “delighted” hides many issues of how to delineate particular concepts.

Down-to-earth actions, crafts, and behaviors often have close resemblance across traditions, and are presupposed in more sophisticated interpretations of ancient texts. For example, there is an extensive literature on the story of the happy fish in the *Zhuangzi* (ch. 17), but these scholarly debates are only possible, partly, because people going for a stroll is a recognizable MRHP and the fish's swimming is a practice belonging to the fish's form of life. In the *Zhuangzi*, many human and animal practices are recorded. All stories in chapter 4 presuppose MRHPs: how to deal with people, how a cripple survives, how a tree survives, how a sage survives, and similarly for other stories, including magical stories such as a sacred oak tree appearing in a dream.

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Conflict of interest statement

The authors declare no competing interests.

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