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**The notions of Ki 氣 and the Great Void 太虛
in the philosophy of Chinese scholar Zhang Zai (張載 1020–1077)
and Korean scholar Hwadam Sŏ Kyŏng Tŏk (花潭徐敬德 1489–1546).
Explorations in Neo-Confucian thought**

Abstract: This paper is an introduction to Ki-based teaching of Korean Neo-Confucian scholar Hwadam Sŏ Kyŏng Tŏk. Hwadam developed the notion of Ki, the transformative process that constitutes our existence, on the basis of the teaching of the Chinese Neo-Confucian Zhang Zai. Chinese-Korean philosophy, which operates through “pair concepts” (sometimes close in meaning to binary opposition), is a “philosophy of relationship”. Philosophy of relationship means that each concept is understood through its relationship to other concepts, thus forming pair concepts. This article investigates the meaning of Ki notion in the philosophy of Hwadam, by examining the function of Ki in three pair concepts: Ki—Great Void, Ki—Spirit and Ki—Form. In relation to the Great Void, which signifies tranquility, Ki means activity; in relation to Spirit, which signifies the subtle and the imperceptible, Ki means involvement with the matter; in relation to Form, a tangible object, Ki means the absence of form. All these meanings and concepts exemplify the unfolding of the Way of Heaven (Yin and Yang) and the Way of Earth (soft and hard).

Ключевые слова: Хвадам, Со Кйонг Док, Чжан Цзай, Ки, Великая Пустота, Дух, Форма.

Introduction

As human beings, we often perceive reality through dichotomy. We classify our impressions and emotions in various ways, among which dichotomy is one of the basic patterns for differentiation.

From the moment we start communication and contemplation in early childhood, we differentiate: between the pleasant and the unpleasant, between the warm and the cold, between mommy and other ladies, between the desirable and the undesirable. The distinction between me and others, between nature and civilization, between space and time, etc. is always present in our consciousness. This notion of differentiation into two is one of the basic tools for interpreting the world around us.

In Chinese and Korean philosophy the above differentiation into two (dichotomy) had received the name of Yin and Yang (陰陽, Korean *Ŭm* and *Yang*).¹ Which we classify as Yin and which as Yang is of lesser importance. Of greater importance is the presence of the two, and the interrelationship between them.

Dichotomy we discuss here is different in meaning from the concept of dichotomy in Western philosophy. The English word “dichotomy” comes from Greek *dichotomia* (cutting into two). In logic it is a division of a class or genus into two lower mutually exclusive genera (The Oxford English Dictionary, 1978, vol. 3, p. 326.) But Eastern transactional

¹ Originally meaning the shadowy and the sunny sides of mountains and rivers, Yin and Yang subsequently came to be connected with various dual and polar aspects of the reality (Kim Yung Sik, 2000, p. 42).

polarity² of Yin-Yang refers rather to interrelationship, connection and harmony between two different entities, concepts, or poles.³ Dark changing into light, winter passing into spring, negative emotions being transformed into positive feelings — all those exemplify a never-ending Yin-Yang relational process, the Change (易 Chinese *yi*, Korean *yŏk*; 化 Chinese *huà*, Korean *hwa*).

To understand better the concept of Change, let's consider a simple example. Let us look at this table. One hundred years from now this table will not look the same. One thousand years from now it will not exist anymore. The table is constantly in the state of change, which is slow and gradual.

If we put the table outside, the process of the Change will depend upon the weather. The “metamorphosis” of the table under sunshine is different from the process of change under rain. The process of transformation of the table is directly influenced by the surroundings. It is an interaction, an interrelation between the wood (of which the table is made) and the surrounding objects and conditions.

Considered a dead object only, this table has a beginning and an end. But this table was a live tree once, which came from a seed of a parent tree. And one day, this table will dissolve into elements that will serve as food for another live being. From this point of view, the table is a link in a chain of death and life, part of a never-ending process.

According to Chinese-Korean understanding of the world, all things are simultaneously processes that constantly intermingle with each other. If we contemplate all these processes together, we may call them one process. This process is called Ki.⁴ Another name for the same process is Change, as the essence of Ki is a constant change. The flow of Ki, if it is orderly and right, constitutes the Way (道 Chinese *Dao*, Korean *Do*).⁵ Chinese Song (960–1279) and Ming (1368–1644) scholars called the Heavenly Principle (principle of nature) according to which the Ki flow Li, the Principle (Cheng Chung-ying, 1987, p. 20).

The Chinese-Korean notion of Ki relates both to spiritual and corporeal, to matter and life, to universe and to the human mind. Concentration and dispersion of Ki constitute the formation and dissolution of mountains and oceans, life and death of plants and animals.

² The concept of transactional polarity was suggested by Dr. Kim Jung-Yeup (Kim Jung-Yeup, 2008). Dr. Kim also uses terms “conceptual polarity”, “relationally opposed polarities”, “relational differentiations”, “oppositional polarities”, “relational opposition”, “transactional vitality”.

³ “China tends to treat opposites as complementary, the West as conflicting” (Graham, 1986, p. 28). In his book A.C. Graham inquires into the nature of correlative thinking in ancient China.

⁴ The word Ki was translated into English as “the vivifying principle or aura of Chinese cosmogony”, breath, vapor, air, steam, gas, ether, vital fluid, force, influence, vital force, vital energy, material force, configurative energy, temper, manner, demeanor, feelings, passion-nature, weather, life-giving principle, matter-energy, subtle spirits, vital energizing field (Kim Jung-Yeup, 2008, p. 1).

⁵ This view was held by Zhang Zai, the forefather of the Ki school. “太和所謂道 中涵浮沉升降動靜相感之性” (Zhang Zai, 1999, vol. 2). “The Great Harmony is called the Way. It embraces the nature which underlines all counter processes of floating and sinking, rising and falling, and motion and rest.” Translation by Chan Wing-Tsit, 1973, p. 500. But later scholars Cheng Yi (程頤 1033–1107) and Zhu Xi (朱熹 1130–1200) challenged this view. According to the Cheng-Zhu school of thought, which came to be called the school of Li, the endless process of life, the Yin-Yang itself, is not the Way. The Way is that by which the Yin-Yang come about, the cause (所以 Chinese *suoyi*, Korean *soi*). In Cheng-Zhu school of thought this is the separation between the Yin-Yang (which is signified by Ki) and the Way (which is signified by Li, the Principle). This view was criticized by Luo Jinshun (羅整庵, Lo Ch'in-shun, 1465–1547) and other philosophers of Ki, including the Japanese Confucian Kaibara Ekken (1630–1714), of whom it may be said that they returned to the view of Zhang Zai. (Lo, Ch'in-shun, 1987, p. 60; Ekken Kaibara, 2007). As to Hwadam, he harmonizes both views, by stating that Li is the cause (所以 Chinese *suoyi*, Korean *soi*) of the endless transformative process of life, while stressing that there is no separation between Li and Ki. Hwadam says: “語其所以 曰理” (1992, p. 182). “When we talk about what makes it as it is (the cause), we say ‘Li’.” Hwadam also says: “氣外無理” (1992, p. 184). “There is no Li outside Ki”.

Ki assembling and dissolving may be observed in the appearance and disappearance of races and nations, of ideas and religions, of thoughts and images in a human mind. Humans forming armies, animals forming packs, molecules forming substances — all these are examples of Ki concentration.

The transformative activity of the universe is perceived, observed and explained on the basis of at least two factors, such as movement and rest, concentration and dispersion, death and life. This is why Ki is explained through Yin and Yang. Ki is a relationship, an interaction between Yin and Yang.

Unlike Greek ontology/substance theory, which examines the essence of each thing separately, Chinese-Korean philosophy occupies itself with relationships. Each object exists only in a relationship with other objects. In this sense, it is the relationship and interaction that define the thing and make it what it is. This is a Philosophy of Relationship (I Ch'ang II, 2007, p. 17, p. 415).

