

# CONFUCIAN HERESY AND RELIGIOUS IMAGINATION: A STUDY OF THE RENDERINGS OF MOZI BY PROTESTANTISM MISSIONARIES IN 19TH CENTURY

*Jiixin Lin*

School of Foreign Studies, Northwestern Polytechnical University, Xi'an, 710129 - China.

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6534-9471> |  [linjiixin@nwpu.edu.cn](mailto:linjiixin@nwpu.edu.cn)

*Zihan Yu*

School of Foreign Languages, Guangdong University of Finance and Economics, Guangzhou, 510655 - China.

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0102-3442> |  [ElenaYu20021015@163.com](mailto:ElenaYu20021015@163.com)

*Honghui Hu*

School of Foreign Languages, Guangdong University of Finance and Economics, Guangzhou, 510655 - China.

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5204-7033> |  [20031509@gdufe.edu.cn](mailto:20031509@gdufe.edu.cn)

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**Keywords:** Mozi. Protestantism missionaries. Christianity. Confucianism.

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**Resumo:** Como uma heresia confucionista, Mozi inicialmente chamou a atenção do missionário inglês Joseph Edkins, em 1858. Posteriormente, o missionário holandês Johann Jakob Maria de Groot traduziu a Doutrina Funerária de Mozi, que tem fortes tonalidades religiosas. Joseph e Groot, que representavam os missionários do protestantismo, interpretaram Mozi em uma variedade de narrativas teológicas. Os dois missionários, que procuravam conexões entre Mozi e o cristianismo, consideravam Mozi um cânone teológico, contendo doutrina cristã. Eles também atacaram o confucionismo, a antítese do cristianismo, apontando que Mozi era um herege, na tradição confuciana. Através dessa imaginação religiosa sobre Mozi, mais missionários e sinologistas se juntaram à tradução de Mozi, e a jornada da transmissão do cânone para o Ocidente começou.

**Palavras-chave:** Mozi. Missionários do protestantismo. Cristianismo. Confucionismo.

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# CONFUCIAN HERESY AND RELIGIOUS IMAGINATION: A STUDY OF THE RENDERINGS OF MOZI BY PROTESTANTISM MISSIONARIES IN 19TH CENTURY<sup>1</sup>

*Jiixin Lin*<sup>2</sup>*Zihan Yu*<sup>3</sup>*Honghui Hu*<sup>4</sup>

**Abstract:** Mozi first came to the English missionary Joseph Edkins' attention in 1858 as a Confucian heretic. Subsequently, the Dutch missionary Johann Jakob Maria de Groot translated Mozi's Funerary Doctrine, which has strong religious overtones. Protestantism missionaries were represented by Joseph and Groot, whose renderings of Mozi were replete with theological interpretations. Mozi was imagined as a religious canon, containing Christian doctrine, by the two missionaries who were keen to find commonalities between Mozi and Christianity. They also used Mozi's status as a Confucian heretic to criticize Confucianism, the archenemy of Christianity. Through this religious imagination of Mozi, more missionaries and sinologists joined Mozi's translation, and the journey of the canon's transmission to the West started.

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## INTRODUCTION

Missionary activities have many important aspects, such as missionary activities, social undertakings, cultural exchanges, etc. The priests' missionary activities in China have a long history. During the missionary process, priests brought their own culture and belief concepts into Chinese society and tried to share their religion with the Chinese people. For Chinese society, this is a way of cultural exchange and contact with foreign cultures. During the Ming and Qing dynasties, Jesuits came to China. While spreading Christianity, they translated a large number of Western knowledge and created a powerful Western learning Movement that became the second high point in the history of Chinese translation. Priests

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<sup>2</sup> School of Foreign Studies, Northwestern Polytechnical University, Xi'an, 710129 - China, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6534-9471>. E-mail: [linjiixin@nwpu.edu.cn](mailto:linjiixin@nwpu.edu.cn).

<sup>3</sup> School of Foreign Languages, Guangdong University of Finance and Economics, Guangzhou, 510655 - China, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0102-3442>. E-mail: [ElenaYu20021015@163.com](mailto:ElenaYu20021015@163.com).

