4.   REAL, IMAGINARY, OR FICTIVE? PHILOSOPHICAL DIA-
            LOGUES IN AN EARLY DAOIST TEXT AND ITS PICTORI-
            AL VERSION*

Mingjian Xiang

This chapter explores a critical yet still unanswered question in fictive in-
teraction research, namely, the relationship between reality, fiction, and
fictivity, through examining conversational imagery in a foundational
Daoist text, *Zhuangzi*, and its comic book rendition. This text is the earliest
surviving Chinese text to use abundant imagined dialogues between realis-
tic and fantastic characters to present the philosopher's views. The
philosopher thereby fictively talks to himself through these characters in a
kind of ventriloquism (Cooren 2010, 2012), the reader becoming a by-
stander of this fictive conversation. Hence, readers understand the moral of
the narrative through reality, fiction, and fictivity. I argue that these onto-
logical categories constitute a continuum and may appear embedded into
one another in a conceptual blending network.

[…] once or twice she had peeped into the book her sister was reading, but it had no pictures or conversations in it, "and what is the use of a book", thought Alice "without pictures or conversations?"

(Lewis Carroll,
Alice's Adventures in Wonderland)

1.   Introduction

Fictive interaction, ontologically conceptualized as an entirely mental or conceptual phenomenon, is characterized as being neither factual nor fictional (Pascual 2002, 2014; Pascual and Sandler this volume). Fictivity, as originally conceptualized by Talmy ([1996] 2000), seems to be entangled between reality and fiction. This may be interpreted as entailing that reality, fiction, and fictivity are clear-cut categories. By way of illustration, consider the following questions (in italics):

(1) a. Ellen: Well, […] *what would you like to be called?*
Hillary: Well you know, I'm fine with "Grandma". I'm fine with "Madame President". (The Ellen DeGeneres Show, Season 13 Episode 3 Hillary Clinton, 10 September 2015)

b. […] "*Did you say 'pig', or 'fig'?*" said the Cat. "I said 'pig'," replied Alice […] (Carroll [1865] 1998, p. 55)

c. *Why is linguistics of crucial importance for understanding the world and us, who live in it?* […] Linguistics is important because it tackles the phenomenon without which all sciences and humanity itself could not exist–human language. (Mel'čuk 2016, pp. x-xi)

In (1a), Ellen DeGeneres poses a factual information-seeking question to Hillary Clinton, the candidate for President of the United States in the 2016 election, to ask what she would like to be called by her granddaughter Charlotte. In (1b), the Cheshire Cat asks Alice to clarify her answer to his previous question. The question itself is a bona fide information-seeking question posed by one imaginary character to another, which necessarily makes it fictional. In (1c), an excerpt from The Author's Foreword to his 2016 new book, Igor Mel'čuk asks a question, which he then proceeds to answer himself. This question is not factual, as it is not produced to elicit answers from the addressee, but rather to organize the argument he is making (cf. Ilie 1999; Pascual 2006b; Xiang and Pascual in press); and it is not fictional either, as it is produced by a real person in a real and genuine situation of communication (as opposed to a theatre play or a joke). Instead, this question is used fictively as an expository question, which involves the linguist conceptually splitting himself up into two selves and simultaneously assuming the roles of the fictive questioner and the fictive answerer, thereby engaging in a talk with himself (cf. Pascual 2006b; Xiang and Pascual in press). The questions in example (1) constitute prototypical instances of three distinct categories, namely real information-seeking questions, fictional information-seeking questions, and fictive discourse-organizing questions.

