

TANG YIJIE: CONTEMPORARY CHINESE NEW CONFUCIANIST

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Professor Tang Yijie (1927 – 2014) was one of the most prominent philosophers of the PRC after the “Cultural Revolution” (1966 – 1976). He was the leading representative of New Confucianism, the main trend in Chinese philosophy of the 20th and (beginning of the) 21st centuries. This essay points out mainly the author’s personal reminiscences concerning him and his wife Yue Daiyun (1931 –) and their strain to overcome the huge impact of the ultra-leftist views of the period 1949 – 1978, which made all scholarly development in the humanities impossible. It is mostly about our meetings, correspondence, discussions and the facts often unknown to other scholars, but also within the possibilities of a short review presenting his life and work.

Key words: Tang Yijie, Yue Daiyun, “Cultural Revolution”, New Confucianism, harmony vs. uniformity, universal values

One of the well-known Chinese philosophers of our age, Professor Tang Yijie 汤一介 passed away in his 87th year, early in the night of 8 September 2014. Born on 15 February 1927, according to the Chinese lunar calendar, as a son of another even more famous philosopher Tang Yongtong 汤用彤 (1893 – 1964), who was President of Peking University in the first years of the existence of the PRC after 1951. During his life, Tang Yongtong was probably the best expert on the history of Chinese Buddhism. He devoted much time to his son, who likewise began to study philosophy in Peking University, but only later in a more liberal atmosphere, beginning in 1980 where he wrote much about the three Chinese philosophies and religions: Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism, and was one of the first in China to devote his attention to Christianity in this period.

Tang Yijie finished his studies at a very difficult time when the political and ideological campaigns of the second half of the 1950s began, and he regarded

the 30 years from 1950 – 1980 as a waste of time. Three years before his death in 2011, he pronounced that the papers written during those years had little value and the huge impact of the ultra-leftist views made all scholarly development in the humanities impossible.¹

I first met Lao Tang, as his wife Yue Daiyun 乐黛云 (1931 –) and his best friends called him, in Hamburg at the XXXth International Congress for Asian and African Studies, 25 – 30 August 1986. Yue Daiyun, with whom I was in correspondence, asked me to get them an invitation letter to participate. At that moment they were well-known in America but not in Europe. I did this and Daiyun read at the panel chaired by myself, her paper entitled “The Reception of Nietzsche by Chinese Writers around 1919” and Tang Yijie in another section, his paper: “On the Mergence of Two Different Cultures from the Perspective of the Introduction of Indian Buddhism into China.” After Hamburg we met nearly every year during my visits to Peking, in their flat at first at Zhongguan yuan, and later in Lanrong yuan. Mostly it was in Shaoyuan where we had lunch together, discussed our scholarly plans, spoke about our friends both in China and abroad, and exchanged materials. They usually gave me many more books than I was able to present to them.

I read much about Lao Tang in Daiyun’s and Carolyn Wakeman’s English book *To the Storm. The Odyssey of a Revolutionary Chinese Woman*, published by University of California Press, 1985, and presented to me by Daiyun in Hamburg on 26 August 1986, on the first day we met.² There is much about Lao Tang, for instance, his words to Daiyun when she was unjustly condemned as a Rightist and had to leave him though she was on maternity leave. Lao Tang began to cry when holding her tightly he said with bitterness: “Sometimes people act just like wolves towards each other” (op. cit. p. 5). These words remind me of the well-known Latin proverb *Homo homini lupus* [Man is Wolf to his Fellow Man]. Those who behaved themselves in this way were their colleagues, “comrades in arms”, members of the CCP. Mostly they remained unknown to the readers since their real names were not used in Yue Daiyun’s confessions. Her husband wept, but at that time she had no tears. Thirty years later on the way back from the 2nd Congress of the Chinese Comparative

¹ LU, Qianwen. Chinese Sinologist Tang Yijie Passes at 87. Remembering a Pioneer. In *Global Times*, 15 September 2014, p. 18.

² At the request of Yue Daiyun I wrote a long review of the book in *Asian and African Studies*, 1988, Vol. XXIII, pp. 293–296, where I pointed out that the ideologies (like the one preached in the PRC especially after 1957) present “empty illusions serving like opium to even explicitly mislead and deceive masses as at the time of the “Cultural Revolution” with its cultural and social vandalism, tyranny, murders, suicides and moral decay” (p. 295).