The philosophy of relationship and interaction was depicted in the Book of Changes around 1200 BC (Cheng Chung-ying, 2008, p. 201). The Book of Changes visually portrays the interaction between Yin and Yang in diagrams consisting of broken and unbroken lines. The scholarly tradition of interpreting the Book of Changes and uncovering new layers of meaning has received the name of the “philosophy of Change” (易學 Chinese *Yi xue*, Korean *Yōk 'ak*). The term “Change” indicates both the Book of Changes itself and the cosmic transformative process, which the Book of Changes depicts.

The philosophy of Change served as one of the basic elements of Chinese scholarship of Song, Ming and Qing (1644–1912), and of Korean scholarship of Chosŏn dynasty (1392–1910). Actually, the philosophy of Change is a part of the underlying background of the whole Chinese-Korean civilization.

Zhang Zai is an example of a distinguished Chinese scholar who dedicated himself to the philosophy of Change.⁶ Korean scholar Hwadam Sŏ Kyŏng Tŏk was greatly influenced by him.

The controversy between the school of Li (Principal) (理學 Chinese *lixue*) and the school of Ki (氣學 Chinese *qixue*), which started in Song China and was continued in Chosŏn Korea, has been receiving more attention in recent scholarship (Kim Jung-Yeup, 2008, p. 16–25). Cheng Yi and Zhu Xi were the forefathers of the school of Li. Zhang Zai was a forefather of the school of Ki.

Zhang Zai was born in Chang'an (Xi'an, in modern Shaanxi). At the age of 21 he met an outstanding scholar official, Fan Zhongyan (范仲淹 989–1052), who told him to study the Doctrine of the Mean.⁷ Zhang Zai started his education with Confucian classical texts, later he studied Buddhist and Taoist literature and in the end came back to Confucianism. Zhang Zai obtained a “presented scholar” degree in 1057 and was appointed to a number of official positions. When he lectured on the Book of Changes in the capital, his students included the famous historian-statesman Sima Guang (司馬光 1019–1086) and the two nephews of Zhang Zai, Cheng Yi and Cheng Hao, who later became his critics and central figures in Cheng-Zhu Neo-Confucianism. Zhang Zai disapproved of radical reforms of Wang An-shih (王安石 1021–1086) and resigned in 1077 from his position of director of the board of imperial sacrifices.

⁶ Zhang Zai was one of the four Song scholars which were selected by Zhu Xi to represent the orthodox line of Confucian learning. The other three are Zhou Dunyi (周敦頤 1017–1073), Chen Hao (程顥 1032–1085) and Cheng Yi (Chen Wing-Tsit, 1973, p. 589).

⁷ *The Doctrine of the Mean* is one of the four books of Confucianism which were compiled during Zhou (1100?–249 BCE) dynasty by the disciples and followers of Confucius. Other three are the *Analects* of Confucius, the *Great Learning* and the *Book of Mencius* (Yao Xinzhong, 2001, p. 57–67).

Zhang Zai developed a cosmological system of Ki, of which cultivation of moral virtues through ritual practice⁸ was an inherent part. Zhang Zai believed that inward morality should be expressed outwardly in political and social action, so he tried, for example, to remedy an existing unequal distribution by putting an ancient well-field system into practice.⁹ His major works include the Western Inscription, Zheng-Meng (Correcting Youthful Ignorance) and Commentaries on the Book of Changes.¹⁰ The examination of the thought of Zhang Zai in this paper is mainly based on his Correcting Youthful Ignorance, vol. 2 of the Zhang Zi Quanshu (張子全書) (The Completed Works of Zhang Zai), 1999.

After the death of Zhang Zai his school was absorbed by the School of Li of the Cheng brothers, and his Ki philosophy did not have direct continuation. However, Ki philosophy of Zhang Zai was later developed by Luo Jinshun, Wang Tingxiang (王廷相 1474–1544), Wang Fuzhi (王夫之 1619–1692) under Ming dynasty and Dai Zhen (戴震 1723–1777) under Qing dynasty (Kim Jung-Yeup, 2008 p. 16–20).

Hwadam Sō Kyōng Tōk was one of the first Chosŏn scholars who studied and developed the philosophy of Change. Hwadam explained the Change through the Ki concept of Zhang Zai. Hwadam was born in Songgyōng (松京) (modern Kaesŏng 開城) of father Hobŏn (好蕃) and mother from the Han (韓) family. In his studies of Confucianism, Hwadam paid great attention to Chinese philosophers of Song Dynasty, he also studied Taoist literature. Hwadam spent his life in a place called “Hwadam”, near Kaesŏng (this is how people started calling him “teacher from Hwadam” and his literary name “Hwadam” came into existence). Hwadam led the life of a “country scholar” (鄉士 Chinese *xiangshi*, Korean *hyangsa*), a Confucian not involved in politics but instead living in the country, studying and teaching. During the course of his life, Hwadam was offered a number of official positions, but each time declined. He spent his life in poverty.

Hwadam had many friends and followers with whom he often exchanged letters and poems, and many students. The friends, followers and students of Hwadam came from various social backgrounds and diverse political groups, and later became connected to different philosophical schools.

Chang Ga-sun (張可順 1493–1549), Min Sun (閔純 1519–1591), Pak Chi-hwa (朴枝華 1513–1592), Hong In-u (洪仁祐 1515–1554) and others were of the friends and followers of Hwadam who did not undertake official career, but chose quiet life in the country dedicated to contemplation and teaching. But others, for example Pak Sun (朴淳 1523–1589) and Hŏ Yŏp (許曄 1517–1580), occupied official positions in the administration of the state. Nam Ōn-kyōng (南彦經 1528–1594) and Hong In-u, the students of Hwadam, were of the first Korean scholars interested in the teaching of the Chinese Confucian Wang Yang Ming (王陽明 1472–1529). Ki philosophy of Hwadam has influenced many later Korean Confucians, including II Yulgok (李珣栗谷 1536–1584).¹¹ The major works by Hwadam include his essays Wōnrigi (原理氣) (Origin of Li and Ki), Rigisŏl (理氣說) (On Li and Ki), T'aehŏsŏl (太虛說) (On the Great Void), Bok Ki Gyŏn Ch'ŏnji ji Sim Sŏl (復其見天地之心說) (In the Hexagram “Return” We See the Heart of Heaven and Earth) and Kwi Sin Sa Saeng Ron (鬼神死生論) (On Ghosts and Spirits, Death and Life). This

⁸ The Chinese word 禮 (*li*) which is usually translated as “ritual practice”, signifies concrete moral and other rules as to the way of dressing, eating, talking, acting toward different kinds of people, sacrificing to the dead ancestors and spirits, etc. These rules regulate practically all aspects of human life.

⁹ A system in which a field was divided into nine squares, with eight families each cultivating one square separately, for its own support and one square jointly for government revenues.

¹⁰ For the above biography of Zhang Zai see Chan Wing-Tsit, 1973, p. 495–496; Huang Siu-Chi, 1968, p. 247; Chow Kai-wing, 1993, p. 201–229.

¹¹ For the above biography of Hwadam see Hwang Kwang Uk, 2003, p. 41–46, p. 200.

paper presents the ideas of Hwadam mainly on the basis of his essays Wōnrigi (原理氣) (Origin of Li and Ki) and Rigisōl (理氣說) (On Li and Ki) which are introduced in English for the first time.¹²

In his writings, Hwadam mentions that he follows a number of teachers: Zhang Zai, Zhou Dunyi, Shao Yong (邵雍 1011–1077), Cheng Yi, Chen Hao, and Zhu Xi. Hwadam integrated the Ki philosophy of Zhang Zai with the teaching of Shao Yong on Preceding Heaven and Succeeding Heaven. In this paper, we examine the connection of Hwadam's philosophy to the philosophy of Zhang Zai.

