

“Vacuity,” “Vapor,” and “Vanity”: Some Perspectives on the Void*

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以空爲中

“Make void the center”

A piece of practical wisdom from Chinese folklore provides the epigraph for this excursion into some perspectives on the void. When piling up logs to make a fire, one is instructed “to make void the center,” or, in other words, “to make a space in the middle,” so that there will be at the very heart of the configuration of logs an opening that will create a draft for the fire. The genius of Chinese philosophy — of drawing from the most concrete instances the most suggestive and profound implications — persuades me to consider this homely bit of instruction in a larger intellectual context. I decided to compare the concepts of void in different literatures and to examine their respective transformations and valuations. This essay is a preliminary effort.

“Vacuity” in Chinese

A classic variation on the usefulness of emptiness comes from the eleventh chapter of the *Tao-te-ching*: “Thirty spokes converge on the hub of a wheel: it is on nothingness (*wu* 無) that the function of the cart depends. Clay may be molded into a vessel: it is on nothingness that the function of the vessel depends. Doors and windows are made to form a

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room: it is on their nothingness that the function of the room depends. Therefore, turn being to advantage, and nothingness to function." The term *wu*, rendered here as "nothingness," seems to coincide with the geometers' definition of the "point" in the image of the wheel: something which has position but no extension. The center is a position, a point of "nothing," around which the spokes revolve. In the image of the clay bowl, *wu* suggest volume or capacity, and in the example of doors and windows, it suggests vacancy or unobstructedness. The sequence is not merely rhetorical repetition for emphasis: the several illustrations underline the variety of functions that *wu*, or nothingness, can assume. Chapter Sixteen in the *Tao te ching* commands us to "Attain perfect emptiness *hsü*, maintain deep tranquility."

In the *Chuang-tzu*, in a chapter titled "The Way of Heaven" *T'ien-tao*, the term *hsü*, rendered here as "emptiness," constitutes the central image in a passage which exalts the power of one who understands how to use the absence of things:

夫虛靜恬淡寂寞無爲者，萬物之本也。明此以南鄉，堯之爲君也；明此以北面，舜之爲臣也。以此處上，帝王天子之德也；以此處下，玄聖素王之道也。以此退居而閒遊江海，山林之士服；以此進爲而撫世，則功大名顯而天下一也。靜而聖，動而王，無爲也而尊，樸素而天下莫能與之爭美。

Emptiness, stillness, limpidity, silence, inaction are the root of the ten thousand things. To understand them and face south is to become a ruler such as Yao was; to understand them and face north is to become a minister such as Shun was. To hold them in high station is the Virtue of emperors and kings, of the Son of Heaven; to hold them in lowly station is the way of the dark sage, the uncrowned king. Retire with them to a life of idle wandering and you will command first place among the recluses of the rivers seas, the hills and forests. Come forward with them to succor the age and your success will be great, your name renowned, and the world will be united. In stillness you will be a sage, in action, a king. Resting in inaction (*wu-wei* 無爲) you will be honored; of unwrought simplicity, your beauty will be such that no one in the world may vie with you.¹

The command of the void is a neutral but powerful advantage, leading alike

to "success" in a contemplative life (the condition of a sage) and "supremacy" in an active life (the authority of a king). In the last chapter of the *Chuang-tzu*, an account is given of Kuan Yin 關尹 and Lao Tan 老聃, Lao-tzu, delighting in an exposition of being and nothingness and exploring the concept of the Ultimate One (*t'ai-i* 太一). They promote a philosophy in which "yielding and humility are the outward manifestation and vacancy and emptiness (*k'ung hsü* 空虛), and non-destructiveness toward all creation its inner essence."² The aspiration to the ideal of ultimate vacancy and emptiness, the achievement of a pure state of freedom and non-involvement, emphasizes the positive valuation of certain aspects of the void. In another passage, this time from the *Huai-nan tzu* 淮南子, void is identified as the source of all creation:

天墜未形，馮馮翼翼，洞洞濔濔，故曰太昭，道始於虛霏，虛霏生宇宙。

Before heaven fell into shape, there was chaos and formlessness. Therefore it was called the Great Beginning. Tao originated from emptiness and emptiness produced the universe.³

It is clear that the notion of void as "the Prime Mover" is a logical as well as ontological premise. Void must be prior to creation: it is the primordial reality. As in cosmogeny, so also in ontogeny. The source of wisdom through inaction, or of authority through action: the way of the sage and the way of the king derives ultimately from recognizing the fecundity of the void. In the *Lieh-tzu*, the question of emptiness as a value is raised:

