

Postgraduate Assignment coversheet & feedback form

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For completion by the student:		
Student Name: Kehan Dong		
Module code: SICH7004 Module title: Classical Chinese texts in English	Student ID number: 2016148	Educational support needs: Yes / No
Module tutor: Prof. Xiaowei Wang Assignment due date: 27/03/2026		
If your module has multiple submissions please indicate which piece of work this is. 1 st ☒ 2 nd ☒ 3 rd ☐ 4 th ☐ 5 th ☐ 6 th ☐		
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From Individual Eternity to Governance by Self-cultivation: the Meaning Transformation of the Chapter 12 from *Dao De Jing* in the *Qunshu Zhiyao* (*The Governing Principles of Ancient China* 群書治要)

Module code: SICH7004

Module tutor: Dr. Xiaowei Wang

Student name: Kehan Dong

Student ID: 2016148

Date: 27 March 2026



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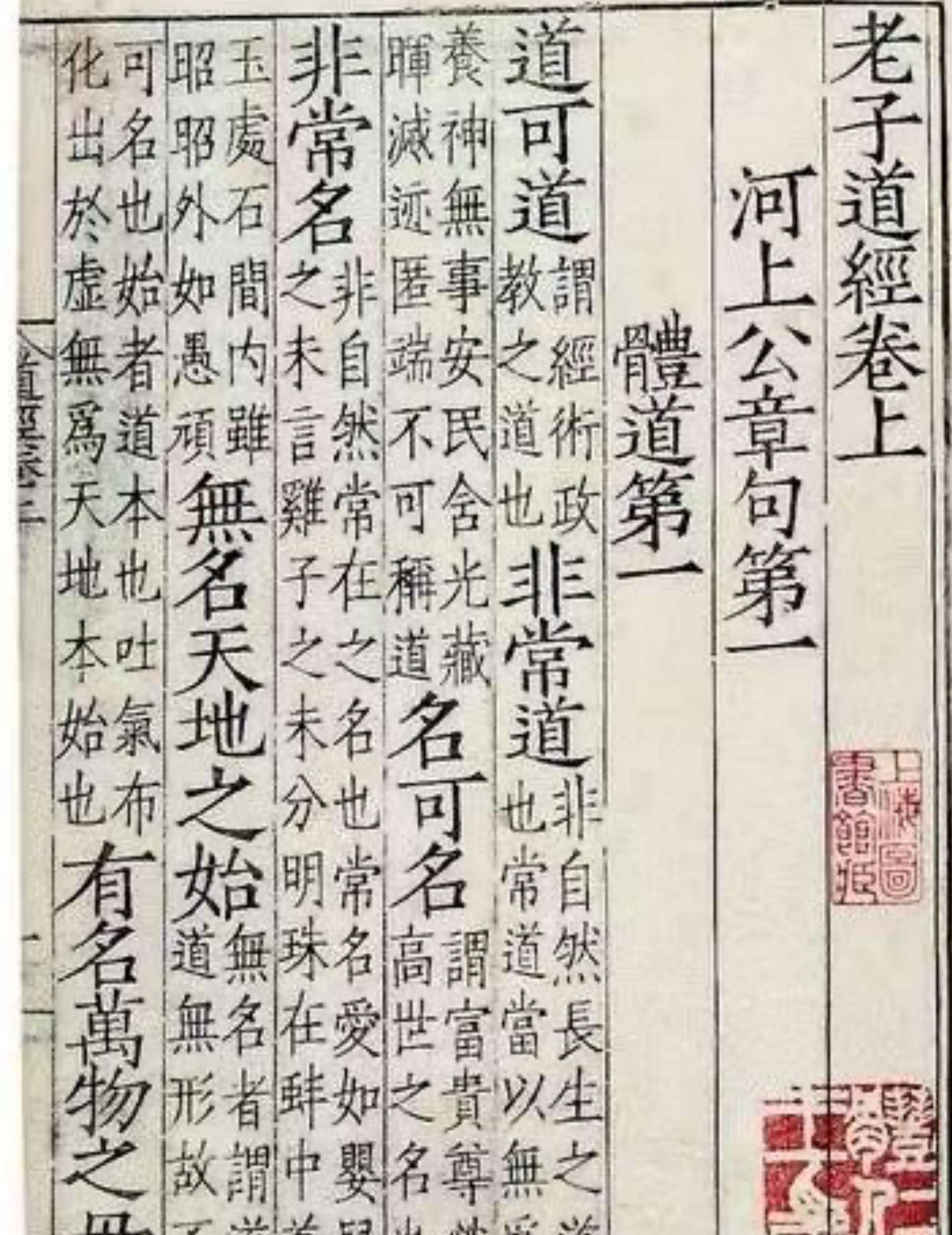
1. A Comparison of Chapter 12 From *Dao De Jing* Between *Qunshu Zhiyao* and *Laozi Heshang Gong zhu* (*Heshang Gong's Commentary on the Laozi* 老子河上公注)
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- While Heshang Gong discusses both **the way of governing the state** and **the way of cultivating the self**, his primary emphasis lies in the cultivation of the self and the preservation of health.
- 河上公對治國與治身之道雖皆有論述，但其重點卻在治身養生。