In his explanation of Change, Hwadam talks about the interaction between the subtle, unperceivable, and pure, the Great Void,¹³ and the active and transforming, which he calls Ki. Hwadam repeatedly stresses, that the Great Void and Ki are essentially one.

The philosophy or relationship of Hwadam is structured through “pair concepts”. For example, Ki is explained on the basis of a few “pair concepts”, such as “Ki—the Great Void”, “Ki—Spirit” and “Ki—Form”. The meaning of each concept in the pair is explained through the relationship within the pair. When the same concept is paired with “another partner”, another aspect of meaning is emphasized. Within the pair Ki—the Great Void, Ki implies the world of action. Within the pair Ki—Spirit, Ki indicates involvement with the matter. Within the pair Ki—Form, Ki means the absence of form.

In this paper, we investigate the meaning of Ki in the philosophy of Hwadam through examining the above three pair concepts. However, Ki philosophy of Hwadam is rooted in Ki philosophy of Zhang Zai. So first we have to understand the meaning of Ki for Zhang Zai.

While translating from Chinese we follow the translations by Ira Kasoff, Kim Jeung-Yeup, and Wing-Tsit Chan, sometimes with changes. If there are no translations or if we disagree with the existing ones, we supply our own translation. The translations of Hwadam are all our own.

For the transliteration of Korean words we use McCune-Reischauer Romanization system. 陰-陽 (Chinese *Yin-Yang*, Korean *Ūm-Yang*) we render in Chinese transliteration. Ki (氣 Chinese *qi*, Korean *ki*) we render in Korean transliteration. In most cases, both Chinese and Korean transliteration is given, but if the context is mostly Chinese, we cite only Chinese transliteration. If the context is purely Korean, only Korean transliteration is given.

Part I: the Great Void and Ki in the philosophy of Zhang Zai

In Part I, we are going to examine the concepts of the Great Void and Ki in the philosophy of Zhang Zai. Zhang Zai talks about the subtle, unperceivable, and pure, which he calls the Great Void. The Great Void is the basis of all things. Zhang Zai says that all things are constantly “coming from the Great Void” and “returning to the Great Void”. Besides the Great Void, the second central idea in his teaching is Ki. All things are “concentration and dispersion” of Ki (Kasoff, 1984, p. 37–39).

The Great Void is referred to in the discourse on no-form and no-action. Ki is used for discussing forms and actions. The key point in the teaching of Zhang Zai is the inter-relationship between form and no-form, between action and non-action.

The philosophy of Zhang Zai is a holistic understanding of reality, where everything is interconnected. We see around us the world of forms. These forms are continuously inter-

¹² Michael Kalton has translated into English another two essays of Hwadam: T'achōsōl (太虛說) (On the Great Void) and Kwi Sin Sa Saeng Ron (鬼神死生論) (On Ghosts and Spirits, Death and Life) (Kalton, 1993, p. 607–610).

¹³ The term “Great Void” originates with Zhang Zai. It can be also translated as the Great Emptiness or the Supreme Vacuity (De Barry and Bloom ed., 1999, p. 685).

mingling with each other, producing new forms, also transforming and interacting. All this is Ki, the never-ending process. The visible, the manifest aspect of this process is characterized by forms (形 Chinese *xing*), which Zhang Zai calls “temporary forms” (客形 Chinese *ke xing*), because they are just temporary manifestations of Ki being concentrated, and later are going to disperse.

These forms are intermingling with each other in a process of stimulation and response:¹⁴ one form is touching another, and the latter is reacting. Zhang Zai calls it “touching”, or “affecting” (感 Chinese *gan*). These feelings and reactions are likewise impermanent. Each one of them has a beginning and an end. That’s why Zhang Zai calls them “temporary inter-relationships (processes of stimulation and response)” (客感 Chinese *ke gan*). “客感客形與無感無形 惟盡性者一之” (Zhang Zai, 1999, vol. 2). “Temporary forms and temporary interrelationships between forms; absence of forms and absence of interrelationships between forms: only the person who has completely realized her/his nature will be able to show that they are actually One” (our translation).

Each form is short-lived. However, the total process of “forming” and “un-forming” through the concentration and dispersion of Ki is endless. Each interaction between forms is impermanent. However, the sum total of interactions between all the forms, which can be seen as one process, does not have a beginning or an end.

Zhang Zai calls this process of forming and un-forming through the mutual stimulation and reaction of forms to each other, a Great Harmony (太和 Chinese *Taihe*). “太和所謂道 中涵浮沉升降動靜相感之性 是生網緼相盪勝負屈伸之始 ... 不如野馬網緼不足謂之太和 語道者知此 謂之知道 學易者見此 謂之見易” (Zhang Zai, 1999, vol. 2). “The Great Harmony is called the Way. It embraces the nature which underlines all counter processes of floating and sinking, rising and falling, motion and rest. It is the origin of the process of fusion and intermingling, of overcoming and being overcome, of expansion and contraction. ... Unless the whole universe is in the process of fusion and intermingling like fleeting forces moving in all directions, it may not be called a Great Harmony. When those who talk about the Way know this, we say that they know the Way; and when those who study the Change (or the Book of Changes) see this, we say that they see the Change.” Translation by Chan Wing-Tsit, 1973, p. 500–501, with some changes.

The following passage from the Doctrine of the Mean shows that each “thing” when considered by itself only is limited and insignificant. However, when viewed in its connection to other things, it becomes significant and unlimited. If we consider each entity in the context of its interaction with other objects, then the interconnectedness, the endless oneness of the universe is revealed: “今夫天斯昭昭之多 及其無窮也 日月星辰繫焉 萬物覆焉 今夫地一撮土之多 及其廣厚 載華嶽而不重 振河海而不洩 萬物載焉 今夫山一卷石之多 及其廣大 草木生之 禽獸居之 寶藏興焉 今夫水一勺之多 及其不測 黿鼉蛟龍 魚鼈生焉 貨財殖焉” (Da xue Zhong yong, 2007, p. 257).

“The heaven now before us is only this bright, shining mass: but when viewed in its unlimited extent, the sun, moon, stars, and constellations are suspended in it and all things are covered by it. The earth before us is but a handful of soil: but in its breadth and depth, it sustains mountains like Hua and Yueh without feeling their weight, contains the rivers and seas without letting them leak away, and sustains all things. The mountain before us is only a fistful of straw; but in all the vastness of its size, grass and trees grow upon it, birds and beasts dwell on it, and stores of precious things (minerals) are discovered in it. The water before us is but a spoonful of liquid, but in all its unfathomable depth, the monsters, drag-

¹⁴ The Book of Changes says “感而遂通”, “it reacts when stimulated” (Ch’oe Yōng Jin, 2005, p. 305).

ons, fishes, and turtles are produced in them, and wealth becomes abundant because of it [as a result of transportation]”. Translated in Chan Wing-Tsit, 1973, p. 109.

Thus each thing (form) and each process possess the quality of being “restricted” (in time and space) and “endless” (in time and space) at the same time. They are limited when considered by themselves, separate from each other. They are endless when considered in their total interconnectedness. Zhang Zai calls this interconnectedness of things “the One”.

When we see objects and actions as separate from each other, we say that they are many. When we view them in interaction with each other, we say that they are One. These separate things and processes are not parts of the One, in a way that separate bricks are parts of the house. The One is rather an ability of the bricks to form a house by uniting with each other.¹⁵

The One is revealed when separate entities interrelate. The One IS their interconnection. Different objects existing in the universe can interact with each other BECAUSE they are multiple and BECAUSE they are different. This multiplicity and diversity of various entities is labeled “the Two”. That’s why Zhang Zai says: “兩不立 則一不可見 一不可見 則兩之用息 兩體者 虛實也 動靜也 聚散也 清濁也 其究一而已 感而後有通 不有兩 則無一” (Zhang Zai, 1999, vol. 2). “If the Two are not established, the One cannot be revealed. If the One cannot be revealed, then the function of the Two will cease. The substance of the Two is emptiness and reality, motion and rest, concentration and dispersion, clearness and turbidity, however in the final analysis they are One. After stimulation (affection) there is penetration (reaction). If there are no Two, there is no One” (our translation). The conclusion of Zhang Zai is that without multiplicity and diversity there cannot be a unity.