或謂子列子曰子奚貴虛
列子曰虛者無貴也
〔子列子曰非其名也〕，莫如靜，莫如虛。靜也虛也得其居矣！
取也與也失其所矣！

Someone asks Lieh-tzu: "Why do you value emptiness?"
Lieh-tzu says: "In emptiness, there are no values."
Then, Lieh-tzu says: "Nothing better than stillness. Nothing better than emptiness. In stillness, in emptiness, we reach our home. But to seize and to impart is to lose our place."⁴

The embrace of emptiness, freeing oneself from prejudgements and chimerical values: this is the proper stance of the truth-seeker who quests for the

Primordial Reality, the Ultimate One. In another chapter of the *Lieh-tzu*, one finds the following bit of what appears to be symbolic logic:

無則無極有則有盡，然無極之外復無無極，無盡之中復無無盡，是以知其無極無盡也，而不知其有極有盡也。

Nothingness has no limits, but being is exhaustible. How do I know? Because outside that which has no limits, there is nothing limitless; and within that which is inexhaustible, there is nothing not exhaustible. Without limits, nothing can be limitless; without exhaustibility, nothing can be inexhaustible. Which is why I know that which is limitless and that which is inexhaustible, but I cannot know that which has limits and that which is exhaustible.⁵

In Liu Hsieh's *Wen-hsin tiao-lung* [The Literary Mind: the Carving of Dragons] writers were instructed to "empty the mind and keep it still,"⁶ a piece of advice that might be fruitfully contrasted with the command Sir Philip Sidney received from his muse: "Look into thy heart, and write!" The sources of wisdom and of poetry for the Chinese were not in the intimations of the soul or the emotions of the heart but in an empty mind. Of the many that might be cited as examples, three short poems of Han-shan, the Cold Mountain poet, may usefully serve as succinct illustrations. The first reflects the "empty mind" that Liu Hsieh enjoined:

自樂平生道
煙蘿石洞間
野情多放曠
長伴白雲閑
有路不通世
無心孰可攀
石牀孤夜坐
圓月上寒山

I enjoy the way of my everyday life
Among the misty vines and the rocky caves.
Thoughts in the wild are so much freer.
Longtime companions: the drifting clouds,
There are roads, but they lead nowhere.
Nothing on my mind, who can disturb me?

On a bed of stone, I sit alone at night
As the round moon climbs up Cold Mountain.⁷

The symbol of perfect emptiness is the “zero” of the “round moon” climbing up the mountain, the reflection of the “nothing on my mind,” or more precisely, the state of “no-mine” (*wu-hsin*) in which the poet finds himself. The still center of Han-shan’s dwelling place is mentioned in more than a few poems. In describing his house, he tells us it has no walls, but it has six doors – the four directions, above and below, the rooms are empty and lonesome, the east wall hits the west wall, and, “at the center there is one thing: nothing” 其中一物無⁸ In another verse, he refers to a cave, and again uses the same image, the nothing that is at the center 窟中無一物:

余家有一窟
窟中無一物
淨潔空堂堂
光華明日日
蔬食養微軀
布裘遮幻質
任你千聖現
我有天真佛

Where I dwell there is a cave
At the center, not a thing.
Pure and immaculate, the empty chamber;
Bright and glorious, the radiant sun.
Vegetables nourish this slight frame;
A cloak of pelt covers this illusory thing.
Take your epiphany of a thousand saints:
I have the real Buddha of Heaven.⁹

The references to the self – “the slight frame”/“this illusory thing” (*wei-ch’ü* 微軀, *huan-chih* 幻質) are not tropes of modesty or self-effacement, but descriptions of a sensibility being “refined out of existence.” The vision of Han-shan in this poem reminds one of “The Snow Man” in Wallace Stevens’s poem of that title who, “nothing himself, beholds/Nothing that is not there and the nothing that is.” The refinement of the self to non-being is a prime desideratum of knowledge and of knowing for Han-shan. The immanence of phenomenon is never so well perceived as when the perceiver is virtually

absent and the object of perception vividly present. This is manifest in Han-shan's short poem that reads:

碧澗泉水清
寒山月華白
默知神自明
觀空境逾寂

Green rills, spring waters clear —
Cold Mountain moonlight white.
Silent knowledge: the spirit's self-enlightenment —
Contemplate the void: the world exceeds stillness.¹⁰

The characterization of void as infinity, of emptiness as plenitude, of nothingness as the origin of all creation — all these are suggested in these brief lines. Elsewhere they are symbolized by the full round moon (or in Japanese poetry by the image of the moon reflected in a pond). But the references to the void suggest peace and calm: they bespeak no dissatisfaction or anxiety, no *angst* that fears annihilation. How remarkable this attitude is can only be appreciated by contrasting it with the treatment of void in other contexts.