<sup>4</sup> School of Foreign Languages, Guangdong University of Finance and Economics, Guangzhou, 510655 - China, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5204-7033>. E-mail: [20031509@gdufe.edu.cn](mailto:20031509@gdufe.edu.cn).

not only introduced Western learning and Chinese classics to different countries at the same time. Some scholars refer to this period as the period of “Missionary Sinology”. Since the Jesuits’ arrival in China, the translation and study of Chinese classics became the earliest form of Western Sinology. Protestantism missionaries to China, in the 19th century, continued the sinology tradition set up by the first Jesuits, which was translating Chinese classics. For example, Joshua Marshman (1768-1837), an English Baptist missionary, published *The Works of Confucius: Containing the Original Text, with a Translation* in Serampore, India, in 1809. A member of the London Missionary Society, David Collie (? -1828), first translated the *Four Books* into English in 1828. In contrast to the Jesuits, the Preacher no longer confined themselves to Confucian canons but extended their translation activities, the Taoist classics, including *Dao De Jing*, and the work of the Mohist School, *Mozi*. It was in this context that *Mozi* was first introduced to the West. The background of the missionaries’ presence in China can be traced back to hundreds of years ago, and the missionaries’ activities are related to the cultural exchanges and trade in China. As early as the ancient Silk Road period, there were cultural and commodity exchanges between China and foreign countries. Over time, Christianity and its missionaries began to enter China, bringing new ideas and religious concepts to the Chinese people.

The focus of this work is John Locke’s use of Domingo Fernandez de Navarrete’s work *History, Politics, Ethics and Religious Treaties of China’s Monarchy* (1676) in his paper “Human Understanding” (1690). It pays special attention to the English philosophers’ possession of ethnographic information recorded by Spanish priests, from which he expounds his theory of human understanding. The proposed speech is part of the recent contributions of the history of science, which highlight the role of Iberian powers in accumulating information about the world outside Europe, which has driven knowledge production in modern centuries. From our grandfather’s happiest memories, Carolo’s charitable architect, and not the Roman emperors, Rudolfo and Ferdinand, our second generation, is also very fond, and then we have built time in architectural dignity, concession and confirmation, which will be followed by literary words.

## 1 THE DEBUT OF THE CONFUCIAN HERESY: JOSEPH EDKINS’ INTRODUCTION OF *MOZI*

One of the main motivations for the Jesuits and Protestant missionaries’ translation activities was to spread the Christian faith and the content of the Bible. Jesuits and Protestant missionaries saw translating *the Bible* into local languages as an important way to make Christianity more accessible and acceptable to local people. By translating *the Bible* into local languages, they hope to communicate Christian teachings and values to a wider community. As far as information is available, the earliest introduction of *Mozi* to the West was made by Joseph Edkins (1823-1905), who was a member of the London Missionary Society (Fang,

1991, p. 12). Joseph was one of the most prominent sinologists in the 19th century. He was an accomplished scholar in multiple fields of sinology. During his time in China, he collaborated with Chinese scholars, such as Li Shanlan and Wang Tao, on several occasions by translating, editing and publishing a series of Western scientific works. The most famous of which was *Sixteen Primers of Western Learnings*, published in 1898. This book systematically introduced knowledge of Western zoology, botany, chemistry, geography, physiology, logic, and other subjects. Joseph was regarded as one of the founders of British Sinology by making important breakthroughs, particularly in the study of the Chinese language and phonetics and Chinese Buddhism. His major masterpieces include *A Grammar of Colloquial Chinese: as Exhibited in the Shanghai Dialect* (1853), *A Grammar of the Chinese Colloquial Language Commonly Called the Mandarin Dialect* (1857), *China's Place in Philology: An Attempt to Show Philology* (1871), *Introduction to the Study of the Chinese Characters* (1876), *Chinese Buddhism: a Volume of Sketches, Historical, Descriptive, and Critical* (1880), *The Evolution of Chinese as an Example of the Origin and Development of Human Languages* (1888), etc. Joseph Edkins was an English missionary and sinologist who worked in China in the second half of the 19th century, in a historical and cultural context that was an important period of Chinese modernization and foreign cultural influence. Joseph Edkins's period of activity was the rise of a series of modernization movements and trends of thought in China, including the Westernization Movement, the Self-Strengthening Movement, and the Reform. These movements sought to promote China's modernization process by absorbing Western science, technology and political systems.