We can see and touch the things. We can feel and observe the processes. But what we can see and touch is only the limited, impermanent aspect of things. We can not see with the eyes and touch with the hands their essence of being endless, their being part of the Great Transformation in their total oneness and interconnectedness. The One is hidden from the eye.

What we see and perceive with the senses is only a part of the whole. There is another part, the unseen. Zhang Zai calls these two the visible, the manifest (明 Chinese *ming*) and the invisible, the hidden (幽 Chinese *you*). The unseen does not have form. Zhang Zai talks about the interrelationship between form and no-form (形-不形 Chinese *xing-buxing*), between affection and non-affection (感-不感 Chinese *gan-bugan*), between manifest and hidden.

According to Zhang Zai, the concepts of being and nothingness are incorrect. More correct concepts are hidden and manifest. “方其聚也 安得不謂之客 方其散也 安得遽謂之無 故聖人仰觀俯察 但云知幽明之故 不云知有無之故” (Zhang Zai, 1999, vol. 2). “When it is gathered how can it not be called a temporary state, and when it is dispersing how can it be hastily called nothing. The sage looked above and below and said that he realizes (知) reasons for the hidden and the manifest. He did not say he knows the reasons for being and nothingness”. Translated in Kim Jung-Yeup, 2008, p. 64.

All things (manifest) come to an end (become hidden), and other things appear (become manifest). But despite the fact that things are appearing and disappearing, coming and go-

¹⁵ Bricks can form a house by correlating with each other. Puzzle pieces can make a picture by connecting to each other. In case of bricks, their ability to form a house is due to their similarity to each other. In case of puzzle pieces, their ability to make a picture is due to their constructive difference from each other. However, in both cases, the key point is not the similarity/difference, but the ability to constructively correlate. We can constructively correlate to others through liking/disliking them both due to their difference from us and due to their similarity to us.

ing, our world is nevertheless real. And the most hidden, namely the One, the Great Void, is the most real of all. “凡有形之物即易壞 惟太虛無動搖 故為至實” (Zhang Zai, 1999, vol. 12). “All things which have form decay easily. Only the Great Void is not moved or shaken; thus it is the most substantial.” Translated in Kasoff, 1984, p. 41. The Great Void is not nothingness. The Great Void may look like nothingness, but it is a nothingness that is real and alive, pure and clear. That’s why it is called Spirit.¹⁶

The Great Void and Ki constitute one and the same reality. The Great Void is the pure, intangible, invisible state of Ki, and Ki is the “activity” of the Great Void, the coming into existence and coming to an end of all things and beings in the universe. The myriad things are constantly “coming” from the Great Void and “returning” to the Great Void. “太虛無形氣之本體 其聚其散 變化之客形爾” (Zhang Zai, 1999, vol. 2). “The Great Void is without forms — it is the original substance of *ch’i* [Ki]. Its condensation and dispersal are but temporary forms of change and transformation”. Translated in Kasoff, 1984, p. 37. “太虛不能無氣 氣不能不聚而為萬物 萬物不能不散而為太虛 循是出入是皆不得已而然也” (Zhang Zai, 1999, vol. 2). “The Great Void cannot but consist of *ch’i* [Ki]; *ch’i* [Ki] cannot but condense and become the myriad things; the myriad things cannot but disperse and become the Great Void. Following this [cycle], and leaving and entering [the undifferentiated state] — this is all necessarily so”. Translated in Kasoff, 1984, p. 37.

Zhang Zai sees things and actions as concentration of Ki. Things and actions coming to an end are the dispersion of Ki. That’s why Ki is said to unify being and non-being. If there is a thing or an action, it is a concentration of Ki, which is called “coming from the Great Void”. If a thing or action comes to an end, it is a dispersion of Ki, which is called “returning to the Great Void”.

Hwadam’s philosophy is a continuation of this line of thinking. Hwadam, like Zhang Zai before him, talks about the relationship between seen and unseen, manifest and non-manifest, forms and formless, ends and endless. However, for Zhang Zai and for Hwadam, Ki belongs to both of the above two realms. Ki is both manifest and non-manifest. Through Ki forms and formless, ends and endless are explained.

For Zhang Zai, our universe is an endless process of change and transformation. Being and non-being, condensation and dispersion, leaving and entering, form and no-form are depicted in the Book of Changes as an endless, meaningful and creatively transforming universe. Zhang Zai says: “知虛空即氣 則有無隱顯神化性命通一 無二顧聚散出入形不形 能推本所從來 則深於易者也” (Zhang Zai, 1999, vol. 2). “When you understand that the void is *Ch’i* [Ki], then being and non-being, hidden and manifest, *shen* [spirit] and transformation, nature and destiny, are all unitary and not dualistic. If you reflect on condensation and dispersal, leaving and entering, form and no-form, and can trace them to the origin whence they come, then you have a profound grasp of the Change”. Translated in Kasoff, 1984, p. 40.¹⁷

Zhang Zai explains the relationship between form and formless, end and endless, manifest and non-manifest, “above forms” and “below forms” using the concept of Ki. The terms “above forms” (形而上 Chinese *xing er shang*) and “below forms” (形而下 Chinese *xing er xia*) appear in the Book of Changes as follows: “形而上者 謂之道 形而下者 謂之器” (Ch’oe Yōng Jin, 2005, p. 309). “What is above forms is called *tao* [the Way]; what is within forms [below forms] is called tool.” Translated in Wilhelm and Baynes, 2003, p. 323.

¹⁶ See below the discussion on Ki and Spirit.

¹⁷ Here, Kasoff translates 易 (Chinese *yi*) as the Book of Changes. We translate it as the “Change” itself.

Zhang Zai says that Ki unifies the above forms and below forms, form and no-form, being and non-being (Kasoff, 1984, p. 41). He explains the above passage as follows: “凡不形以上者 皆謂之道 惟是有无相接 與形不形處 知之為難 須知氣從此首 蓋為氣能一有无 无則氣自然生 是道也 是易也” (Zhang Zai, 1999, vol. 12). “That which is above form, taken alone, is not called the Way. It is just that the place where being and non-being come together, the place of form and no-form is difficult to understand. You must understand that *ch'i* [Ki] originates here. *Ch'I* [Ki] can unify being and non-being. Non-being is where Ki naturally originates.¹⁸ This is the Way, this is Change.” Translation by Kasoff, 1984, p. 40, with some changes.¹⁹

The Book of Changes says that the Way does not have physical form (is “above forms”), while the physical objects do (and therefore are “below forms”). Zhang Zai says “that which is above forms taken alone, is not called the Way”. The Way does not belong solely to the realm of above forms. The Way, the Change is a meeting point of form and no-form, of above forms and below forms, of spiritual and corporeal. It “is just the place where being and non-being come together, the place of form and no-form...” This is where Ki originates. “This is the Way, this is the Change”.

This meeting point of form and no-form, of above forms and below forms, the spiritual and corporeal, is Ki, the Change, the transformation, the Way. It is the relation between form and no-form, between above forms and below forms. It is the transition from hidden to manifest and from manifest to hidden, from life to death and from death to life.

Part II: Ki in the philosophy of Hwadam

In Part II we are going to clarify the meaning of Ki in the philosophy of Hwadam, by examining three pair concepts: Ki and the Great Void, Ki and Spirit, and Ki and Form (a tangible object).