Laozi daodejing Heshang Gong zhangju dianjiao 老子道德經河上公章句點校, Wang Ka王卡



The five colours blind people's eyes.

The five notes deafen people's ears.

The five flavours deafen people's mouth.

The chase and the hunt madden people's hearts.

Precious goods impede people's activities.

This is why sages are for the belly and not for the eye;

And so they cast off the one and take up the other.

五色令人目盲。五音令人耳聾。五味令人口爽。馳騁田獵，令人心發狂。難得之貨，令人行妨。是以聖人為腹不為目，故去彼取此。

The five colours blind people's eyes.

五色令人目盲。

👉 Heshang Gong 河上公：

Indulgence in lust and beauty

impairs people's essence and makes
people blind.

貪淫好色，則傷精失明。



The five notes deafen people's ears.

五音令人耳聾。

👉 Heshang Gong 河上公：

If people are fond of five notes, the harmonious *qi* will leave their mind and they are unable to listen the soundless sound.

好聽五音，則和氣去心，不能聽無聲之聲。



The five flavours deafen people's mouth.

五味令人口爽。

👉 Heshang Gong 河上公：

Shuang means losing. When people are addicted to the five flavours on the palate, the mouth will lose. This means people deviate from the *Dao*.

爽，亡也。人嗜於五味於口，則口亡，言失於道也。



The chase and the hunt madden people's hearts.

馳騁田獵，令人心發狂。

👉 Heshang Gong 河上公：

Human spirit is fond of tranquility. When people chase, hunt, and breath(irregularly), the spirit will dissolve.

Hence, people become mad.

人精神好安靜，馳騁呼吸，精神散亡，故發狂也。



Precious goods impede people's activities.

難得之貨，令人行妨。

👉 Heshang Gong 河上公：

Fang means 'to harm'. Precious goods refers to gold, silver, pearls and jade. If people's heart is **greedy**, mind has **desires**, and they **do not feel satisfied**, their conduct will be **harmed** and the people themselves will be **disgraced**.

妨，傷也。難得之貨，謂金銀珠玉，心貪意欲，不知饜足，則行傷身辱也。



Indulging in desires ruins
people's health and self-
cultivation.



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people's eyes.
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This is why sages are **for the belly** and **not for the eye**.

And so they cast off the one and take up the other.

是以聖人為腹不為目。故去彼取此。

👉 Heshang Gong 河上公：

for the belly (為腹)：守五性，去六情，節志氣，養神明。

for the belly (為腹): 守五性，去六情，節志氣，養神明。

The Five Dispositions refer to the five properties: **essence**, **spirit**, **acuity of hearing**, **clarity of sight**, and **faculty of speech**.

「五性」是指「精、神、聰、明、音聲」這五種特性。

Laozi heshanggong zhangju de wuxingliuqing shuo xilun <老子河上公章句> 的「五性六情」說論析, Ma Bing 馬兵

for the belly (為腹): 守五性, 去六情, 節志氣, 養神明。

Liuqing 六情: the form, the skeleton, bones, flesh, blood, and the channel.

六情:形、骸、骨、肉、血、脈也。

For those who cultivate yourself, you ought to eliminate emotions and dispel desires to empty the five viscera. Then the spirit will return. (chap.11)

治身者，當除情去欲，使五臟空虛，神乃歸之也。

for the belly (為腹): 守五性，去六情，節志氣，養神明。

One should take *qi* as the root and essence as the stem... to have the deep root and firm stem is the way to attain longevity and prolonged eyesight (vitality).
(chap.10)

人能以氣為根，以精為蒂.....深根蒂固者，乃長生久視之道。

for the belly (為腹): 守五性，去六情，節志氣，養神明。

If people are able to nurture the spirit, then they will not die.
(chap.6)

人能養神，則不死也。

for the belly (為腹): 守五性，去六情，節志氣，養神明。

Cultivating ourselves → Maintaining health → Being Eternal

This is why sages are for the belly and **not for the eye**. And so they cast off the one and take up the other.