Literature Association, Xi'an, 25 – 30 August 1987, Daiyun told me that after this terrible announcement, she was declared an enemy of the people and sentenced to reform through laodong gaizao 劳动改造 manual labour in Zhaitang 斋堂 near Peking, to feed hungry pigs and to carry weighty stones, as part of the construction of a water reservoir. She slept well through the whole night, but Lao Tang could not even close his eyes.

After finishing his studies at the Philosophical Faculty of Peking University the young Tang Yijie worked as a revolutionary cadre for five years at the Peking CCP Committee School up to 1956. Then he returned back to his Alma Mater. That's why he could not understand the attitude of Party cadres to his wife who was even more intensive in her belief in Party policy. The whole 21 years of persecution began for him, his wife and his children. Only in 1981, at 54 years old, was he promoted to Assistant Professor and in 1985 to Full Professor. Before this time, he could only do at the University mostly work concerned with notes on the works of the philosophers acceptable for the cultural policy of Mao Zedong. In 1973 he participated in the propaganda work of the Peking and Qinghua University Professors called Liang Xiao 梁效 having the task of criticizing Lin Biao, Confucius and Mencius. This was, of course, his great mistake. He made it very probably for financial reasons to make family life easier, and probably also because of his belief in the universal brilliance of the Great Helmsman. Among those who participated in this work was also the world-renown Professor Feng Youlan 冯友兰 (1895 – 1990), a believer in New Confucianism of the 20th century, and his colleagues from both the aforementioned Universities, like the historian Zhou Yiliang 周一良 (1913 – 2001), and the literary scholars Lin Geng 林庚 (1910 – 2006), Hu Jingzhi 胡经之 (1933 –) and others. Lao Tang was asked to participate in this propaganda initiated by the old Mao, whose health went into decline three years before his death in 1976. He was ashamed later for his being seduced by Mao's infallibility and the idea of his being a "Great Star" bringing "salvation" to the Chinese people. The 78 years-old Tang Yijie repented this deed to a journalist in 2005 with the words: "Wo cuo la, wo yao shenke fanxing" 我错了, 我要深刻反省 I made a mistake. I will deeply introspect."³ Probably it would have been better to use the word: houhui 后悔 to regret. Not one word (if I read it carefully) is written about Liang Xiao and Tang Yijie's years (1973 – 1977) in Li Juanjuan's 李娟娟 monograph *Tang Yijie zhuan* 汤一介传 *Tang Yijie's*

³ [Cit. October. 2014]. Available from <http://www.gmw.cn/01ds/2006-02/08/content_370825.htm>.

Biography.⁴ This is a certain distortion of his life and work. Who in the world did not do or has not done something not quite right, or made no mistakes in one's life? Yue Daiyun in her English book described the years connected with Liang Xiao and Tang Yijie on 9 pages, and his investigation and detention not in a jail, but in a room in the "basement" of the lakeside (Weiminghu Lake at Beida, M. G.) teachers' canteen, on 12 pages. Historical truth is a *condition sine qua non* for all historical writing, and biographies are not exceptions. I never found a mention of Yue Daiying crying except in the case when her talented children in the year 1977 could not be accepted to study at the University, since the CCP condemned "the policy of holding children accountable for their parents' mistakes" (p. 366). She cried in front of the Vice-President of Peking University, who at first promised to help and counselled her to have faith in the Party and its policy, since it needed "talented young people to help build China's future" (p. 369), but he most likely deceived her and did nothing about the matter, because neither her daughter Tang Dan 汤丹 (*1953) nor younger son Tang Shuang 汤双 (*1957) were admitted to the University. It is quite understandable that in the 1980s they left China for America never to return to the country of their ancestors, except to visit their ageing parents for a while. Both Lao Tang and Daiyun regretted it very much and told me about it more than once. They envied me since my children and grandchildren remained with me in this globalized world. Both Tang Dang and Tang Shuang were present at their father's funeral and remained with their mother for a few days at a recreation resort in Hangzhou.

The years after Tang Yijie finished his University studies were much better than those after 1957. He inherited his love for philosophy from his father, who was also one of his teachers. As a 19 years-old boy in 1947 he wrote essays different to those of Tang Yongtong, and more similar to those of Feng Youlan and practitioners of the Philosophy of Life much in fashion in China in the post-May Fourth Movement period. The "eternal questions" of life and death interested him much and he wrote about them.⁵

⁴ Peking: Xinhua chubanshe, 2011, reprint 2012, 334 pp.