1. Ki and the Great Void:

The essay Wōnrigi of Hwadam reads as follows: “太虛 湛然無形 號之曰先天 其大無外 其先無始 其來不可究 … 彌漫無外之遠 逼塞充實 無有空闕 無一毫可容間也 然挹之則虛 執之則無 然而却實 不得謂之無也 到此田地 無聲可耳 無臭可接 … 語其湛然之體 曰一氣 語其混然之周 曰太一… 是則先天 不其奇乎奇乎奇 不其妙乎妙乎妙 倏爾躍 忽爾闢 孰使之乎 自能爾也 亦自不得不爾 … 不能無動靜 無闢闢 其何故哉 機自爾也 既曰一氣 一自含二 既曰太一 一便涵二 一不得不生二 … 一生二 二者何謂也 陰陽也 動靜也 … 一者何謂也 陰陽之始 … 湛然為一者也 一氣之分 為陰陽 陽極其鼓 而為天 陰極其聚 而為地 … 是謂之後天 乃用事者也” (Sō Kyōng Tōk, 1992, p. 178–179). “Great Void is clearness and absence of shape. It is called Preceding Heaven. This greatness has nothing external, this source has no beginning, this root can not be investigated. ...It spreads far and wide, to the length that can not be measured. This is thickness and density without cavities. There are no gaps, not even to include a single hair.²⁰ But to tug it — it is empty, to grasp it — there is nothing. However,

¹⁸ By non-being here Zhang Zai means not abstract nothingness but Ki in the state of dispersal.

¹⁹ The first and the last sentences are our translation. Kasoff translates only the following partial citation: “形以上者 皆謂之道 惟是有无相接 與形不形處 知之為難 須知氣從此首 蓋為氣能一有无”. The Book of Changes uses the terms “形而上, 形而下”. Zhang Zai sometimes says “形以上, 形以下” instead, but the meaning is the same.

²⁰ When the substance is stretched out, it becomes expanded, thin and penetrable. When the substance is tightly pressed, squeezed, it becomes thick and dense. The Great Void spreads far and wide, but its substance does not become thin as a result. The Great Void is thick and dense nevertheless. The fact that it spreads far and wide does not affect its density. The usual condensation–expansion rule does not work here.

it is real, we can not call it nothingness. In reaching this state there are no sounds to hear, there are no odors to scent. ...When we talk about this clearness of substance, we say “One Ki”. When we talk about it being interconnected and all-embracing we say ‘T’aell (the Great One)’. ...This is Preceding Heaven. Isn’t it marvelous? Isn’t it wonderful? Suddenly there is springing up, suddenly there is opening — who made it so? It is thus by itself. It can not be otherwise. ...It can not but move and stop, close and open, what is the cause for that? It activates itself by itself. Since we say ‘One Ki’, the One already contains the Two. Since we say T’aell (the Great One), the One thus includes the Two. One cannot but produce Two. ...One gives life to Two. What are the Two? The Two are Yin and Yang, activity and tranquility. ...What is the One? The One is the beginning of Yin and Yang, ...the Clear is the One. The components of One Ki are Yin and Yang. Yang maximizes its vibration and becomes Heaven. Yin maximizes its concentration and becomes Earth... This is called Succeeding Heaven. This is the Function.” Hwadam connects the Great Void and Ki to the Preceding Heaven (先天 Chinese *Xian tian*, Korean *Sŏnch’ŏn*) and Succeeding Heaven (後天 Chinese *Hou tian*, Korean *Huch’ŏn*). The terms Preceding Heaven and Succeeding Heaven originate in the Book of Changes, and were later developed by Shao Yong. Like many other concepts in Chinese-Korean philosophy, Preceding Heaven–Succeeding Heaven is a “frame concept”, the concept that defines not the essence of things, but the relationship between them.

Preceding Heaven is the state before the creation of the world. The transformative activity of the world (which is called Succeeding Heaven, Change, Ki, Yin-Yang) has not yet started. However, the Succeeding Heaven, the Change, is already present inside Preceding Heaven as a potential, which has not yet been realized.

The seed is a small, insignificant object lying quietly underground. And yet in its potentiality it contains a grand tall tree, with thick trunk and widely stretching branches, bearing blossoming flowers which turn into delicious fruit. The seed containing the tree inside is a metaphor for One (Preceding Heaven) containing Two (Succeeding Heaven).²¹

Preceding Heaven–Succeeding Heaven relationship is that of a passage or a switch. Shao Yong explains it as a passage from “before the existence of the world” to “the existence of the world”, from “before civilization” to “after civilization”, from calm empty mind to thoughts and feelings, from thought to action, from non-being to being (I Ch’ang II, 2007, p. 374–380). Preceding Heaven changing into Succeeding Heaven is the passage from potentiality to actuality, from a seed to a tree. Preceding Heaven is connected to foreseeing the future, the ability to see the actuality in the potentiality, to see the future tree while still inside the seed.

Hwadam, while stating that the Great Void and Ki are one and the same reality,²² nevertheless associates the Great Void more with the clear and the tranquil, the Preceding Heaven, and Ki — with the dynamic and the active, the Succeeding Heaven.

The Great Void and Ki of Hwadam are close in meaning to the Great Void and Ki of Zhang Zai. Ki, like the Great Void, does not have shape, nor has it a beginning or an end. But the term Ki is associated with movement, vibration and life. Ki is a description of our world, living, changing, active. When Hwadam says “Ki” he implies the world of forms and actions.

The Great Void is not a “thing”, but rather a “state” of absolute clearness, tranquility and absence of shape. This state relates both to the human mind (microcosm) and the universe (macrocosm). This is the state of mind of a Sage, who is not troubled by useless thoughts. This is the state of mind of martial artist, who is concentrated and calm inside, preparing to

²¹ But this large and grand tree has originated from a small, insignificantly looking seed. The tree has a past of being a small seed. Therefore, besides saying that the seed contains the tree, we may also say that the tree contains the seed, that is Succeeding Heaven (the Two) contains Preceding Heaven (the One).

²² “虛即氣”. “Void is Ki” (Sŏ Kyŏng Tŏk, 1992, p. 182).

repel the attack of the opponent. This state of absolute concentration is indicated by the words “This is thickness and density without cavities. There are no gaps, not even to include a single hair”. But this is not nothingness. This is Preceding Heaven.

The Great Void (Preceding Heaven) is the state of absence of anything, the state of no-form, no-action. It is metaphorically expressed by Hwadam as “no sounds to hear, no odors to scent.” But Preceding Heaven is also the ability to foresee the possible future. When observing the seed, we already “see” the tree in the seed with the sight of the mind, although we do not actually see it with the sight of the eye. This passage may also be rendered as follows: “In reaching this state we can hear that which yet does not have sound, to scent that which yet does not have odor (to hear the sound of the future, to scent the odor of the future)”.

Ki (Succeeding Heaven) implies our world of forms and actions. How does it relate to the Great Void (Preceding Heaven)? Hwadam says: “倏爾躍 忽爾闢 孰使之乎 自能爾也 亦自不得不爾 …不能無動靜 無闔闢 其何故哉 機自爾也 …一不得不生二” (Sō Kyōng Tōk, 1992, p. 178). “Suddenly there is leaping up, suddenly there is opening — who made it so? It is thus by itself. It can not be otherwise. ... It can not but move and stop, close and open, what is a reason for that? It activates itself by itself. ... One cannot but produce Two.”

Let us go back to the example of the seed and the tree. Preceding Heaven, the Great Void, is the seed. Succeeding Heaven, our world, is the tree. Preceding Heaven necessarily turns into Succeeding Heaven, as a seed necessarily unfolds into a tree. To indicate this inevitability Hwadam says: “One cannot but produce Two”.