Perhaps it was because of his extensive interest in China, or perhaps by chance, that Joseph discovered Mozi, a philosopher long neglected in China. In 1858, Joseph published an essay in the fifth issue of the *Journal of the North China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, entitled "Notices of the Character and Writings of Meh Tsi", which served as the beginning of the translation of Mozi in the West (Edkins, 1858, p. 155).

When exploring the relationship between Confucian heresy and religion in the fields of missionary science and academia, some existing reference books can be used for dialogue. Although there are no works specifically addressing this specific issue, the following bibliography may provide some relevant perspectives: "Teaching through Communication". It is a classic work on teaching through communication, covering the history, methods and significance of missionary activities. Some of the chapters mentioned the spread of Eastern culture and religion, which can be used as a background study of the heresy and religious exchanges of Confucianism. This short essay by Joseph contained a wealth of information relating to Mozi. He referred to Mozi as "[...] the most influential of the early opponents of Confucianism" (Dulskis, 2014, p. 45), and it was evident that Joseph regarded Mozi as a heretic of Confucianism. Joseph had a very high opinion of Mozi, the masterpiece of the Mohist School. In his view, Mozi was less readable than the Taoist texts: *Laozi* and *Zhuangzi*.

Still, Mozi's ideological content was far superior to both, especially as the ethical ideology in *Mozi* was unique in the mainstream philosophy in the period before the Qin Dynasty. Joseph Edkins received a traditional Christian education in England and was trained in medicine. These experiences laid the foundation for his future missionary and medical work. Joseph Edkins developed a keen interest in China's language, culture, history and philosophy, and became an avid sinologist. He studied the Chinese language in depth and conducted extensive research on ancient Chinese literature and philosophy.

Following the essay, Joseph focused on Mozi's doctrine of “兼爱”, which was translated as “the doctrine of equal and universal love”. Joseph pointed out that Mozi, like all ancient Chinese philosophers, had his own political aspirations and ideals. Mozi's lifelong quest was to establish the best governance mechanism that would bring long-lasting peace to the country, which depended on the implementation of “兼爱”. After introducing Mozi's identity and the doctrine of “兼爱”, Joseph focused on Mencius' critique of “兼爱” and the Confucianism-Mohism controversy behind it. In his view, the essence of the conflict between Confucianism and Mohism was simple as the following. While both Confucianism and Mohism were revered as prominent schools at the time, the influence of Mohism was gaining momentum over Confucianism, so Confucians became concerned that Mohism might threaten the status of Confucianism. As a result, later Confucian scholars began to take turns launching fierce attacks on the Mohists. Amongst the analysis, Joseph focused his analysis on Mencius' critique of “兼爱”. According to Joseph, Mencius denounced it as “a cruel principle without respect to fathers”, mainly because it posed a great challenge to Confucian ethical norms. Mozi believed in the existence of the mandate of heaven and believed that human beings should conform to it. He emphasized the moral connection between man and heaven, and advocated that individual and social behavior should be guided by the norms of the Way of Heaven. Mozi paid attention to pragmatism, the solution of practical problems and the improvement of society. He advocated the combination of theory and practice, not abstractly entangled in knowledge, and ignored the actual situation.

The reason for the denouncement was that “兼爱”, which advocated a kind of universal love regardless of generation or class, contradicted the Confucian idea of filial piety. For Confucians, people should not love others more than they love their parents. If universal love was practiced, Confucians thought that children would not be able to fulfill their duty of filial piety to their parents (Dulskis, 2014, p. 63).

According to Edkins, Mencius' accusation that Mozi was “of no respect to filial piety” was unfair. In Joseph's view, although Mozi raised many objections to Confucianism, Mozi did not oppose Confucian filial piety. Mozi made it clear that loyalty and filial piety were incumbent upon everyone. Accordingly, Joseph further analyzed the reasons for Mencius' extreme hatred of “兼爱”: (1) Mozi was the first person of his time to attack Confucianism