⁵ "Lun shan" 论善 On Good, "Lun si" 论死 On Death, and "Lun wei shenme huozhe" 论为什么活着 Why Do We Live? were their titles. It is difficult to explain why at the same time, or even before, he was enthralled by Edgar Snow's (1905 – 1972) *Red Star over China*, 1937, translated into Chinese under the title *Xi xing man ji* 西行漫记 read by him in the 1940s which allegedly on him and his classmates in Yunnan Province functioned as "as opium or plague" that they decided to go to Yan'an to be the witnesses of this "mysterious and for them so attractive place..." See LI, Juanjuan. Op. cit. p. 32. In Tang Yijie's case it never happened. It was just good for him. Probably had he stayed in Yan'an with Mao and his people, educated by his ideas, he would never

Tang Yijie was different from his father who was a scholar *par excellence*, interested mostly in scholarly work. Tang Yijie in his adolescent years started to be intensively engaged in social and political questions, and at 22 years old in 1949 he became a convinced Marxist. In November of that year he joined the CCP, believing similarly to Julius Fučík (1903 – 1943), a Czech Communist murdered by German Nazis, that he would “love life, love mankind and his own ideal conviction”.⁶ It is necessary to remark that Tang Yijie (and Yue Daiying, too,) did not know much about the real life of Fučík which was embellished and elevated by the rulers of Czechoslovakia after the year 1948. Tang’s life after 1957 was similar to the fate of the Czech Communist hero, with the exception that he did not lose his life, but he suffered more than the idol presented to post-World War II readers, including those in China.

It is difficult for me to judge why Tang Yijie spent the years 1951 – 1956 in the Peking School for the Cadres of the Communist Party. Was he sent there by the Party authorities or was it his own decision? The scholarly level of this school could not be very high. Only in 1956 was he “transferred back” to the Department of Philosophy at Peking University. Was it his “inner desire” or Mao Zedong and Lu Dingyi’s 陆定一 (1906 – 1996) speeches given on 27 February and 26 May 1956, concern with “Let a Hundred Flowers Bloom, let a Hundred Schools of Thought Contend”, promising to the Chinese intellectuals “better treatment, greater latitude in which to work, and relaxed pressure for ideological orthodoxy”. But later an “unexpected outburst of bitter grievances against the Communists in May 1957, particularly on university campuses, was followed by a total reversal of the Hundred Flowers policies toward intellectuals”.⁷ Neither Tang Yijie nor Yue Daiyun joined this wave of criticism, and therefore it is beyond comprehension that already on 7 February 1958 Yue Daiyun’s Communist Party membership was revoked. In a private conversation, I suppose, on the train from Xi’an to Peking, after the 2nd Congress of the Chinese Comparative Literature Association in 1987 mentioned above, she told me that their Literary Department received the instruction of how many Rightists should be condemned among about twenty members. The punishment for her was “dismissal from employment to work under the supervision of the labouring people at the monthly salary of sixteen yuan” (p. 43). That was the

have written in 1947 that it is necessary “to see the things which are not visible, to hear not audible voices, and give the soul the possibility to reveal the (not yet) existing phenomena”. See the essay under Note 3.

⁶ See Note 3.

⁷ ARKUSH, R. D. Introduction. In NIEH, Hualing (ed. and co-trans.). *Literature of the Hundred Flowers*, Vol. I: Criticism and Polemics, p. XV.

pay for the PRC criminals and the famous Chinese poet Gu Cheng 顾城 (1956 – 1993) received the same for his work before he left China in 1987.⁸