是以聖人為腹不為目。故去彼取此。

👉 Heshang Gong 河上公：

not for the eye(不為目)：Eyes do not gaze randomly.

Random gazing will cause the essence to leak outward.

目不妄視，妄視洩精於外。

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Precious goods impede people's activities.

~~This is why~~ sages are for the belly and not for
~~the eye;~~

~~And so they cast off the one and take up the
other.~~

**Indulging in
desires ruins
people's
health and
self-
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~~Cultivating
yourselves →
Maintaining
health → Bein
g eternal~~

Qunshu zhiyao :

五色令人目盲，（貪淫好色，則傷精失明。）五音令人耳聾，（好聽五音，則和氣去心也。）

五味令人口爽，（爽，妄也。人嗜於五味，則口妄，失於道。）馳騁田獵，令人心發狂，

（人精神好安靜，馳騁呼吸，精神散亡，故發狂也。）難得之貨，令人行妨。（妨，傷也。難得之貨，謂金，銀，珠，玉，心貪意欲，則行傷身辱也。）

Laozi Heshang Gong zhu:

五色令人目盲；（貪淫好色，則傷精失明也。）五音令人耳聾；（好聽五音，則和氣去心，不能聽無聲之聲。）五味令人口爽；（爽，亡也。人嗜於五味於口，則口亡，言失於道也。）馳騁畋獵，令人心發狂，（人精神好安靜，馳騁呼吸，精神散亡，故發狂也。）難得之貨，令人行妨。（妨，傷也。難得之貨，謂金銀珠玉，心貪意欲，不知饜足，則行傷身辱也。）

~~是以聖人為腹，（守五性，去六情，節志氣，養神明。）不為目，（目不妄視，妄視洩精於外。）故去彼取此。（去彼目之妄視，取此腹之養性。）~~

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Qunshu Zhiyao. Vol. 34, *Laozi*. (Trans. Philip J. Ivanhoe, with modifications)

Why Was This Passage
Retained?



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Qunshu zhiyao: 知人者智，自知者明，勝人者有力，自勝者強，知足者富，強行者則有志，不失其所者久，死而不妄者壽。

道常無為，而無不為，侯王若能守之，萬物將自化。 **Chap.37**

Heshang gong: 知人者智，自知者明，勝人者有力，自勝者強，知足者富，強行者則有志，不失其所者久，死而不妄者壽。

(Chap.33)

Qunshu zhiyao:知人者智，自知者明，勝人者有力，自勝者強，知足者富，強行者則有志，不失其所者久，**死而不妄者壽**（目不妄視，耳不妄聽，口不妄語，則無怨惡於**天下**，故長壽也。）**道常無為，而無不為，侯王若能守之，萬物將自化。**（言侯王而能守道，萬物將自化，效於己也。）

From what I have observed, emperors throughout ancient times... when it came to institutions, they **rejected extravagance and advocated frugality.**

臣觀自古帝王...言制度也，則絕奢靡而崇儉約。

Precious goods are acquired from even the farthest (corners of the world)... If the superior indulge in extravagance, yet expect the inferior to uphold simplicity and frugality, there will not be such a thing.

難得之貨，無遠不臻...上好奢靡，而望下敦朴，未之有也

When Your Majesty first ascended the throne... your mind was free from cravings and desires, you removed hunting gear within the palace and cut off all sources of hunting outside. Yet after several years, you failed to uphold your will... and found pleasure in chasing and hunting.

陛下初登大位...心無嗜慾，內除畢弋之物，外絕畋獵之源。數載之後，不能固志...以馳騁為歡。

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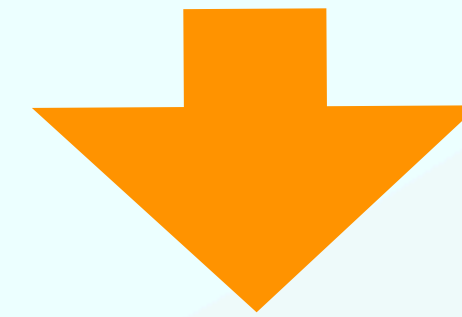
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cultivation.**

~~Cultivating
yourselves → M
aintaining
health → Bein
g eternal~~

Heshang Gong:

**Restraining
desires→maintaining
health&upholding the moral
character→Being eternal**



Qunshu zhiyao:

**Restraining
desires→maintaining
health&upholding the moral
character→Governing the
states by self-cultivation**

THANK YOU
FOR
LISTENING