openly, so Mozi contained a great deal of opposition to Confucianism, which Mencius regarded as disrespectful to the personality and teachings of his venerated teacher Confucius; (2) In Mencius' time, there was a proliferation of thinkers, various doctrines and schools of thought, especially the emergence of the two heretical doctrines of Yang Zhu (a philosopher advocating ethical egoism) and Mozi. These two heretical schools of thought were prevalent while trampling on and destroying the orthodox moral concepts inherited from the ancient sage kings and Confucius. Therefore, it was the duty of Confucian scholars to eradicate heresies and defend the orthodoxy of Confucianism. From this perspective, Joseph believed that the main reason why Mencius spared no effort to expel Mohism was that the social influence of Mohism was so strong that it posed a great threat to Confucianism. It was for the same reason that Xunzi and other Confucian scholars followed Mencius' example and joined in the attack on Mozi (Chiu, 2014, p. 199). Mozi believed in the existence of the mandate of heaven and believed that human beings should conform to it. He emphasized the moral connection between man and heaven, and advocated that individual and social behavior be guided by following the norms of the Way of Heaven. This view has moral and ethical implications, advocating that people should shape their own behavior according to justice and morality. Mozi paid attention to pragmatism, the solution of practical problems and the improvement of society. He advocated the combination of theory and practice, not entangled in the abstractness of learning and ignoring the actual situation. Mozi emphasized the verification and perfection of theories through practice, and put forward many practical suggestions on water conservancy, architecture, weapons and so on.

Finally, Joseph contrasted “兼爱” of the Mohist school with Christian philanthropism. In his view, the Mohist doctrine of universal love fits well with the Christian idea of philanthropism in the *New Testament*. Joseph was surprised to find that the doctrine of universal love of Mohism predated the birth of Christianity by five centuries. He was even more puzzled by the fact that this doctrine of “兼爱”, similar to Christian doctrine, was not well received in China. Joseph also analyzed the differences between the forms of “兼爱” and philanthropism in practice. According to Edkins, the former was based on political utilitarianism and relied mainly on rulers to implement it, and the Savior (Jesus) advocated fraternity on a religious and moral basis. Christian fraternity mainly followed the God's will, and the object of the fraternity was the whole world while Mozi's universal love was not for the enemy. In Joseph's view, “兼爱” presented a strong utilitarian dimension. Thus, it seemed closer to the British utilitarian philosophers' vies, such as Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) and William Paley (1743-1805) in the 19th century. Joseph even argued that if Mozi had lived in the same era as the British utilitarian philosophers, they would undoubtedly have become confidants (Shu, 2014, p. 199). A good translation should strive to accurately convey the ideas and meanings of the original work. If the translation of Mozi's Funerary Doctrine can accurately convey its content and intention, readers would be able to better understand

Mozi's views and philosophical thoughts. There may be semantic deviation or inaccuracy in the translation process, resulting in the meaning of the original text cannot be accurately conveyed. This may be because there are differences in vocabulary and grammatical structures between languages, and it may be difficult to find the right words for certain concepts or ideas.

To sum up, as one of the most influential sinologists in the West in the 19th century, Joseph attracted many domestic scholars' attention due to his sinology achievements. Perhaps because of his great success in several study fields of sinology, the essay he wrote to introduce *Mozi* has not attracted the attention of the domestic academic community in China. As the first discoverer of Mozi in the West, Joseph had a profound impact on the study of *Mozi* in the West in the 19th century because of this essay, which also profoundly influenced the reception and dissemination of *Mozi* in the West.

Because Groot introduces a Christian perspective into his interpretation of *Mozi*, it may lead to bias against other religious or philosophical views. This bias may affect the objective understanding and evaluation of Mozi's thought, thus making the interpretation too subjective or one-sided. Firstly, Joseph was the first to discover Mozi's identity as the Confucian heresy, which provided a new clue for Protestantism missionaries in the 19th century to criticize Confucianism. Joseph's introduction of *Mozi* mainly started with Mozi's identity as a Confucian heretic, followed by the introduction of Mozi's core idea of “兼爱” and Mencius' criticism, which further led to the Confucianism-Mohism controversy. Thus, Joseph clearly discussed Mozi and Mozi's doctrine within the broader context of the Confucianism-Mohism controversy. It was particularly important to realize its context because Joseph's discovery of the archenemy of Confucianism, Mozi, provided Protestant missionaries with new theoretical resources and methodological guidance for their critique of Confucianism during Joseph's time when the conflict between Confucianism and Protestantism was at its most acute.

