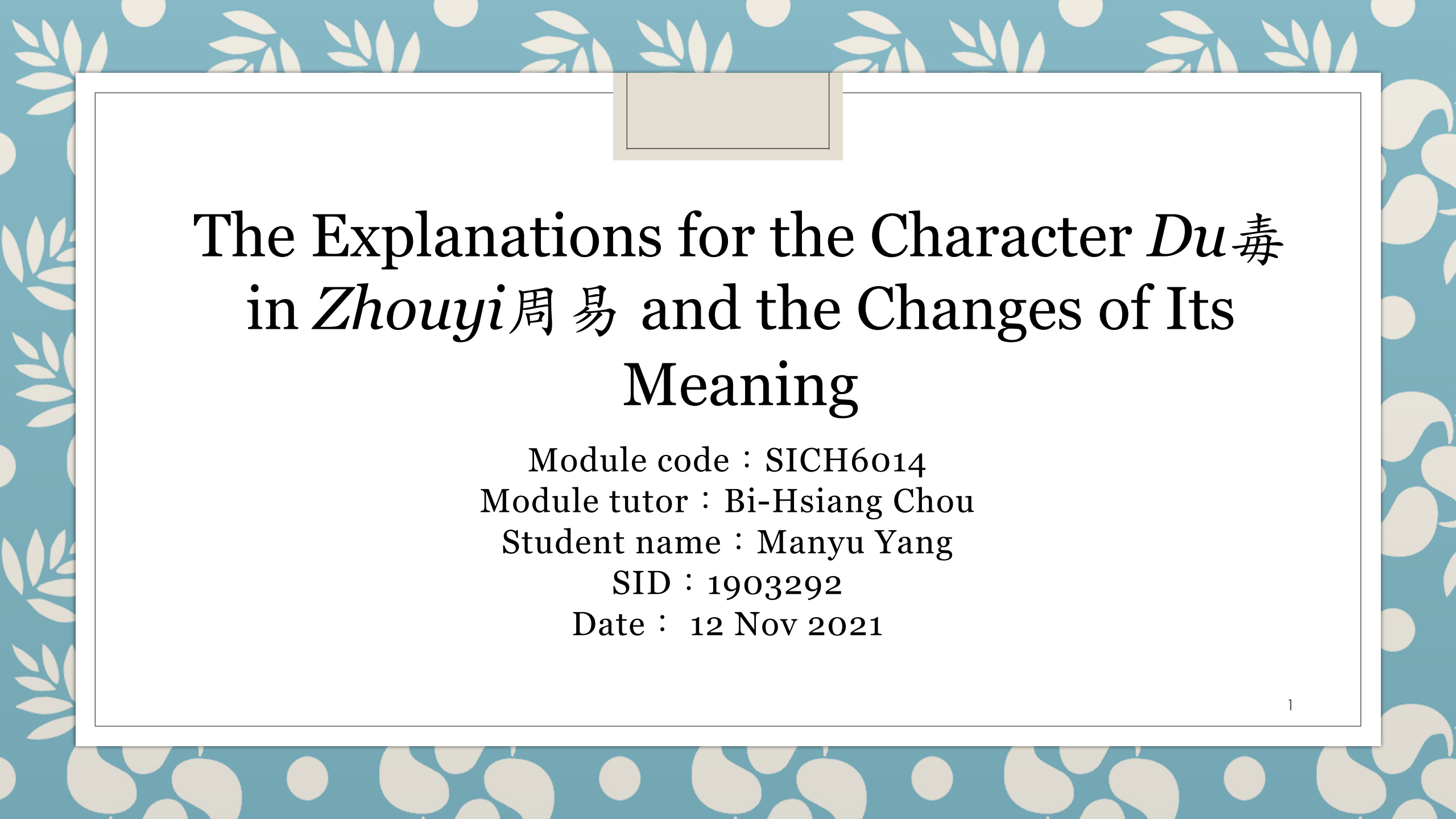




The Explanations for the Character *Du* 毒 in *Zhouyi* 周易 and the Changes of Its Meaning

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Du 毒
Today's meaning:
Poison

1. 以此**毒**天下，而民从之，吉又何咎矣。
——《周易·師卦·彖傳》
2. 噬腊肉，遇**毒**，小吝，無咎。
——《周易·噬嗑卦·六三》



Content

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2. Finding out the original meanings ——
Analysing through shape
3. Analysing through sound
4. Analysing through texts
5. Conclusion: The differences between the ancient meanings and modern meanings of *Du*

1. How can't the character *Du* be understood as its modern meanings in *Zhouyi*.

Du

1. 以此毒天下，而民从之，吉又何咎矣。
——《周易·師卦·彖傳》

Du

2. 噬腊肉，遇毒，小吝，無咎。
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1. How can't the character *Du* be understood as its modern meanings in *Zhouyi*.