Tang Yijie's life changed completely after Yue Daiyun found the possibility to study in the US, Canada and in other countries in the years 1980 – 1986. It was she who introduced him to the scholarly circles there. One of the results of his studies and of his lectures was a book entitled *Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, Christianity and Chinese Culture* from the year 1991, published by the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy in Washington. It seems that this is his most popular book among the Western readers. For the Chinese scholars it is probably his *Wei Jin Nanbeichao shiqi de Daojiao* 魏晋南北朝时期的道教 *Daoism of the Epochs of Wei, Jin, Northern and Southern Dynasties*, written mainly on the basis of the content of his lectures at Mc Master University, Canada, in the first half of 1986, published in 1988, and presented to me in October 1989, and *Wei Jin xuanxue lun jiangyi* 魏晋玄学论讲义 *Lectures on Dark Learning of the Wei and Jin Dynasties*, Xiamen, 鹭江出版社 2006, likewise presented to me after it appeared in print. In these books he followed his father's works, especially Tang Yongtong's *chef d'oeuvre Han Wei Liang Jin Nanbeichao Fojiao shi* 汉魏两晋南北朝史 *A History of Daoism in the Han, Wei, Two Liang and Southern and Northern Dynasties* from the year 1938, and *Wei Jin xuanxue lungao* 魏晋玄学论稿 *A Draft Dark Learning in the Wei and Jin Dynasties* from a year unknown to me (new edition 2000). Especially the second book has certainly been to a great extent influenced by the work of his father, and Tang Yijie admits it in his "Zixu" 自序 Self-Preface on p. 3. Here he acknowledges also the works by Feng Youlan, Hou Wailu 侯外庐 (1903 – 1987) and other well-known Chinese philosophers, and also asserts that after the "Cultural Revolution" and Mao's death, the scholars should search for "ziwo" 自我 themselves, which meant, search for their heart's desires, self-examination, not only to listen to Mao's teachings. Mao's ideas were already "gen bu shang" 跟不上 they could no longer be followed (p. 2) and it was necessary to hear the voices of others.

Who were the voices of other people? If in the Liang Xiao group he was supposed to criticize Confucius or Mencius if he was asked to do so, after 1980 Confucius and his teaching became one of the main targets of his works outside of those we have just mentioned. Tang Yijie criticized Confucius in the 1970s,

⁸ GÁLIK, M. Gu Cheng and Xie Ye: Contemporary Chinese Poets Who Died Too Early. In *Asian and African Studies*, 1994, Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 121.

although “he emphasized the progressive aspects of Confucius’ thought”⁹ in the early 1960s. Already in 1980, he put aside the Maoist appeal from the year 1962: “Never forget the class struggle!” and he was one of the first who began to proclaim Confucius’ idea of harmony as an antithetical to class struggle, although, as far as I know, he did not say it openly.¹⁰

From the putting aside of the class struggle there was only one further step to embracing the opposite: universal harmony. Tang Yijie was one of the first in the PRC to proclaim this new trend in philosophy and his work *He er bu tong* 和而不同 *Harmony But Not Uniformity*, Shenyang: Liaoning renmin chubanshe 2001, is evidence of it. I do not know who was or were the translator(s) of the dark coloured publication *Kongzi mingyan lu* 孔子名言录 *Famous Sayings by Confucius*, edited anonymously by the Guoji yuyan yanjiu yu fazhan zhongxin 国际语言研究与发展中心 International Center of English Research & Development, Peking: Gaodeng jiaoyu chubanshe 2006 (2nd printing 2007). The English “Preface” of this book asserts that the translation of this book “is based on the edition of *The Analects of Confucius* translated by James Legge” (p. 1), which is not quite true. The Chinese preface admits “shidang de gaidong” 适当改动 suitably modifying Legge’s rendition. In the *Kongzi mingyan lu* the most important idea connected with the difference between “harmony” and “uniformity” from the Chapter 13, passage 23 recorded by Confucius’ disciples and attributed to him was translated as follows: “The superior man aims at harmony but not at uniformity (和而不同). The mean man aims at uniformity but not at harmony (同而不和)” (p. 24). The translation by James Legge is different: “The superior man is affable, but not adulatory; the mean man is adulatory, but not affable.”¹¹ Affable means in Chinese *heai keqin de* 和蔼可亲

⁹ YUE, Daiyun. *To the Storm. The Odyssey of a Revolutionary Chinese Woman*, pp. 101–124.

¹⁰ ZHAO, Jianyong 赵建永. Tang Yijie xiansheng yu “pupian hexie guannian” de chonggou 汤一介先生与“普遍和谐观念”的重构. A Reconstruction of Mr. Tang Yijie’s Concept of “Universal Harmony”. In SUN, Shangyang 孙尚杨, HU, Jun 胡军 (eds.). *Tanxun “Zhen Shan Mei” 探寻真善美. Search of Truth, Goodness and Beauty. Festschrift for Professor Tang Yijie on the Occasion of His 80th Birthday and on the Occasion of His 25th Year of Teaching*, pp. 482–499. For Tang Yijie especially two conditions for achieving this harmony are important: Ziyou wei ti 自由为体 Freedom as Foundation and Minzhu wei yong 民主为用 Democracy for practical needs. Cf. op. cit. p. 483 and *Tang Yijie xueshu wenhua suibi* 汤一介学术文化随笔 *Tang Yijie’s Sketches Concerning Scholarship and Culture*, p. 154. As we know, academic freedom and democracy are problematic in China up to now.