Secondly, Joseph was not only the first to introduce Mozi's idea of universal love but also to realize the intrinsic fit between Mozi's “兼爱” and Christian philanthropist. This important discovery drew many missionaries' attention, including James Legge and Groot, and later, missionaries were delighted to discover that Mozi was probably the only theist among the pre-Qin philosophers. As a result, more and more missionaries from the second half of the 19th century onwards began to imagine *Mozi* as a religious text containing Christian doctrine, attempting to theologize it and find more traces of the God's existence in it. On the other hand, Joseph presented *Mozi* and Mozi's doctrine of universal love from a Christian standpoint. In Joseph's view, Mozi's “兼爱” could not be compared to the Christian fraternity because the latter covered the whole of humanity, whereas Mozi's “兼爱” excluded

enemies. Such an assertion was made from the standpoint of Christian theology, and it was suspected that it honored Christianity and devalued Mohism.

It should be affirmed, however, that Joseph's presentation of *Mozi* and Mozi's thought was essentially objective by seeing both the formal commonalities of Mozi's "兼爱" and Christian philanthropism and being aware of the difference in connotation between the two. The universal love, connoted by "兼爱", seemed to fit more with utilitarian philosophy, which suggested that Joseph had implicitly noticed Mozi's philosophical value. It demonstrated Joseph's vision as a professional sinologist. It was somewhat unfortunate that Joseph did not expand on this. However, this important discovery also opened up the possibility of a shift from religious imagination to philosophical writing in the West in the early 20th century. From this point of view, Joseph pioneered the translation of *Mozi*, and his main contribution to the reception of *Mozi* in the West was that he activated missionaries' religious imagination of Mozi and set in motion a wave of missionary translations and studies of Mozi.

Although missionary sinologists in the late Qing Dynasty may have studied and translated Chinese literature, they did not translate *Jane Eyre* into Chinese. Therefore, during the late Qing Dynasty, there was no English translation abstract available for providing about *Jane Eyre*. Mohism is not Li's doctrine (Chu, 2021, p. 161). Mohism is a school of philosophy in ancient China, which originated in the Warring States Period and developed and flourished in the Qin Dynasty and later Han Dynasty. The representatives of Mohism include Mozi, Xunzi and Mencius. Moxue emphasizes the core concept of "universal love" and advocates world peace, justice and moral education. Mozi emphasized the concepts of "non-aggression" and "universal love", advocated tolerance, peace and mutual assistance, and opposed war and violence (Wu; Amin, 2021, p. 430; Sloyan, 2000, p. 560).

Ancient religion in China's religious system included many religious beliefs, such as Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, folk religion, etc. These belief systems interact and blend with each other, and are managed and controlled by the government. Religion in China's religious system has undergone many changes in history. In ancient times, emperors and official institutions maintained social order and rule legitimacy through sacrificial ceremonies. With the passage of time, the status of Confucianism in society has gradually risen, and Confucianism has become the mainstream belief, which is combined with political power. In addition, Buddhism was introduced into China from the Eastern Han Dynasty, and gradually developed, which had a profound impact on religion in China's religion and culture (De Groot, 1969, p. 1892). The Fuzhou Protestants played an important role in the social, political and cultural changes of modern China, and had a profound impact on the process of China's modernization. The Fuzhou Protestants originated in the early 19th century and were formed by the Christian faith introduced by missionaries to the Fujian area.

The author describes in detail the Fuzhou Protestants' organizational structure, doctrinal characteristics and social influence (Ryan, 2001, p. 1857).

## 2 INTERPRETING MOZI WITH CHRISTIANITY: GROOT'S RENDERING OF MOZI'S *MODERATION IN FUNERAL*

Jan Jakob Maria de Groot (1854-1921) was a leading Dutch sinologist and historian of religions whose major works included the six-volume *The Religious Systems of China* (1894). A Key to the Study of Taoism and Confucianism (1912). In 1894, in Chapter 8, "Reaction against the Waste of Wealth in Burying the Dead", of the second volume, "The Grave", of the book *The Religious Systems of China*, Groot translated some of the extracts from Mozi's *Moderation in Funeral* (Suh, 2014, p. 214).

Groot spoke highly of Mozi, whom he regarded as the most distinguished ancient Chinese philosopher and thinker. However, he was also critical of Mozi's readability, which he considered to be filled with a large number of repetitive phrases and wordings, in addition to numerous fragments and breaks in the text that resulted in a far inferior literary quality to other ancient Chinese philosophical works. In his view, this was the main reason why *Mozi* had not been studied as much as *Confucius*, *Mencius* and *Laozi* and *Zhuangzi* in the West (Groot, 1894, p. 770).