“Vapor” in the Hebraic Tradition

The most modern of Old Testament works, the *Book of Ecclesiastes*, provides the text for our consideration of the void in the Hebrew context. “Breath of breaths,” or “A vapor of vapors,” is the way a modern biblical scholar translates the revered passage familiar as “Vanity of Vanities, all is vanity” (deriving ultimately from Jerome's *Vanitas vanitatum et omnis vanitas*). Eloquent as the latinate phrase may be, and clumsy as the modern rendering might sound, the important semantic shift in emphasis from the Hebraic to the latinate version cannot be easily dismissed in favor of stately oratorical rhythms. The Hebraic version uses a concrete image of ephemerality, whereas the latinate version posits an abstraction of an abstraction. The original word, “*hébel*,” as one scholar has reminded us, “connotes what is visible or recognizable, but unsubstantial, momentary, and profitless.”¹¹ However charming the notion of “vanity” is, it conjures up no visible image of unsubstantiality. Another connotation of the word *hébel* has been suggested as something approaching nullity: “The world we live in is

hébel, or zero."¹² The image conveys first a sense of extreme insubstantiality: vapor or breath is intangible enough, but "A vapor of vapors" or "A breath of breaths" represents the most insubstantial of things. It is from this extreme notion of physical insubstantiality that one derives the notion of temporal fragility, of ephemerality and transiency. From this in turn one derives the notion of teleological meaninglessness, or futility. These shifts away from the concreteness of the original image are worth noting, for they will reflect a gradual drift in translated versions of the phrase. The intangibility of air, or wind, is a "current" of thought that prevails throughout *Ecclesiastes*: 1:14 reads — "I observed all the deeds done under the sun, and saw that all was an empty breath and a grasping at the wind";¹³ 2:11 reads: "For when I considered all the things that I had done and the energy I had expended in doing them, it was clear that the whole of it was futility and a grasping at the wind";¹⁴ 2:17: "So I came to hate life, because it depressed me that all man's activities under the sun are only a vapor and a clutching at the wind."¹⁵ Most English translations (including the Authorized Version and the Revised Standard Version) tend to obscure the concrete associations of inconsequential air with the translation of "vanity" for *hébel*.

Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had spent in doing it, and behold, all was vanity and a striving after wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun. (RSV, 2:11)

For the fate of the sons of men and the fate of beasts is the same; as one dies, so dies the other. They all have the same breath, and man has no advantage over the beasts; for all is vanity. (RSV, 3:19)

... a man to whom God gives wealth, possessions, and honor, so that he lacks nothing of all that he desires, yet God does not give him power to enjoy them but a stranger enjoys them; this is vanity; it is a sore affliction. (RSV, 6:2)

For it comes into vanity and goes into darkness, and in darkness its name is covered. . . . (RSV, 6:4)

For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fools; this also is vanity. (RSV, 7:6)

For if a man lives many years, let him rejoice in them all; but let

him remember that the days of darkness will be many. All that comes is vanity. (RSV, 11:8)

The opacity of the abstract word as a translation of a concrete word in each of these instances stems from a transference from an image with different *connotations* in each context to a substantive which *subsumes* all the suggestions of the concrete image. Whereas in the original, an image is given a different association — whether of insubstantiality, or ephemerality, or of futility — in each context, the latinate “vanity” becomes a cipher that accretes within itself all relevant connotations but losing much in directness and immediacy. This can be made clear by contrasting the key passages with a modern version:

I said to myself, “Let me experiment with pleasure and have a good time!”, but this also turned out to be (unsubstantial as) *vapor*. (2:1)¹⁶

For when I considered all the things that I had done and the energy I expended in doing them it was clear that the whole of it was *futility* and a grasping at the wind. . . . (2:11)

For the fate of men and the fate of animals is the same; as one dies, so dies the other, for all have the same breath of life. Man has no superiority over the beast, for all are *a breath that vanishes*. (3:19)