To summarize, Ki and Great Void indicate the same reality, but Great Void is its calm, quite and formless aspect, while Ki is a dynamic and active aspect. Simultaneously, Great Void is the Origin, the Source, the One, which gives rise to the Two, the dynamic activity of the universe. This dynamic activity of the universe is called Ki, Yin-Yang, the Two.

2. Ki and Spirit (神 Chinese *shen*, Korean *sin*)

Regarding Ki and Spirit Hwadam says as follows:

Spirit	Ki
<p>“又曰 易曰 不疾而速 不行而至 氣無乎不在 何所疾哉 氣無乎不到 何所行哉 氣之湛然無形之妙 曰神 …神不囿於粗迹 果何所方哉 何所測哉 …語其所以妙 曰神” (Sō Kyōng Tōk, 1992, p. 182).</p> <p>“He also said: The Book of Changes says: ‘swift without haste, arrives without going’. There is no time when Ki is not present — why should it hasten? There is no place which Ki does not reach — why should it go anywhere? The marvelous aspect of Ki, the clearness and absence of shape is called ‘Spirit’. ... Spirit is not limited by the matter, could it have a spatial restriction? Could it be predicted (in terms of time)? ... When we talk about what makes it marvelous, we say ‘Spirit’.”</p> <p>“一故妙” (Sō Kyōng Tōk, 1992, p. 185). “One causes the marvel.”</p>	<p>“既曰氣 便有粗涉於迹” (Sō Kyōng Tōk, 1992, p. 182).</p> <p>“Since we said ‘Ki’, necessarily there is thickness, involvement with the matter.”</p> <p>“二故化” (Sō Kyōng Tōk, 1992, p. 185). “Two cause the Change.”</p>

Ki is the transformative activity of the universe, both the outer universe (macrocosm) and the inner universe (microcosm, a human mind). Ki is the process of opening and closing, movement and rest that we witness in our lives every day. However, this transformative activity has a subtle and marvelous aspect. This subtle and marvelous aspect is called Spirit by Hwadam.

For Hwadam, Ki and Spirit are different aspects of the same thing. Ki is associated with the world of forms, it implies “thickness, involvement with the matter”, while its marvelous aspect, “the clearness and absence of shape” is called “Spirit”. One (Preceding Heaven, the Great Void) is Spirit. Two (Succeeding Heaven) is Ki, the Change. Hwadam says: “二故化一故妙 非化之外 別有所謂妙者” (Sō Kyōng Tōk, 1992, p. 185). “Two cause the Change. One causes the marvel. There isn’t anything outside the Change that we can call ‘marvelous’.”

“Yin and Yang” indicate the two poles of any interrelationship. These two poles are often called just “the Two”. In order to have an interrelationship, a process, at least two factors are needed. No thing can interrelate with itself. Change is the Process, the interaction. Each interaction has two interactive poles, and so does the Change, the allinclusive total interaction. Change is an interaction between the Two. This is why Hwadam says “Two cause the Change.”

The Change, the universal transformation we witness in our lives every day implies fixed physical forms, the visible, the tangible. This is the process that we see and experience. It is called Ki, the Change. That’s why Hwadam says “Since we said ‘Ki’, necessarily there is thickness, involvement with the matter.”

We can witness and experience the creative transformation of the universe. But we cannot see and measure it in its totality. The Change, the universal transformation, necessarily includes a subtle, unperceivable, marvelous aspect. This marvelous aspect of the Change is called Spirit. But this marvelous aspect exists only inside the Change. It can not be separated from the Change. Hwadam says “There isn’t anything outside the Change that we can call ‘marvelous’.”

Hwadam associates Spirit with the marvelous, the One, the Great Void. Ki is associated with the Yin-Yang, the Change, the process of endless universal transformation described in the Book of Changes, the Two. Zhang Zai says likewise: 散殊而可象 為氣 清通而不可象 為神” (Zhang Zai, 1999, vol. 2). “Dispersing and differentiating, capable of becoming forms, is Ki. Clear and penetrating, not capable of becoming forms, is Spirit.”

We have seen that Hwadam sees Ki and Spirit as different aspects of Change. However, at another instant, Hwadam sees Ki and Spirit not as different aspects of the same thing, but as one and the same thing. The Book of Changes says: “唯神也 故不疾而速 不行而至” (Ch’oe Yōng Jin, 2005, p. 305). “It is the Spirit alone that is swift without haste, arrives without going” (our translation). Here, in the Book of Changes, the qualities of being “swift without haste” and “arriving without going” are ascribed to Spirit. But Hwadam ascribes these qualities to Ki: “易曰 不疾而速 不行而至 氣無乎不在 何所疾哉 氣無乎不到 何所行哉” (Sō Kyōng Tōk, 1992, p. 182). “The Book of Changes says: ‘swift without haste, arrives without going’. There is no time when Ki is not present — why should it hasten? There is no place which Ki does not reach — why should it go anywhere?”

“神不囿於粗迹 果何所方哉 何所測哉” (Sō Kyōng Tōk, 1992, p. 182). “Spirit is not limited by the matter, could it have a spatial restriction? Could it be predicted (in terms of time)?” According to Hwadam, Spirit is “not limited by the matter” therefore it “does not have a spatial restriction” and “cannot be predicted in terms of time”. And about Ki Hwadam says: “There is no time when Ki is not present — why should it hasten? There is no place which Ki does not reach — why should it go anywhere?”

We see that here Ki and Spirit are one and the same thing for Hwadam. Everything that is limited by the matter has restrictions in terms of time and space. But Spirit/Ki is “not limited by the matter” so it “does not have spatial restriction”, therefore “there is no place which it does not reach” and consequently it can “arrive without going”. Spirit/Ki is “not limited by the matter” so it “cannot be predicted in terms of time” and “there is no time when it is not present” and consequently it can be “swift without haste”. Spirit/Ki is not limited by time or by space. Let’s summarize this in the following table:

Space	Time
Hwadam: “神不囿於粗迹 果何所方哉” (Sō Kyōng Tōk, 1992, p. 182). “Spirit is not limited by the matter, could it have a spatial restriction?”	Hwadam: “神不囿於粗迹…何所測哉” (Sō Kyōng Tōk, 1992, p. 182). “Spirit is not limited by the matter. ...Could it be predicted (in terms of time)?”
Hwadam: “氣無乎不到 何所行哉” (Sō Kyōng Tōk, 1992, p. 182). “There is no place which Ki does not reach — why should it go anywhere?”	Hwadam: “氣無乎不在 何所疾哉” (Sō Kyōng Tōk, 1992, p. 182). “There is no time when Ki is not present — why should it hasten?”
The Book of Changes: “唯神也 …不行而至” (Ch’oe Yōng Jin, p. 305). “It is the Spirit alone that ... arrives without going.”	The Book of Changes: “唯神也 故不疾而速 …” (Ch’oe Yōng Jin, p. 305). “It is the Spirit alone that is swift without haste...”

Here Spirit and Ki are not two different aspects of the same thing. Here they are one and same thing.