The modern meanings of the character *du* 毒:

Noun

1. Harm;
2. Harmful materials;
3. Narcotic drugs;
4. A metaphor for the things which can harm people's ideology.

Verb

1. Hate;
2. Harm;
3. Using harmful drugs to kill or hurt.

1. How can't the character *Du* be understood as its modern meanings in *Zhouyi*.

***Du* : (harm?)**

1. 以此毒天下，而民从之，吉又何咎矣。
——《周易·師卦·彖傳》

***Du* : (poison?)**

2. 噬腊肉，遇毒，小吝，無咎。
——《周易·噬嗑卦·六三》

2. Finding out the original meanings —— Analysing through shape

Du 毒

Heavy. The harmful grass usually grow together and look luxuriant.

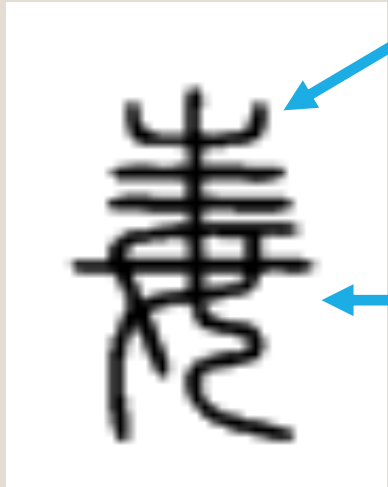
The radical of the character is *che* 𠂇 and *ai* 𠂇.

厚也。害人之艸，往往而生。从𠂇，从毒。

——*Shuowen jiezi*



2. Finding out the original meanings —— Analysing through shape



Che 屮

Newly grown grass and trees

艸木初生也

Ai 毒

People who are immoral

人無行也

——*Shuowen jiezi*

2. Finding out the original meanings —— Analysing through shape



Du 毒

Heavy. 厚

Questions:

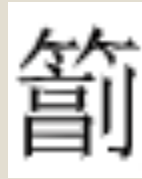
1. Does the character *du* originally means ‘**harmful**’?
2. How do we understand the word ‘**heavy**’ (厚) correctly?

2. Finding out the original meanings —— Analysing through shape

(1). Does the character *du* originally means ‘harmful’?



The ancient form



is the ancient form of *du* 毒, the radical is *dao* 刀.
古文毒，从刀。



Means harmful

—— *Shuowen jiezi*

2. Finding out the original meanings —— Analysing through shape

(2). How do we understand the word ‘**heavy**厚’ correctly?

The pronunciation of the character *hou*厚(heavy) is close to *du*毒...

*Zhanguoce Qince*戰國策·秦策 says, you cannot gain a great victory.

Gao You’s annotation says, the character *hou*厚 means great.

Zhouyu says, the richer the flavor is, the more deleterious it becomes

Wei Zhao’s annotation says, rich flavor contains great harm.

厚也者，毒厚聲相近...

《秦策》非能**厚**勝之也。高注：**厚**，大也。

《周語》：**厚**味寔臘毒。韋注：味厚，其毒亟也。

——*Shuowen jiezi yizheng*

2. Finding out the original meanings —— Analysing through shape

(2). How do we understand the word ‘**heavy**厚’ correctly?

Shuowen jiezi: du^{ㄉㄨˊ}𡩊 : hou 𡩊 (thickness)

Duan Yucai: 𡩊 各本作**厚**，今正。許意厚薄字當作 𡩊

Shuowen jiezi: hou厚: the greatness of mountains
山陵之厚也

2. Finding out the original meanings —— Analysing through shape

Du 毒

Du has both of kind and evil meanings, just like the character *xiang* 祥 can be used to describe both of good fortune and bad fortune, the character *chou* 臭 contains both meanings of good smell and bad smell.

毒兼善惡之辭，猶祥兼吉凶，臭兼香臭也
——*Shuowen jiezi zhu*



A relatively neutral word

3. Finding out the original meanings —— Analysing through sound

💡 Homophonous or nearly homophonous graphs are likely to hold the same meanings.