¹¹ LEGGE, J. *The Chinese Classics*. Vol. 1, 2nd ed., revised, p. 273.

的。Adulatory means in Chinese guofen chengzan de 过分称赞的。Famous Sayings by Confucius, was distributed as a present to the participants of the 1st World Conference on Sinology, Peking, organized by the Hanban (The Office of Chinese Language Council International) and Renmin University of China, 25 – 28 March 2007, having as its topic: Dialogue of Civilization and a Harmonious World. It is necessary to point out that no one translation of *Lun yu* 论语, available to me, is similar to that distributed to the participants at the 1st World Conference on Sinology.¹² Was Tang Yijie's understanding of "universal harmony" antithetical to the class struggle in his own country or a reflection of the situation in the realm of humanistic scholarship in the Western countries and also in China after the 1980s? I do not want to say much about the first,¹³ but mainly Professor Zhang Liwen's 张立文 (1935 –) book *Hehe xue* 和合学 *Learning of Harmony*, Peking: Peking University Press 2006, "found a vast echo throughout Chinese society".¹⁴ His understanding of the problem of "harmony" is more comprehensive than that of Tang Yijie, since it put emphasis also on the modernizations, both one of its challenges and its failures. Zhang is more idealistic than Tang, asserting that "the twentieth century was the century of conflicts, of wars, of science, on the contrary, the new century will be a century of peace, of progress, of care for ecological harmony".¹⁵

Now we know that it is not true. Tang Yijie was present at the opening of this conference, fitting like a glow for him, but because of his bad health he could not take part in the rest and he did not read a paper. He participated in the 2nd Conference on World Conference on Sinology, Renmin University of China, 30 October – 1 November 2009 and read a featuring lecture entitled: "Xunqiu wenhua zhongde 'pubian jiazhi'" "寻求文化中的 '普遍价值'".

¹² I mention here only the rendition by another well-known translator of Confucian and Daoist writings LAU, D. C. 刘殿爵: "The gentleman agrees with others without being an echo. The small man echoes without being in agreement." See his *Confucius, The Analects (Lun yü)*, pp. 128–129.

¹³ The well-known Chinese writer YU Hua 余华 in his essay China's Struggle to Forget in *The New York Times*, 16 March 2014, wrote the following: "These days Chinese society is riddled with contradictions, but 'Never forget class struggle' has been replaced by the 'harmonious society' and 'stability overrides all other considerations'". He ends his critical essay with the words: "For our current leaders even to mention class struggle would be tantamount to digging their own graves." See also < <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/17/opinion/chinas-struggle-to-forget.html>>.

¹⁴ See the invaluable book by BRESCIANI, U. *Reinventing Confucianism. The New Confucian Movement*, p. 442.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 443.

Searching for the ‘Universal Values’ in Cultures¹⁶ which I used as one of the arguments in my essay “On Inter-philosophical Sino-Western Dialogue in the Contemporary World” published recently in the *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 40th Anniversary Special Issue.¹⁷ Lao Tang was present for one whole day at the 3rd World Conference on Sinology, likewise at Renmin University, 3 – 5 November 2012, as an Expert Responder for the plenary speeches by Professor David Jeffrey, Baylor University, and Professor Du Weiming 杜维明 (1940 –), earlier at Harvard, now at Peking University. His speech was rather long and one could observe that he was quite exhausted. In spite of that he remained at the conference all day and in the next few days he had to take to his bed. In the room for VIP in the Mingde Hall I presented him a toy: a small hare. He believed that hares bring him good luck, fortune and happiness. This time it did not happen. In the next two years he often had to exchange his bed at home for a bed in a hospital. His fatal illness was diagnosed as ganyan 肝癌 cancer of the liver.¹⁸

Tang Yijie was a workaholic all his long life. From the year 1986 his academic titles and places where he was engaged abound. From my own experience it was not Peking University, his Alma Mother, he felt high esteem for. For more than two decades the authorities of Peking University behaved to him, his wife and children like a bad stepmother. In his discussions with me he highlighted the Zhongguo wenhua shuyuan 中国文化书院 International Academy of Chinese Culture of which he was one of the founders and the first Director. In this Academy the *Ruzang* 儒藏 *Confucian Canon*, the greatest compendium of Confucian works of Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Vietnamese provenience is edited and then published by the Peking University Press. The complete project should be finished in 2025. A few years ago Tang Yijie told me that his and Yue Daiyun’s books from their private library, together about 40,000 volumes, will be presented to the International Academy of Chinese Culture.