3. Ki and Form (形 Chinese *xíng*, Korean *hyōng*, a tangible object)

Hwadam associates Ki with Heaven, and tangible objects with Earth. In his essay Wōn-rigi Hwadam says: “一生二 二者何謂也 陰陽也 動靜也 … 一氣之分爲陰陽 陽極其鼓而爲天 陰極其聚而爲地 …天運其氣 一主乎動 而圜轉不息 地凝其形 一主乎靜 而權在中間 氣之性動 騰上者也 形之質重 墜下者也 氣包形外 形載氣中 騰上墜下之相停 是則懸於太虛之中 而不上不下 左右圜轉 亘古今而不墜者也 邵所謂天依形 地附氣 自相依附者 依附之機 其妙矣乎 …動靜之不能不相禪 而用事之機自爾 所謂一陰一陽之謂道是也” (Sō Kyōng Tōk, 1992, p. 178–182). “One gives life to Two. What are Two? The Two are Yin and Yang, activity and tranquility. ...The components of One Ki are Yin and Yang. Yang maximizes its vibration and becomes Heaven. Yin maximizes its concentration and becomes Earth. ...Heaven constantly circulates its Ki, mainly through activity; it rotates and does not stop. The Earth constantly consolidates its form, mainly through tranquility, and stays in the middle. The nature of Ki is to move, to rise up (to ascend). The characteristic of the Form is to be heavy, to sink down (to descend). Ki embraces the Form from without, the Form sustains the Ki from within. By mutually pushing up and pulling down they arrest each other. They thus hang in the midst of the Great Void, not rising up nor falling down, but revolving to the left and the right, since ancient times till today, and do not fall. Shao Yong says: ‘Heaven leans on the Form; the Earth attaches itself to Ki. This principle of mutual leaning and attaching — isn’t it marvelous?’ ...Activity and

tranquility cannot but surrender to each other, this function operates by itself, this is ‘Once Yin and once Yang is called the Way’.”

Hwadam associates Yin with concentration, consolidation, Earth, Form, tranquility, staying in the middle, heaviness, sinking down (descending), sustaining the Ki (Heaven) from within. He associates Yang with vibration, circulation, Heaven, Ki, activity, constant rotation, movement (in opposition to heaviness), rising up (ascending), embracing the Form (Earth) from without. Let’s summarize this in the following table:

“陰極其聚而爲地” “Yin maximizes its concentration and becomes Earth.”	“陽極其鼓而爲天” “Yang maximizes its vibration and becomes Heaven”.
陰 Yin	陽 Yang
聚 concentration	鼓 vibration
地 Earth	天 Heaven
“地凝其形 一主乎靜 而權在中間” “The Earth constantly consolidates its form, mainly through tranquility, and stays in the middle”.	“天運其氣 一主乎動 而圓轉不息” “Heaven constantly circulates its Ki, mainly through activity; it rotates and does not stop”.
凝 condensation	運 circulation
形 Form	氣 Ki
靜 tranquility	動 activity
權在中間 stays in the middle	圓轉不息 rotates and does not stop
“形之質重 墜下者也” “The character of the Form is to be heavy, to sink down (to descend)”.	“氣之性動 騰上者也” “The nature of Ki is to move, to rise up (to ascend)”.
質 character	性 nature ²³
重 heaviness	動 movement
墜下 sink down (descend)	騰上 rise up (ascend)
“形載氣中” “the Form sustains the Ki from within”	“氣包形外” “the Ki embrace the Form from without”

Traditionally, Yang is associated with movement and Yin with tranquility. 動靜 (Chinese *dong jing*, Korean *tongjong*) is usually translated as “movement and tranquility” and is taken to be one example of Yin-Yang. Here, in writings of Hwadam, Earth is associated with the process of congealing, cold, tranquility, Form. Heaven is associated with the process of vibration, heat, activity, Ki. While Yin is associated with tranquility and concentration (according to the tradition), Yang is associated not only with movement, but with vi-

²³ While describing the Form, Hwadam uses the word Character (質 Chinese *zhi*, Korean *ji*). While describing Ki, Hwadam uses the word Nature (性 Chinese *xing*, Korean *song*). We can associate the word Character with the Physical Nature (氣質之性 Chinese *qi zhi zhi xing*) and the word Nature with the Nature of Heaven and Earth (天地之性 Chinese *tian di zhi xing*) in the philosophy of Zhang Zai (Zhang Zai, 1999, vol. 2). Zhang Zai uses the word Nature (性 Chinese *xing*) to refer both to Physical Nature and the Nature of Heaven and Earth. However, later thinkers, Zhu Xi for example, associated the word Character mainly with Physical Nature, and the word Nature with Innate Nature endowed by Heaven, which is morally good.

bration. The concept of vibration is different from the concept of movement. When the object vibrates, it does not necessarily change its place in space.

The character Ki first appeared on the Shang oracle bones and on the Zhou bronze inscriptions as three horizontal lines, similar to modern character for three (三 Chinese *san*, Korean *sam*). *Shuemu* (說文), Chinese dictionary of Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE), explains this character as representing rising mists, and defines it as “cloud vapors” (雲氣 Chinese *yun qi*, Korean *unki*) (Ames and Hall, 2001, p. 72). In modern Korean, character Ki is part of the word *kiun* (기운, 氣運), which means “feeling” or “atmosphere”. The most frequent modern usage of Ki character is air or gaseous substance in general (Kim Yung Sik, 1984, p. 25–36; Kim Yung Sik, 2000, p. 33). All the above connotes the flowing, moving, shapeless, non-static, not fixed.

There is no doubt that, since ancient times till today, the term “Ki” represents something that does not have a fixed shape — be it something physical or non-physical. It was often said that physical objects “consist” or “are made” of Ki, however, the primal meaning of this character was never something that had fixed shape.

Hwadam contrasts Ki with Form, something that does have a fixed shape. This echoes the other pair of contrasts: Heaven and Earth. Ki “embracing the form from without” is Heaven embracing the Earth from without. The Form “sustaining the Ki from within” is the Earth “staying in the middle” of Heaven.²⁴ Heaven and Ki are movement and vibration, while Earth and Form (tangible objects) are tranquility and concentration. The relationship between Heaven (Ki) and Earth (Form) is that of mutual balance and support. This relationship of mutual balance and support in Chinese-Korean philosophy has received the name “Equilibrium” (中 Chinese *zhong*, Korean *jung*). This is the relationship between heavy Form pushing down, and vibrating Ki pulling up.

In modern physics, the movement of a body undergoing circular motion is a result of exertion of two forces: centripetal force, directed inward, toward the center of rotation, and centrifugal force, directed outward, away from the center of rotation. The Earth orbits the Sun. The Sun attracts the Earth (gravitational force); however, the Earth does not fall on the Sun. As a result of the application of the gravitational force and the centrifugal force (an outward force away from the center of rotation) the Earth keeps orbiting the Sun.

Hwadam also talks about two forces: one force is pulling up (Yang, which is associated with Heaven, moving, Ki); the other force is pushing down (Yin, which is associated with Earth, heaviness, Form). As a result, Heaven and Earth are “hanging in the midst of the Great Void, not rising up nor falling down, but revolving to the left and the right, since ancient times till today, and do not fall”. The parallel between the insight of the 16th century Korean philosopher and modern physics is striking.

Ki and Form may be understood as separate entities that correlate with each other, for example Earth may be Form and the outer space may be Ki. But Ki and Form can also be read as two forces applied to a single object, for example the Earth which circles the Sun. Ki may imply the centrifugal force (an outward force away from the center of rotation) which “pulls” the Earth away from the Sun. Form may imply the gravitational force that “pushes” the Earth towards the Sun. As a result of these two forces that “arrest and balance” each other, the Earth keeps circling the Sun without falling on it.

Hwadam gives his own interpretation to the phrase from the Book of Changes, “Once Yin and once Yang is called the Way”. Hwadam says: “動靜之不能不相禪 而用事之機自爾 所謂一陰一陽之謂道是也” (Sŏ Kyŏng Tŏk, 1992, p. 182). “Activity and tranquility

²⁴ For the discussion on Ki and Form of Hwadam see Song Jin Suk, 1998.

cannot but surrender to each other, this function operates by itself, this is ‘Once Yin and once Yang is called the Way’.”

Once Yin and once Yang is called the Way. Yin and Yang are relative concepts, not absolute. Yin is the stillness and heaviness of the Earth and tangible objects. Yang is the movement of the Heaven and Ki. Yin is concentration and consolidation, Yang is vibration and rotation. Yin and Yang surrender to each other and balance each other. This is how our world functions. No one activates it from outside. It is thus by itself. This is the Way.