Du 毒

————→
interchangeable

Du 竺 *Du* 篤 —— Duan yucaí

Du 督 —— Zhu Junsheng

Du 簪 —— Zhu Junsheng

3. Analysing through sound

	上古聲紐 Initials	段玉裁17韻 部 Finals (following Duan Yucan's 17 ancient- time finals)	陳新雄32韻 部 Finals (following Chen Xinxiong's 32 ancient- time finals)	擬音 Restructuring pronunciations
毒	定	尤	覺	duk
篤	端	尤	覺	tuk
督	端	尤	覺	tuk
管	端	尤	覺	tuk
竺	端	尤	覺	tuk

3. Analysing through sound

◦ Du 毒 Finding **cognate** 同源詞

◦ Original meanings in *Shuowen jiezi*:



◦ **Du** 篤: Horse walks slowly (馬行頓遲也。)

Duan yuca: firm and solid (篤，固也。篤，厚也。)

◦ **Du** 督: To observe and to inspect, and another meaning is eye pain (督，察視，一曰目痛也。)



◦ **Du** 筍: Thick →



◦ **Du** 竺: Thick →



4. Analysing through texts

(1)The original text: 以此毒天下，而民從之，吉又何咎矣。

Annotations：

1. Ma Rong (馬融)：to manage. 治也
2. Wang Bi (王弼)：to order. 毒猶役也
3. Kong Yingda (孔穎達)：to order. 使役
4. Cheng Yi (程頤)：to harm. 毒害
5. Hu Yuan (胡瑗)：to order. 役使
6. Xu Zhirui (徐志銳)：to harm. 害

4. Analysing through texts

(2). The original text: 噬腊肉，遇毒，小吝，無咎。

Annotations:

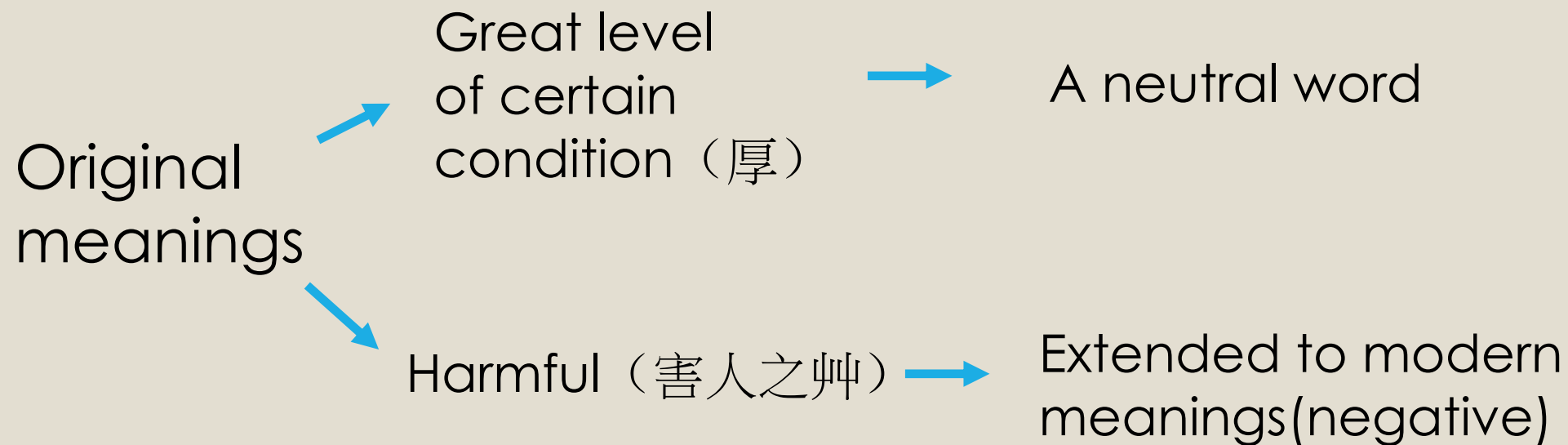
1. Wang Bi (王弼): a metaphor for resentment starting to form. 以喻怨生

2. Kong Yingda (孔穎達): Bitter and rotted things. 苦惡之物也。

3. Cheng Yi (程頤): Strong and bad taste. 毒惡之味。

4. Lai Zhide (来之德): The part with strong taste in a dried meat which has been sitting out for too long. 臘肉之陳久太肥者也。.....言噬干肉而遇陳久太肥厚味之肉也。

5. Conclusion



Thank you for listening