Groot had already noted the introduction of Mozi by Joseph and James Legge, but he believed that both had concentrated mainly on the exploration of Mozi's "兼爱" (Universal Love). He, therefore, focused his introduction on Mozi's chapter "节葬" (Moderation of Funeral), which previous missionaries had not noted. Groot was well versed in the Western study of Mozi at the time and in Chinese history and philosophy, so he was very rigorous in his approach and paid particular attention to the authenticity and reliability of the historical sources he used. For example, in his introduction of Mozi's life, he mainly used material from Sima Qian's *Shi Ji* (*The Historical Records*) while remaining extremely cautious about other questionable historical materials, such as the numerous accounts of Mozi's life and deeds recorded in Liu An's *Huai Nan Zi*, most of which Groot considered to be credible, but some of which were also questionable, such as in *Huai Nan Zi*'s "Xiu Wu Xun" –that stated Mozi made a kite out of wood and flew it for three days without stopping, but it lacked historical support for the claim that Mozi was the first inventor of kites (Won, 2016, p. 131; Yao; Gombrich, 2017, p. 205).

It is still worth noting that to fit in with the theme of "Chinese funerals" in the book, Groot claimed that he would selectively translate those passages that dealt with Mozi's attitude towards funerals. By comparing the original text, the author found that Groot's translation omitted only the first paragraph of the original text. On the whole, Groot's

translation was more faithful to the original text and more readable. Another feature of this translation was that Groot had noted all the important cultural information in the original text in the footnotes. For example, the phrase “三代圣王” in the first sentence of “三代圣王既没，天下失义” of *Moderation in Funeral* appeared several times in Mozi, which was an extremely important cultural information for understanding Mozi’s thought, because Mozi’s entire line and reasoning were very logical. The primary basis for Mozi’s judgment was the first one of the “Three Standards” (Criterion for judging whether it is true or false in epistemology), i.e. “本之古者圣王之事.”, which referred to the deeds of the ancient saints and kings. In all different renderings of Mozi, only Groot noticed this point and explained it to the reader in the form of footnotes.

The most striking feature of Groot’s translation is the translator’s strong tendency to interpret Mozi in terms of Christianity. This tendency is evident in Groot’s assessment of Mozi. In his view, while the other pre-Qin thinkers were at pains to preach realism and materialism, Mozi had already conceived of a personified nature and of ghosts and gods that could reward good and punish evil. Mozi’s most significant distinction from the other pre-Qin scholars was that he was a theist. There is also a tendency for Groot to adopt Christian vocabulary to translate concepts, terms or culturally loaded vocabulary in Mozi. For example, Groot translated “仁者” as a philanthropist (mostly a Christian term for a philanthropist or a description of God’s goodness); “义” was translated as rectitude (often used interchangeably with righteousness, a common theological concept in Christianity, Judaism and Islam, suggesting that someone’s behavior is right because it satisfies God); “法令” was translated as rescript (often used to refer to the Roman Catholic pope’s or religious authorities’ response to questions of religious doctrine or religious discipline), etc. These are all strongly Christian words (Lin; Liu, 2021, p. 203). On the other hand, as Groot did not fully understand the cultural connotations behind the original text, there were many mistranslations in Groot’s rendering. For example, he translated the word “君子” as magnates, but in fact, the word “magnates” is mostly used in business contexts and refers to a rich and powerful person in industry or business. In ancient China, the term “君子” was more often used to refer to a person of high morals and character.

It is particularly worth mentioning that the chapter “Moderate in Funeral” in Mozi provides a detailed description of the pre-Qin emperors’, princes’, nobles’, and even commoners’ funeral rituals in China. Therefore, the translator must have the necessary cultural background knowledge when translating. Otherwise, mistranslations would occur repeatedly. For example, in *Moderation in Funeral*, the pre-Qin nobility’s funeral rituals were described as “王公大人有丧者，曰棺槨必重，葬埋必厚，衣衾必多，文绣必繁，丘陇必巨”. The phrase “棺槨必重” referred to the fact that when a ruler or a high official died, he would be placed in several inner and outer coffins and buried deep. The word “重” here should therefore be read as “chóng”, meaning multiple layers, rather than as “zhòng”, meaning

weight. The sentence formed invisible intertextuality with the *Book of Rites*. According to the chapter “Tan Gong” (On the Burial Rites) of the *Book of Rites*, “天子之棺四重”, Zheng Xuan, a master of the study of Confucian classics in the Eastern Han Dynasty, had devoted a special examination to the funeral rituals of the pre-Qin period, “诸公三重, 诸侯再重, 大夫一重, 士不重”. Groot, however, mistranslated it as “[...] the coffin and the vault must be heavy and substantial”, apparently mistaking the word “chóng” for “weight” (zhòng).