Conclusion: the Way of Heaven (天之道 Chinese *tian zhi dao*, Korean *ch’ŏn ji do*) and the Way of Earth (地之道 Chinese *di zhi dao*, Korean *ji ji do*)

The notion of Ki “concentrating and dispersing”, “creating shapes and dissolving them” may be attributed not only to formation of physical things in the universe and appearance of mental images in our mind, but also to the concepts and ideas in Chinese-Korean view of the world. Each concept has multiple meanings that correlate with each other in different ways, sometimes closing to form fixed patterns, sometimes opening new possibilities of interpretation.

Ki is a manifold concept, and we have examined some of its meanings in the philosophy of Hwadam, by examining three “pair concepts”: Ki and the Great Void, Ki and Spirit, Ki and Form. Ki appears differently within each pair. In relation to the Great Void, which is tranquility, Ki is activity and transformation. In relation to the Spirit, which indicates the subtle and unperceivable, Ki is involvement with the matter and physical forms. In relation to Form, the tangible object, Ki is the absence of shape. And yet, the concept of Ki involves no intrinsic contradiction. Ki is each of all the above and more.

When discussing Ki and the Great Void in the philosophy of Hwadam in Part II, Section 1, we have mentioned that the Great Void is the One, and Ki is the Two. When discussing Ki and the Great Void in the philosophy of Zhang Zai in Part I, we have mentioned that the One can be discovered if the relations and connections of separate things to each other are observed. The One is the interconnectedness and interdependence of all things. The One is the Great Void, the unseen, the subtle, the Spirit. Spirit is what Zhang Zai calls the hidden, the unseen.

Using the concepts of the Way of Heaven (Yin and Yang) and the Way of Earth (soft and hard) we are going to show how the pair concepts “Ki—the Great Void” and “Ki—Spirit” relate to the pair concept “Ki—Form”.

We have to remember that Yin and Yang are relative, not absolute concepts. Yin-Yang relationship is that of contrast, but “which is Yin” and “which is Yang” differs from situation to situation. Hwadam connects Yin to Earth and Form, and Yang to Heaven and Ki. He contrasts Ki as Yang (intangible) to Form as Yin (tangible). But, according to the concept of the Way of Heaven and the Way of Earth from the Book of Changes, both Yin and Yang indicate the intangible. Yin and Yang (intangible) are contrasted to soft and hard (tangible).

We have seen in Part I above that each thing is limited when considered by itself, taken alone, and endless when considered in its interaction with other things and conditions. The Book of Changes says: “昔者聖人之作易也 將以順性命之理 是以立天之道 曰陰與陽 立地之道 曰柔與剛” (Ch’oe Yŏng Jin, 2005, p. 332). “In the distant past, the way the sages made the Changes was as follows: it was to be used as a means to stay in accord with the principles of nature and of fate. It was for this reason that they determined what the

Way of Heaven was, and they defined it in terms of Yin and Yang; what the Way of Earth was, and they defined it in terms of hard and soft.” Translated in Lynn, 1994, p. 120.

The commentary to the above passage by Han Kang Bo (韓康伯 332–380) says: “在天成象 在地成形 陰陽者言其氣 柔剛者言其形 變化始於氣象 而後成形 萬物資始乎天 成形乎地 故天曰陰陽 地曰柔剛也 或有在形而言陰陽者 本其始也在氣而言柔剛者 要其終也” (Wang Bi, 1999, vol. 9). “In Heaven this [process] created images, and on Earth it creates physical forms. Yin and yang are terms that address things as aspects of material force [Ki], and hard and soft are terms that address them as kinds of physical forms. Change and transformation begin with the images of material force [Ki] and only then go on to create physical forms. The natural endowments of the myriad things begin in Heaven and take on physical forms on Earth. Therefore, when Heaven is involved, we refer to things in terms of yin and yang, and when Earth is involved, we refer to things in terms of soft and hard. One might refer to physical forms as yin or yang; this is to trace them back to their origins. One might refer to material forces [Ki] as either hard or soft; this is to sum up their endings”. Translation by Lynn, 1994, p. 120, with some changes.²⁵

“Yin and yang are terms that address things as aspects of material force [Ki], and hard and soft are terms that address them as kinds of physical forms.” Each and every object participates in the Way of Heaven (Yin and Yang) and the Way of Earth (soft and hard) simultaneously. From the point of view of the Way of Heaven (Yin and Yang), each and every object is Ki. From the point of view of the Way of Earth (soft and hard), each and every object is just a tangible object.

Let us go back to the example of the table. This table is a tangible object, the Way of Earth. But at the same time it is Ki, the Way of Heaven. If the table is taken as a static, tangible, dead and limited, it is a Way of Earth. However, this table is also a process, a link in a chain of life, a passage from a live tree it once was (or a seed in was before) to the basic elements into which it will dissolve in future, in order to form something new. Therefore the table is also Ki, the never-ending process of death and life, dispersion and concentration. Thus considered, the table is the Way of Heaven, the way of Yin-Yang.

But in order to discover the “Heavenly nature” of the table, we have to consider it in its relationship to surrounding objects and conditions. Only this way the “dynamic”, “transforming”, “changing” quality of the table will be perceived. In order to see the table as Ki, we have to look at the process of interaction between the wood and the moisture of the air, for example. Seen as a separate object, the table is only a dead tangible thing. Seen as an interactive process, the table is a link in a chain of life.

When things and objects are viewed as interactions, as processes, we see that all of them are related to each other. When we consider things and objects in their interrelationship with other entities, we come back to their interrelatedness, to their Oneness. One is the Great Void. It is also called Spirit.

Here we come back to the notion of hidden and manifest of Zhang Zai. The hidden is hidden within the manifest, the One is hidden in the Two. The manifest is that which meets the eye: things and objects as being separated from each other. It is the Way of Earth, soft and hard. The hidden, which is not really hidden for us any more, is the way of seeing things and objects as Ki, as processes which intermingle and interact. This is the Way of Heaven, Yin and Yang.²⁶

²⁵ The concepts of the Way of Earth and the Way of Heaven were further developed by Kaibara Ekken (Ekken, Kaibara, 2007).

²⁶ For the discussion on hidden and manifest in philosophy of Zhang Zai see Kim Jung-Yeup, 2008, p. 49–50.

Every single entity around us or within us is simultaneously the Great Void and Ki, Spirit and Ki, Form and Ki. It all depends on the point of view. We have shown that ancient Chinese-Korean concept of Ki includes multiple points of views and multiple understandings, which are nevertheless united by inherent logic.

Nowadays, when the world is turning into a global village and East and West are merging, the philosophical viewpoints of Eastern and Western philosophies are intertwining. Explanation and interpretation of ancient Asian concepts in European languages may be a part of this mutually enriching process of expanding the horizons. We wish for our modest contribution to be of use in this respect.

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Summary

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**Концепции Ки 氣 и Великой Пустоты 太虛:
некоторые аспекты неоконфуцианской философии
в трактатах китайского философа Чжан Цзяя (張載 1020–1077)
и корейского философа Хвадама Со Кённг Дока (花潭徐敬德 1489–1546)**

Настоящая работа посвящена концепции Ки в учении корейского неоконфуцианца Хвадама, которое основывается на философии китайского неоконфуцианца Чжан Цзяя. Согласно теории «бинарных оппозиций» в китайско-корейской философии, каждое понятие приобретает смысл через отношение к другим понятиям, образуя «парные сочетания». Мы рассматриваем значение Ки в трех парных сочетаниях: Ки — Великая Пустота; Ки — Дух; Ки — Форма. По отношению к Великой Пустоте (спокойствие) Ки является активностью; по отношению к Духу (неуловимое и незаметное) Ки является связью с материей; по отношению к Форме (осязаемый предмет) Ки является отсутствием формы. Все эти понятия иллюстрируют раскрытие Пути Неба (Инь-Ян) и Пути Земли (мягкость и твердость).