

Introduction to the Special Section: The Route of Qiaoyiology and Its Knowledge Space

Hua Zhang

Beijing Language and Culture University

Qiaoyiology is an academic method and interpretative perspective established by Professor Jun Ye. In recent years, there has been increasing awareness of this approach within academic circles in China, and it has also gained attention among scholars of Sinology and Chinese studies in the international arena. In many ways, it can be considered a distinct theoretical framework within Chinese culture. In the previous edition of this journal, an article co-authored by Zhifang Yang and me was featured. This article primarily focused on comparing the origins of the conceptual *Yi* from the Qiaoyiological perspective, examining the perspectives of two literary scholars, Shiqiu Liang and Yutang Lin. Furthermore, it elucidated the connotation and usage of various concepts related to Qiaoyiology. I have had the opportunity to contribute multiple special sections in international journals that promote the understanding of Qiaoyiology. To the best of my knowledge, this is the first instance in the field of English academic journals where a special section with the theme of “The Route of Qiaoyiology and Its Knowledge Space” will publish four articles.

Qiaoyiology focuses on the psychological and behavioral changes that occur when individuals relocate to different places. It draws upon the Qiao Xue resources of Shizeng Li (1881–1973), with a specific emphasis on geographical displacement and changes in location. The concept of *Yi*, derived from the *I Ching*, reflects the fluctuations in ideology. The objective of Qiaoyiology is to analyze and elucidate the causal relationship between these two variables, thereby optimizing the methods of “subjective selection” and “speculation inference” within the humanities and social sciences. By applying these methods, we can better observe, analyze, and study the phenomena of geographical migration and ideological variation within different cultures and cross-cultural contexts. Moreover, in the context of “mutual learning of civilizations,” the Chinese modern discourse system has the

potential to enhance the existing dual interpretative framework for cultural exchange between different cultures and Chinese culture.

Jun Ye has made significant contributions to Qiaoyiology with works such as *Changing Creativity and Gradual Constancy: The Idea of Qiaoyiology* (2013, Peking University Press), recognized as the “conceptual work” of Qiaoyiology; *Constructing Order and Taking Image: The Methodology of Qiaoyiology* (2021, Zhejiang Education Press), known as the “methodological work” of Qiaoyiology; and *Displacement and Variability: The Qiaoyiing Individuals’ Spiritual Qualitative Change and its Cultural Space* (2023, Zhejiang Education Press), regarded as a “case study work” of Qiaoyiology. These works, along with numerous papers by Ye, have garnered significant attention within academic circles. Marianne Bastid-Bruguière (1940–), an academicien of the French Academy of Sciences, has praised Qiaoyiology for its capacity to explain various changes and exchanges, not only within China or between China and the world but also globally and among diverse groups of people. As a result, Chinese academic science has regained the ability and position of creative theory. The French journal *Monde Chinois Nouvelle Asie* has organized special discussions titled “Chinese Cultural Exchange: Looking at the West through the Prism of Qiaoyiology” to explore new paths for cultural exchange. Zhenhuan Zou, a professor at Fudan University, believes that Qiaoyiology can have a profound impact in five areas: cultural life, material technology, social norms, psychological cognition, and discourse symbol code.

Qiaoyiology is a versatile methodology that can be applied to individuals, groups, and communities of various dimensions within historical contexts. It can be utilized by writers, historians, artists, and within the framework of global history, considering aspects such as race, groups, artifacts, systems, and cultures of different levels of civilization. By

focusing on spiritual qualitative clues as a means to address “time propositions,” Qiaoyiology provides a valuable tool for local scholars to draw from Chinese traditional cultural and ideological resources, integrating the strengths of both Chinese and Western theories, and preserving academic traditions. As an innovative theory in the field of humanities in China, Qiaoyiology holds significant value and significance in expanding the visual threshold and research methodologies of Asia-Pacific language and cultural studies. More specifically, Qiaoyiology offers a comprehensive research perspective within the discipline of literature and employs comparative literature methods. It encompasses a wide range of topics, including the analysis of world literature, the exploration of cross-cultural interactions among writers, the examination of the translation process of literary texts, and the study of changes in literary imagery.

The four articles featured in this section originate from Beijing, Zhuhai, Hong Kong, and Macao. Wei Yu, from Beijing Language and Culture University, presents “Great Storytellers of Chinese Tales: She Lao, Pearl S. Buck, and Yutang Lin,” which thoroughly analyzes and compares three influential modern writers: She Lao, Pearl S. Buck, and Yutang Lin. These authors emerged within the literary world during the same period, and there are striking similarities between them, as demonstrated by the methods and perspectives of Qiaoyiology. This article explores how their experiences of living abroad resulted in a profound transformation of their spirits, leading to their self-identification as writers. Moreover, their identities as writers significantly contributed to their portrayal of Chinese stories. Each of these writers has left a lasting impression in history for their exceptional storytelling about China. Additionally, the article delves into the discussions between Jun Ye and Mingdong Gu from the University of Texas, Dallas. Wei Yu provides insight into Jun Ye’s concept that “material displacement leads to spiritual qualitative change”; however, Mingdong Gu argues for changing “material” to “subject,” emphasizing that “the displacement of the subject leads to spiritual transformation.” Gu believes this adjustment better highlights the originality of Qiaoyiology and aligns with its inherent concept, as “living abroad” often refers to the “subject.” In this regard, Wei Yu leans toward supporting Mingdong Gu’s viewpoint. Given that the primary focus of Qiaoyiology centers around the *Yi* phenomenon caused by Qiao and investigates the resulting spiritual qualitative changes in subjects, it is natural to direct attention to the subjects themselves, specifically the human body. Without considering subjects, discussing “spiritual

qualitative changes” would be untenable. As the host of this section, I wholeheartedly welcome such discussions. Throughout our extensive academic exchanges with Jun Ye, he has consistently expressed his openness to critical articles, as they contribute to the progress and development of Qiaoyiology.