In fact, another important reason for Groot’s mistranslation was that it was based on Mozi’s version in the late Qing Dynasty with Bi Yuan’s redaction, annotation and version comparison, rather than on Sun Yirang’s master copy, which was recognized as superior in Chinese scholarship at the time. This deficiency in the text, against which other texts were checked, led to a natural deficiency in the accuracy of Groot’s translation.

In the concluding section, Groot commented on Mozi’s idea of moderation in the funeral. He (Wei, 2022, p. 101) pointed out that Mozi’s criticism of the practice of elaborate burial at the time was mainly politically motivated. Mozi wished to see “[...] countries prosperous with a large population, and rulers’ jurisdiction to secure order” (Rex, 2014, p. 7). He abhorred the practice of high officials’ elaborate burials, who sought profit through power. Groot admired Mozi’s character and integrity:

Mozi was not alone; he was not a man isolated from the world. His ethical thinking was not based on a metaphysical or a priori foundation. He was a reasonable man, a statesman, a warrior, and a strategist. Most of his ideas were political, and his political ideal was to build a good society, nothing more. Mozi spent his life working for his country’s economic interests, and he had only the purest ethics and morals at heart. (Groot, 1894, p. 770).

Groot was also aware of the utilitarian philosophy embedded in *Moderation in Funeral*. In his view, it was because Mozi’s thinking was so utilitarian that it made many of the doctrines, presented by Mozi, difficult to stand up to scrutiny (Wong, 2018, p. 45). For example, Mozi often used the Three Standards to argue his points, yet the first one of the Three Standards had obvious logical flaws. In *Moderation in Funeral*, Groot pointed out that Mozi used the details of the burials of three saint kings, Yao, Shun and Yu, to ask people to keep burials short with less expense, but these three kings were at least 180 years older than Mozi. Therefore, in this case, Mozi’s knowledge of their burials at the time of their deaths could not have been as detailed as he described. Thus, to Groot, Mozi argued as if he were telling a story to a child. However, it was more convincing for Mozi to use these ancient saint kings’ life stories, who were revered by the people of their time, to support his argument than for him to make up random stories. Moreover, according to Mozi himself, in his time, the monarchs’ funerals consumed a great deal of wealth. In other words, the social trend of elaborate burials was driven by the ruling class of society. According to Groot, this implied

that elaborate burials were legal at that time. Therefore, other than using Yao's, Shun's and Yu's historical deeds in ancient times as a rationale, Mozi could not find a better way to refute the elaborate-burial culture of his time (Park, 2010, p. 155).

Groot further pointed out that Mozi's advocacy of austerity in burial was so logically implausible, and its philosophical foundation was so weak, that it made it difficult for many of his ideas to make sense. It was because Mozi's advocacy of moderation in funerals was based on a feeble evidence base that, in the following years, Mozi alone could not reverse the deep-rooted custom of elaborate burial in Chinese social life at that time. Later, under Mencius' relentless rebuke, Mozi lost further popular support. Even so, in Groot's view, Mozi's advocacy of a frugal burial was still significant, for Mozi's idea of moderation in funerals was indeed not lacking in insight, but perhaps it failed because it seemed anachronistic in the social context of the time (Xie, 2022, p. 23). In Groot's view, it was because of the soundness of Mozi's ideas that he never lacked followers in later dynasties (Rajiva, 2017, p. 1).