. . . a man to whom God grants riches, possessions, and an honored place. . . so that he lacks nothing that heart could desire, but whom God has not given the power to enjoy it — rather a stranger enjoys it instead. This is *a hollow mockery* and a sore affliction. (6:2)

Though its coming is *futile* and it departs in darkness, though its name is hidden in darkness and it has no burial place. . . . (6:4)

. . . for “like the noise of (burning) thorn bushes under a cooking pot is the loud laughter of fools.” This, too, is *a hollow thing*. (7:6)

Yes, though a man live many years, let him be happy in them all, remembering that the days of darkness will be many, and what lies ahead is *oblivion*. (11:8)

The instability of meaning in the word "vanity" will be discussed later. Here, one might simply note two crucial passages in which the "vapor" image is contrasted with "the breath of life." 3:19 claims that man and beast both have "the breath of life," and that "man has no superiority over the beast, for all are a breath that vanishes." The closing words of Koheleth, 12:7-8, reiterates the opening statement, but precedes it with a reference to "the breath of God-given life":

So (man's) dust will return to the earth where it was before.
And the breath of life will return to God who gave it. A vapor of
vapors! — says Qoheleth — all is vapor!¹⁷

The image of futility is also the image of life. The inspiriting breath (the AV and RSV translate it as "spirit"¹⁸) is thus juxtaposed with the nearly intangible "vapor of vapors." The transience of life is celebrated and accepted: the image of air is modestly affirmative before the reminder of transience. The outlook in *Ecclesiastes* is brutally realistic: but contrary to popular misinterpretation there is no facile fatalism about it, no immature cynicism. The book stresses the limitations of life, the dubious benefits of success and pleasure, the disappointments inevitable in life: yet the conclusion is appreciably positive. No dithyrambic celebrations, no romantic appeals to unrealizable ideals, no wish-fulfillments calling for virtue: the yea-saying is carefully measured against the temptations of pessimism; the celebration of life is not blind to its sufferings. It is this hard-won optimism, forged in pain, tempered by encounters with injustice and futility, steeled against the adversities in life that *Ecclesiastes* preaches. It is this mitigated message that the translation of "vanity," with its uniformly negative associations — of futility, of emptiness, of vainglory — will not admit. The image of "air, breath, vapor" (whatever their rhythmic shortcomings in English) accommodates an important ambivalence. It represents at once the extent and the limits of our existence. It commits neither the romantic fallacy of claiming immortality nor the cynical fallacy that assumes utter worthlessness. To be sure, the image of air does not claim too much, but it is not negligible. "Better a live dog," *Ecclesiastes* says, "than a dead lion" (9:4). The brilliance of *Ecclesiastes* is that it pictures man as miniscule in importance, yet more than zero, a meager but not insignificant affirmation. One commentator puts it more emphatically: "Every line in his book is

instinct with the spirit of cleareyed, brave and joyous acceptance of life, for all its inevitable limitations.”¹⁹

“Vanity” in English

The etymological history of the word “vanity” in English offers a fascinating example of meaning and change of meaning. The Oxford English Dictionary cites as obsolete and rare the definition of “vanity” as “emptiness, lightness; the state of being void or empty,” and offers two early texts:

1400 Stockholm *Med. MS.* 127: A good oynement for the vanyte of the heed. 1587 Levins *Pathw. Health* (1632): For the Vanity of the head Take the iuice of wall-wort. . . and therewith annoint the temples.

A cognate sense — of “a vain, idle, or worthless thing; a thing or action of no value” — runs a wider range, and includes one citation from the Bible:

1470-85 Malory *Arthur* XXI.ix.855: I have forsaken the vanytees of the world. 1535 Coverdale *2 Kings* XVIII.15: They despysed his ordinaunces . . . and walked in their awne vanities. 1848 Thackeray *Van. Fair* xli: As long as we have a man’s body, we play our Vanities upon it, surrounding it with humbug and ceremonies.