However, is the distinction between reality, fiction and fictivity as obvious and clear-cut as illustrated by the examples above? Can we have cases where these categories overlap or are embedded into one another? The relationship between these three notions remains a critical yet untackled issue in research on fictive interaction and on fictivity more generally. To address this matter, this chapter analyzes the philosophical dialogues in an early Daoist text, *Zhuangzi* (4th century B.C.), and its pictorial version, *Zhuangzi Speaks* (Tsai [1986] 2013). The putative author of the text bearing his name, Zhuangzi (c. 369–c. 286 B.C.), is perhaps the greatest of the early Daoist thinkers (Fung [1948] 1997, p. 104).[1] The *Zhuangzi* text, one of the most popular Daoist texts in the Chinese tradition (Roth 2008), presents the philosopher's original insights into human nature and the universe, regarded as analogous to those of the Dutch philosopher Spinoza (Fung 1964, p. 5). In terms of writing style, the *Zhuangzi* text is primarily conversational (Lu 1998, p. 253), resembling that of Plato in his famous dialogues (Fung 1964,

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[1] The *Zhuangzi* text, according to Fung ([1948] 1997), is not the work of a single author and there exists no consensus on the authorship of the 'Outer Chapters' and 'Miscellaneous Chapters' (for a most recent comprehensive overview, see Liu 2015). This notwithstanding, we can be almost certain that all the later authors intended the text to be read as authentically written by the historical Zhuangzi himself (for additional linguistic evidence in favor of this proposition in the text, see Xiang and Pascual in press). Since the authorship issue is not a focus of this chapter, and since it should not affect the conceptualization of the dialogues, I will not distinguish the different (variously named groups of) authors.

p. 5). A possible explanation for both authors' seemingly coincidental use of conversation as a unique mode of philosophizing is that they value conversation or certain distinctive features of it (cf. Long 2008). Since conversation "allows for disagreement and candid exchange", it is thus an "inherently non-authoritarian medium" (Long 2008, p. 45) and can help avoid the authors' dogmatism (cf. Blondell 2002). Moreover, as a canonical form of verbal communication (Clark 1996), conversation can set up familiar, human-scale scenarios so that readers can empathetically identify themselves as a participant and mentally engage in the ongoing discussion (cf. Blondell 2002).

Zhuangzi's writings, as the historian Sima Qian (145-90? B. C.) summarizes in his biography of the philosopher, are "for the most part allegorical" (Fung 1983, p. 221). Most allegories[2] in the *Zhuangzi* text are presented in the form of dialogues, which amount to seventy percent of the approximate total count of 80,000 Chinese characters of the entire text (Huang 2013, pp. 58-59). Critically, these dialogues, modeled by the frame of intersubjective face-to-face communication, are not set up for their own sake, for

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[2] Allegory, however, is only a makeshift translation of the original term "yu yan" (寓言, literally 'lodged words'), which also designates a genre of Chinese didactic fables that "probably do not qualify as allegory in a Western sense" (Hartmann 1986, p. 946). Despite its insufficiency, I still use "allegory" as an umbrella term to cover all the possibly different classifications of the dialogues (e.g. fables, parables, anecdotes) in the *Zhuangzi* text in terms of discourse genre.

entertainment, or embellishment purposes. Rather, they are used as a rhetorical strategy, and aim to "unfold differing perspectives, make assertions, and explore multiple dimensions of an issue" (Lu 1998, p. 253).

Different from their occasional use in other texts by authors in the pre-Qin period (before 221 B.C.) such as the "Second Sage" of Confucianism Mencius (372-289 B.C.) and the greatest Legalist philosopher Han Feizi (c. 280 – 233 B.C.), the allegories of *Zhuangzi* are "the rule rather than the exception"; whereas his contemporaries usually adopted allegories from "history, legend, folk tales, or proverbial wisdom", Zhuangzi frequently went beyond the constraints of reality and "devised his allegories out of thin air" (Mair 1986, p. 23). The allegorical dialogues in the *Zhuangzi* text allow the philosopher to "assume a dozen different roles, to be solemn or quizzical, rhapsodic or paradoxical by turns, to speak in the voice of a madman or a millipede, a long-winded sea god or a ruminative skull" (Watson 1983, p. xi). Thus, the philosopher's voice can be 'heard' in the voice of all the characters (Zhang [1948] 2007; Ye [1979] 2004; Wang 2013). In other words, he is like the puppeteer or ventriloquist (Cooren, 2010, 2012) behind the allegories. This observation is echoed by Tsai Chih Chung ([1986] 2013) in his critically acclaimed comic book *Zhuangzi Speaks*, in which the invisible "superspeaker" (cf. Blondell 2002) Zhuangzi is almost always foregrounded in the first and last panels of the comic strips.