Finally, Groot argued that although Mozi gradually lost the battle between Confucianism and Mohism, later historical practice proved that Mozi's advocates of moderation in funerals won out over Confucianism's "三年之丧" (three years of mourning). Groot found two chapters in *Lü Shi Chun Qiu* (*The Spring and Autumn of Lü Buwei*), entitled "On Handling Funerals Economically" and "On Safeguarding the Dead", indicating that Lü Buwei also advocated short burial with less expense (Park, 2010, p. 190). According to Groot, this also suggested that there was at least one other school of thought besides the Mohist School during the Warring States Period that was strongly opposed to elaborate burials, and it seemed to have been more radical in its attitude than the Mohists (Winans, 1976, p. 407). However, *The Spring and Autumn of Lü Buwei* did not present any new evidence against elaborate burials other than to point out that luxurious tombs were sometimes stolen at the time. Groot also drew on the words in Huangfu Mi's work: *On Death*. Huangfu Mi was a well-known scholar in the Western Jin Dynasty. This meant that Huangfu Mi wanted to shorten his burial and simplify the burying process that required wrapping up, bathing, making clothes and adding funerary objects if he died. In the "Biography of Fan Hong" from the *Book of the Later Han*, it is written "[...]" which stated the history that Fan Hong wanted to have a simple funeral in his last will, and the emperor was so touched that he granted Fan Hong's will and wanted to follow Fan Hong's example to have a simple burial. There were also other related records inferring that, after the pre-Qin dynasty, short funerals with fewer expenses had become the mainstream of society.

In summary, missionaries, such as Joseph and James Legge, who preceded Groot, focused on the translation and interpretation of Mozi's chapter of "兼爱" (Universal Love), whereas Groot, in his *The Religious Systems of China*, took a unique approach to introduce readers to a detailed description of the funeral rituals of the pre-Qin period through

his translation of Mozi's "节葬" (*Moderation in Funeral*). Through his translation and interpretation of *Moderation in Funeral*, Groot not only discovered the important mode of reasoning that runs through Mozi, which includes the Three Standards and the philosophy of utilitarianism that is found everywhere, but also pointed out the logical gaps in this mode of reasoning, which showed that Groot had become aware of the ethical and logical ideas in Mozi, something that previous missionaries had not yet noticed. These important findings highlight Groot's breadth of vision as a distinguished sinologist and lay the foundation for the next stage of the transition from religious imagination to Mozi's philosophical writing in the West.

Educational missionary of the American Board Mission, sinologist and Buddhist scholar, born in Bohemia, he moved to the United States with his parents in 1882. He graduated from Hartford Seminary in 1900 and went to Germany to study at the University of Halle. He was sent to China with his wife, Anna Jelinek Hodou, in 1901 to preach and promote education and was stationed in Fuzhou, where he taught at Ponasang Sacred Academy. He became superintendent in 1902. During the Revolution of 1911, he participated in the activities of the Red Cross Society of China and actively participated in the establishment of Fukien Union University. In 1912, Foochow Union Theological School was established by merging with the True Learning College, run by the Church Missionary Society, and the Evangelical College, run by the Methodist Episcopal Church. He resigned in 1917 and returned to the United States with his family to become a professor of Chinese Culture at the Kennedy School of Evangelism, Hartford Seminary Foundation, and a professor of History and Philosophy of Religion at Hartford Seminary from 1928 to 1941. He retired in 1945. He served as a government interpreter in World War II and died in 1949 at the age of 76 in Mount Hermon, Northfield, Massachusetts. He studied Buddhism and Chinese folk religion and was the author of *Buddhism and Buddhists in China* (1924), *Folkways in China* (1929) and *Careers for Students of Chinese Language and Culture* (1933). He co-edited, with Su Huilian, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms: with Sanskrit and English Equivalents and a Sanskrit-Pali Index* (1937). In 1918, he also translated and published *Principles of Teaching: Based on Psychology*, by Edward Lee Thorndike.

## CONCLUSION

The second half of the 19th century marked the beginning of the translation of *Mozi* in the West. Thanks to the rapid development of sinology in Britain in the 19th century, *Mozi* first struck the missionaries as a Confucian heresy in 1858. Subsequently, the Dutch missionary Groot translated Mozi's heavily religious text, *Moderation in Funeral*. Western missionaries imagined Mozi to be a religious canon with Christian teachings while mixing their renderings of Mozi with a lot of theistic interpretation, and they were keen to find

commonalities between Mozi's doctrines and those of Christianity. Not only that, but they also used Mozi's status as a Confucian heretic to attack Confucianism. Confucianism was seen as the archenemy of Christianity. The religious imagery of Mozi attracted the interest of a growing number of missionaries and sinologists, initiating the long journey of translating and introducing of Mozi in the West.

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