I personally highly appreciate Tang Yijie’s and Yue Daiyun’s contribution to the problem of cultural and philosophical understanding between East and West. Together with the members of European Transcultural led by Umberto Eco and Alain Le Pichon they worked on the *Kuawenhua duihua congkan* 跨文化对话丛刊 *Dialogue Transcultural* of which up to 2012 29 volumes, and a selection

¹⁶ See its versions in *Sinology and Cross-Cultural Communication*. Abstracts of the Conference, 2009, pp. 245–251 and in English, pp. 251–259.

¹⁷ *Chinese Philosophy as World Philosophy: Humanity and Creativity (II) Journal of Chinese Philosophy’s 40th Anniversary Special Issue*, pp. 99–114.

¹⁸ From the E-mail by Yue Daiyun dated 25 November, 2013.

Yinjie xin de wenhua zhuanxing shiqi 迎接新的文化转型时期 *Greeting a New Era of Cultural Reformation* in 2 volumes (1 – 16) was published in 2006 by Peking Sanlian shudian and Shanghai wenhua chubanshe respectively.

In 2008, on 10 – 15 April, sinologists from nine countries gathered in Bratislava and Vienna to be present at a symposium following the Confucian idea *Yi wen hui you, yi you fu ren* 以文会友以有辅仁 to share the culture with friends and in this way to improve humanity (*Lun yu*, 12, 24). On 27 August, 2007 I met Tang Yijie and Yue Daiyun at Shaoyuan where we discussed the topic of the symposium. Lao Tang, Daiyun and nine other Chinese scholars participated. Lao Tang's contribution "Constructing 'Chinese Philosophy' in Sino-European Cultural Exchanges" was connected just with the inter-philosophical dialogue between East and West.¹⁹ In 2002 5 volumes were published of the *20 shiji Xifang zhexue dongjian shi* 20世纪西方哲学东渐史 [A History of the Dissemination of Western Philosophy to China in the 20th Century], a series comprising 14 volumes altogether appeared one year later in 2003.²⁰ This series, edited by Tang Yijie, was well received by famous Chinese scholars, like Zhang Dainian 张岱年 (1909 – 2004), or the even more famous Professor Ji Xianlin 季羨林 (1911 – 2009), and still remains for PRC philosophers a springboard for deeper study of the main schools of modern Western philosophy.²¹ At the beginning of his paper read in Bratislava Tang Yijie pointed out the aim of this series which was "to review the history of the importation of Western philosophy into China, and to study its role in the establishment of the discipline of 'Chinese philosophy'".²² At the end of it he stressed the idea of the "equal dialogue" and of "general dialogue" on both sides, in the West and in China, which "may help world philosophy achieve significant developments in the 21st century."²³

In recent years Tang Yijie's philosophical work was highly evaluated by Chinese PRC scholars and media. I am not the one who may judge him as the Hebrew Prophet Daniel dared in the case of Neo-Babylonian king Belshazzar when he pronounced the verdict: "TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances,

¹⁹ The paper read in Bratislava appeared in *Talking Literature. Essays on Chinese and Biblical Writings and Their Interaction.*, pp. 3–10. This paper slightly changed was published earlier under the same title in the *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 2007, Vol. 34, No. 1, pp. 33–42.

²⁰ Peking: Shoudi shifan daxue chubanshe. Taken over from LI Juanjuan: op. cit. p. 335.

²¹ Tang Yijie. *Zhexuejia* 汤一介. 哲学家. Philosopher Tang Yijie. Commercial Press Website [cit. 19 October 2014]. Available from <<http://www.cp.com.cn/dj/newsdetail.cfm?iCntno=1383>>

²² FINDEISEN, R. D., SLOBODNÍK, M. Op. cit. p. 3.