Nevertheless, I respectfully disagree with Mingdong Gu and Wei Yu’s perspective. Their viewpoint relies solely on the traditional concept of the subject-object dichotomy model, where the subject pertains to individuals and objects refer to entities external to the subject—in this case, the human bodies, as argued by Mingdong Gu and Wei Yu. However, there are two crucial points that undermine this position. Firstly, this subject-object dichotomy model conflicts with the contemporary philosophical notion of ecological ontology. Secondly, even considering the subject-object dichotomy, the subject of Qiaoyi extends beyond mere human bodies. Historical examples further demonstrate this. For instance, the relocation of the renowned London Bridge to Phoenix, USA, constitutes a Qiao event. Similarly, in the late 1990s, the Yinyutang residential building in Huizhou was moved to the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, the hometown of American writer Hawthorne, also exemplifying a Qiao event. Furthermore, the article by Huafeng Sun from Macao University of Science and Technology, titled “Heritage Qiaoyi: The Significance of the Nubian Temples as Ambassadors,” discusses the heritage Qiaoyi during the Nubia Campaign. These instances involve material displacements rather than displacements of subjects. It is worth noting that these material relocations also precipitate changes in the spiritual and cultural realms, highlighting the uniqueness and value of articles like “Heritage Qiaoyi.” As far as my knowledge extends, studies in the field of Qiaoyiology or utilizing Qiaoyiology rarely deviate from humans as the primary research subjects. However, there exists significant potential for exploration within this field, particularly when shifting the focus to material objects as subjects of *Qiao*. This avenue possesses ample room for further investigation in the realm of Qiaoyiology.

The article titled “Movement, Mediation, and Transformation: *Yijing* and Qiaoyiology” is authored by Tze-ki Hon from Beijing Normal University, Zhuhai Campus. It presents the author’s own opinions on relevant issues and different approaches to studying Qiaoyiology, fostering a valuable discussion atmosphere. While acknowledging its remarkable achievements, critics have pointed out the shortcomings of Qiaoyiology. Specifically, Jun Ye has been

criticized for incorporating the sweeping concept of *Yi* from the *I Ching*. These scholars acknowledge the benefits of borrowing the concept of *Yi* from the *I Ching*, particularly its three well-known meanings: the constancy of change, the necessity of change, and the ease with which changes are experienced in everyday life. However, they find the *Yijing*'s claim of encompassing everything on Earth unacceptable and unattainable. They argue that it is absurd to assert knowledge, coverage, and control over everything when millions of people are constantly on the move across the planet. In response, Tze-ki Hon, the author of the article, defends Jun Ye's adoption of the concept of *Yi* from the *I Ching* in Qiaoyiology through meticulous analysis and citation of *I Ching* texts, focusing on two main aspects.

The article titled "Proud of Being Chinese with an American Outlook: Chaoying Fang and His Contributions Through the Lens of Qiaoyiology" by Li Li from The Chinese University of Hong Kong is similar to Wei Yu's article in terms of method and perspective. It serves as a typical case study in the field of Qiaoyiology, aligning with the fundamental concept of *Yi* caused by Qiao. While the former emphasizes the integration of spatial dimensions, the latter focuses on the evolution of temporal dimensions. This encompasses not only the formation and generation of individual ideas resulting from material displacement and spiritual exploration but also the interaction and spiritual transformation of diverse cultural subsystems. Through the utilization of archival materials from the US National Archives and The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Li Li's article explores the life and scholarly contributions of Chaoying Fang through the analytical framework of Qiaoyiology, which examines how "Qiao" leads to "Yi." According to Li Li, Fang's transformative experiences between China and the United States over several decades exemplify the characteristics of a "Qiaoyi individual."

In an essay titled "Cherishing the Memory of Grandparents," Jun Ye reflects on the inevitable struggle faced by every individual in the larger context of a significant era. He ponders upon the insignificance of his grandparents' life trajectory against the backdrop of this momentous era. Jun Ye muses whether, without his personal recordings and contemplation, their life histories would be like solitary leaves withering in autumn, passing unnoticed amidst the vastness of history. However, he expresses his profound emotional response to the intricacies of their life stories, as it resonates not only with his individual empathy and sadness but also with his awareness and sentiment as a historian.

Upon analyzing Jun Ye's academic perspective, it becomes

evident that his essay in memory of his grandparents extends his thinking on the study and writing of history. It moves beyond the realm of renowned figures and experts in traditional academic, ideological, and life history, and delves into the lives of the unknown generation and the most ordinary individuals. This transition encompasses a shift from grand narratives, significant accomplishments, and monumental journeys, to exploring the realm of commonplace emotions, mental explorations, and even the minutiae of everyday life.

The world we inhabit is evidently characterized by constant physical and spiritual flux. Qiaoyiology emerges as an interdisciplinary and cross-cultural academic perspective, encompassing a unique approach and vision. As the theoretical framework of Qiaoyiology continues to develop and refine, we can anticipate the emergence of diverse disciplinary branches within this field, including Qiaoyiology of literature, Qiaoyiology of philosophy, and Qiaoyiology of history. This prospect incites great anticipation and instills me with a sense of profound optimism.