Related definitions — of that which is, or has the quality of “being vain or worthless,” or “that which is of no value or profit,” or “the futility or worthlessness of something” — all these are supported by citations ranging from 1741 (“The vanity of expecting any lasting glory” [C. Middleton, *Cicero* II.vii216]) to 1834 (“Yet you often . . . are disposed to own that all in this world is vanity” [Mathew *Serm.*ii.44]). With the seventeenth century, “vanity” focuses not merely on the quality of being “vaporous,” “futile,” hence “worthless” but on the object and actions that might be so characterized. “Vanity Fair” is “a scene where all is frivolity and empty show” which one first encounters, of course, in Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress* (1678): “The name of that Town is Vanity; and at the town there is a Fair kept, called Vanity-Fair. It beareth the name of Vanity-Fair, because the Town where ‘tis kept is lighter than Vanity” (82). J. Scott, in 1816, gives a

disapproving air to the term: “Such is the Palais Royal — a vanity fair — a mart of sin and seduction!” Thackeray, who offers a secular version of Bunyan, observes with impish wryness: “The last scene of her dismal Vanity Fair comedy was fast approaching.” The sense of vanity as personal conceit, and desire for admiration is but a step away; and the attribution of cosmetic folly to appurtenances for grooming becomes commonplace. We are familiar with “vanity-box,” “vanity case,” “vanity” referring to a table for powdering one’s nose.

In this quick survey, we note that Bunyan’s original use was philologically sound: the reference to a place “lighter than Vanity” does sound echoes of the Hebraic notion of “vapor” behind the latinate *Vanitas*.²⁰ But the crucial text that exemplifies the shift in meaning is a passage that comes from Pope’s “Rape of the Lock” (1712):

Think not, when Woman’s transient Breath is fled,
That all her Vanities at once are dead:
Succeeding Vanities she still regards,
And tho’ she plays no more, o’erlooks the Cards.

The play on “vanity” as futility, on “vanity” as cosmetic self-conceit, on “vanity” as “vainglory” — signaled by the knowing reference to “transient breath” — is what conveys the wit in the passage.

The change of meaning in the word “vanity” over the last three hundred years has so advanced the secular and pejorative connotations that one is now far removed from the neutral associations, the ambivalences of the biblical “vapor of vapors.”

“Void” in the Modern Period

In viewing the concepts of “vacuity,” and its allied notions of “emptiness” (*hsü*) and “nothingness” (*wu*) in the Chinese tradition, we have seen how absence, vacancy, “the nothing” and “the no-mind” might be given positive values, how void might have creative powers with liberating effects; in examining the image of “vapor” or “breath” in the Hebraic tradition, specifically in *Ecclesiastes*, we have encountered a subtle but significant ambivalence in the notion of air as “the breath of life” and as “a vapor of vapors”; and finally, in tracing the etymon “vanity” through English literature, we have outlined the metamorphoses of a metaphor into a series

of secular abstractions, each further and further removed from the original notion of "air" or "vapor."

There is one further logical distinction to be made: between "nothingness" and "negation." One remembers the gloss on *hêbel* as zero (not minus) in *Ecclesiastes*. Jean-Paul Sartre has explored "Being and Nothingness," and though he intends nothingness as an existential zero to be defined and informed with meaning, many readers tend to misinterpret his philosophy as "negative." The dark pessimism of certain writers in the nineteenth century has been traced by Robert Martin Adams in a book entitled *Nil: Episodes in the Literary Conquest of Void during the 19th Century*. Unfortunately, it includes the nihilistic negativism of Melville with poets like Mallarmé who were merely fascinated by the possibilities of blankness and empty space, of verbal nullities, or the *nil* as a creative, not a destructive principle. Perhaps the most memorable and insistent modern exposition of old age and death as negative occurs in Hemingway's brief allegory, "A Clean, Well-lighted Place." In a final meditation, the older of two waiters in a cafe in Spain exploits the nasal negatives of the Spanish word for "nothing":

What did he fear? It was not fear or dread. It was a nothing that he knew too well. It was all a nothing and a man was nothing too. It was only that and light was all it needed and a certain cleanness and order. Some lived in it and never felt it but he knew it all was nada y pues nada y nada y pues nada. Our nada who art in nada, nada be thy name thy kingdom nada thy will be nada as it is in nada. Give us this nada our daily nada but deliver us from nada; pues nada. Hail nothing full of nothing, nothing is with thee.²¹

On the other hand, the positive valuation of "nothingness" in modern literature will not be hard to find. For the notion of *wu*, nothingness, with which we started in the text from Lao-tzu, the *wu* which was at the center of the hub, around which the thirty spokes revolved, and without which the cart could not function — this notion is paralleled in T. S. Eliot in the *Four Quartets*. The image of revolution around a center, now on a cosmic scale, only serves to reinforce the primordial reality of stillness and emptiness. Lines in *East Coker* are reminiscent of passages in both the Taoistic text, *Lieh-tzu*, and the Christian *Ecclesiastes*:

In my beginning is my end. In succession

Houses rise and fall, crumble, are extended,
Are removed, destroyed, restored. . . .