²³ Ibid., p. 10.

and art found wanting” (*The Holy Bible*, JKV version, *Daniel*, 5:27). The European or Taiwanese scholars writing about the contemporary New Confucianism, to which Tang Yijie belongs, seldom mention his name among the best Chinese representatives of this philosophical school.²⁴ His name is mentioned only once as one of the founders of the International Academy of Chinese Culture in the book *Contemporary Chinese Philosophy*, edited by Chung-ying Cheng 成中英 (1935 –) and Nicholas Bunnin.²⁵ As far as I know, more attention is devoted to Tang Yijie only in the recent monograph by Jesús Solé-Farràs *New Confucianism in Twenty-First Century China. The Construction of a Discourse*, but his musings are mostly concerned only with two of Tang’s essays in English: “The Contemporary Significance of Confucianism” in *Frontiers of Philosophy in China*, Vol. 3, No. 4, 2008, pp. 477–501 and “Some Reflections on New Confucianism in Mainland Chinese Culture of the 1990s”, trans. by Gloria Davies in *Voicing Concerns: Contemporary Chinese Critical Inquiry*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield 2001, pp. 123–134. Solé-Farràs ends his analysis of Tang Yijie’s contribution to the “harmony” with a résumé of the text found in Bresciani’s book.²⁶

Tang Yijie’s books and essays are often written without, or only with a few, notes. There is not even one note in his two books on post-Han Buddhism and Taoism presented to me and mentioned above. His great contributions to the development of modern Chinese philosophy since the 1980s are mostly connected with his abilities in teaching, organizing, editing, representing Chinese philosophy abroad and publishing activities. His name is not mentioned among the outstanding personalities of the so-called Third Generation of New Confucians.²⁷ Or did the work of historians writing about this generation not pay enough attention to the scholars from the PRC?

On 14 September 2014 with my granddaughter Barbora Vesterová 巍白璧, at that time a student of Sinology at the University of Vienna, together with some hundreds of Lao Tang’s colleagues, students and friends, I was present at his funeral at Peking Babaoshan 八宝山 Cemetery. Daiyun told me before the ceremony when without a word I shook her hand: “Wo bu ku le” 我不哭了 “I do not cry any more”. I do not believe that she did not cry that evening when

²⁴ Such exceptions are Umberto Bresciani. Op. cit. pp. 441–442 where the author exalts Tang Yijie’s concept of “universal harmony”.

²⁵ Malden (Mass.), p. 350.

²⁶ Cf. SOLÉ-FARRÀS, J. Op. cit. p. 161 and BRESCIANI, U. Op. cit. p. 442.

²⁷ See BRESCIANI, U. Op. cit. p. 389–417; LIU, Shu-hsien 刘述先 (1934 – 2016). A Reinterpretation and Reconstruction of Confucian Philosophy. In *Chinese Philosophy as World Philosophy: Humanity and Creativity (II)*. *Journal of Chinese Philosophy’s 40th Anniversary Special Issue*, p. 243.

her husband died. There were no tears in her eyes in the moments, when sitting on the wheel-chair as she accepted the condolences from the participants in the funeral rites.

Although a workaholic all her life just like Lao Tang, she could not do anything during his illness.²⁸ During the 11th Congress of the Chinese Comparative Literature Association, Yanbian, 18 – 21 September 2014 a few days after the ceremony, Professor Yang Huilin 杨慧林, President of the CCLA in the years 2011 – 2014, informed the participants that Yue Daiyun promised him to continue her work as Honorary President of the Association after some rest. I hope that she will have enough energy to do it in the near future. She has been doing it up to and including these days.

And to Lao Tang I wish that the tuzi 兔子 hare resident in the moon as according to the old Chinese myth, will use a pestle and mortar to pound the gui 桂 cinnamon twigs, and thus prepare the elixir of immortality for him.

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²⁸ On 25 June 2014 I received Yue Daiyun's E-mail with the words: "Because of Lao Tang's heavy illness, you xin ru fen 忧心如焚, my grieved heart is as if burning, I could do absolutely nothing." The Chinese words are quotation from *Shijing* 诗经 *The Book of Songs*, Xiao Ya 小雅 Small Odes, Jie Nan shan 节南山 Crest-like Southern Mountain following Bernhard Karlgren's rendition: *The Book of Odes. Chinese Text, Transcription and Translation*, p. 132. The Chinese original uses tan 谈 identical with 焚.

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