Houses live and die: there is a time for building
And a time for living and for generation
And a time for the wind to break the loosened pane. . . .²²

And from *Burnt Norton*:

At the still point of the turning world. Neither flesh nor fleshless;
Neither from nor towards; at the still point, there the dance is,
But neither arrest nor movement. And do not call it fixity,
Where past and future are gathered. Neither movement from nor
towards,
Neither ascent nor decline. Except for the point, the still point,
There would be no dance, and there is only the dance.²³

The causal impulse emerges from the still point, and in the fine discrimination of "no dance" and "only the dance," there is an echo of *Ecclesiastes*' measured optimism.

After the kingfisher's wing
Has answered light to light, and is silent, the light is still
At the still point of the turning world.

The overtones of distrust in words, so reminiscent of Taoist epistemology, can be heard in these lines:

Words move, music moves
Only in time; but that which is only living
Can only die. Words, after speech, reach
Into the silence. Only by the form, the pattern,
Can the words or music reach
The stillness, as a Chinese jar still
Moves perpetually in its stillness.
Not the stillness of the violin, while the note lasts,
Not that only, but the co-existence,
Or say that the end precedes the beginning,
And the end and the beginning were always there
Before the beginning and after the end.

And all is always now.²⁴

It shall not surprise us that this most religious of modern poems has its medieval antecedents, and that the notion of nothingness as a positive value would have occurred to the early Church fathers. It is fitting that St. Augustine, familiar with false Manichaeian dichotomies of positive and negative, good and evil, heaven and hell, should give the perfect formulation of the all-embracing and all-creating void. Of course, St. Augustine has given it another name:

The nature of God is a circle whose center is everywhere and its circumference nowhere.

The inversion of the circle — turning it inside out — means not only that Augustine has “made void the center”: he has located it at the circumference as well.

Notes

1. *The Complete Works of Chuang-tzu*, trans. Burton Watson (New York, 1968), p. 143.
2. From Chapter 33, *T'ien-hsia* 天下.
3. *Ssu-pu pei yao*, 3.1a. I follow Wing-tsit Chan (*A Sourcebook in Chinese Philosophy*, p. 307) in reading *chao* (light) as *shih* (beginning).
4. *Lieh-tzu chi shih*, ed. Yang Po-chün (Hong Kong, 1965), p. 17.
5. *Lieh-tzu chi shih*, p. 92-93.
6. *Wen-hsin tiao-lung chu* (Hong Kong, 1960), p. 493.
7. *Ch'üan T'ang Shih*, 23b.
8. *Ch'üan T'ang Shih*, 17b.
9. *Ch'üan T'ang Shih*, 17a.
10. *Ch'üan T'ang Shih*, 9a. I borrow the last line from Gary Snyder's rendering (*Riprap & Cold Mountain Poems* [San Francisco, 1969]), p. 47.
11. R. B. Y. Scott, *Proverbs-Ecclesiastes* [The Anchor Bible] (New York, 1965), p. 202.
12. H. Ginsberg, *Studies in Koheleth* (New York, 1950), p. 1.
13. Scott, *Proverbs-Ecclesiastes*, p. 212.
14. Scott, *Proverbs-Ecclesiastes*, p. 214.
15. Scott, *Proverbs-Ecclesiastes*, p. 216. Other instances may be found in 2:26, 4:4, 4:16, 6:9.
16. I cite passages from Scott's translation.
17. Scott, *Proverbs-Ecclesiastes*, p. 254.
18. Of course, the differences and similarities between Greek *pneuma*, Latin *spiritus*, and Chinese *ch'i* 氣 involving studies of translation, comparative philosophy, and the history of ideas are worth a separate study.

19. Robert Gordis, *Koheleth – The Man and His World* (New York, 1951), p. 120.
20. The quote is from *Pslams* 62:9.
21. *The Snows of Kilimanjaro and Other Stories* (New York, 1961), pp. 32-33.
22. *The Complete Poems and Plays, 1909-1950* (New York, 1952), p. 123.
23. *The Complete Poems and Plays*, p. 119.
24. *The Complete Poems and Plays*, p. 121.