In this chapter, I draw on Pascual's (2002, 2006a, 2014) notion of fictive interaction and the theory of conceptual integration or 'blending' (Fauconnier and Turner 1994, 1998, 2002; Pagán Cánovas and Turner this volume). I examine representative non-genuine dialogues of different types in the original text and their corresponding visual representation in the comic book. I aim to show how the philosopher Zhuangzi juxtaposes reality, fiction and fictivity by analyzing the use of questions in the non-genuine dialogues, and how he makes use of these dialogues to convince subsequent readers of his philosophical thoughts through elaborate interactional networks.

2.   The *Zhuangzi* text and its pictorial version

In this study, I restrict my discussion to prototypical dialogues, that is, dialogues between two or more characters with at least two conversational turns. Altogether, I identified 147 instances of prototypical dialogues out of the 192 allegories Ye Chengyi ([1979] 2004) identified in the *Zhuangzi* text.

The version of the original *Zhuangzi* text used here comes from *Zhuangzi yinde* ('A Concordance to Chuang Tzu'), complied by the Harvard-Yenching Institute (1956), which reproduces the recension of the text in the most comprehensively annotated *Collected Commentaries on*

Zhuangzi (Guo [1894] 2013). The English version I used for reference is translated by Burton Watson ([1968] 2013) and is regarded as one of the best English renditions of the text, "eclips[ing] all others for many years" (Classe 2000, p. 1515).

The two-volume bilingual comic book rendition *Zhuangzi Speaks* (Tsai [1986] 2013) contains 156 comic strips, among which the first one provides background information about the historical Zhuangzi and the quintessence of his philosophy, while the rest visually represent pieces of discourse from the *Zhuangzi* text. These discourse fragments can be selections from monologic argumentative essays and short dialogues between discourse characters.[3] The pictorial representation in the comic strips is slightly modified from the original text: sometimes with selected scenarios described in the text and sometimes with extra details not explicitly mentioned but creatively added by the cartoonist. Both the selections and additions provide readers with cues as to how to interpret the text. They can help readers better understand the conceptual configuration underlying the text, as they represent visually what is invisible in the text. In this sense, the

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[3] The text represented in the comic strips is retold in Mandarin Chinese by the cartoonist himself and translated into English by Brian Bruya. The original classical Chinese text of these dialogues can be found in the appendix to the comic book (Tsai [1986] 2013, pp. 222-250).

comic book is a faithful representation of the original *Zhuangzi* in terms of both context and content.

3.   Interactional networks in the *Zhuangzi* text

In the *Zhuangzi* text we have different kinds of non-genuine dialogues enacted by: (i) realistic discourse participants (e.g. living beings that are able to talk, section 3.1) and (ii) fantastic discourse participants (e.g. non-human beings such as animals or plants or even entirely immaterial entities such as abstract concepts, section 3.2). The ultimate philosophical message of the dialogues is usually presented for the benefit of the readers by one of the discourse characters. Occasionally, some dialogues feature a third discourse participant, who makes relevant conclusive comments on the previous conversation between the other two interlocutors, thus voicing the moral that the philosopher intends to convey to the reader. There are also a few instances of dialogues involving even more discourse participants taking turns to talk or dialogues, whose philosophical messages are non-explicit.

In the allegories, Zhuangzi employs two modes of speech: *yu yan* ('imputed words')[4] and *chong yan* ('repeated words'), either separately or in combination. These two literary devices are not mutually exclusive; in fact, repeated words can be viewed as a particular subtype of imputed words. Indeed, more than seventy percent of the allegories have been identified as using both devices (Ye [1979] 2004, pp. 5-80). According to the philosopher himself, imputed words "that make up nine-tenths of [the text] are like persons brought in from outside for the purpose of exposition", while repeated words "that make up seven-tenths of [the text] are intended to put an end to argument. They can do this because they are the words of the elders" (Watson [1968] 2013, p. 234). In other words, the writer generally speaks through other story characters[5] in the allegories to present his philosophical views for the benefit of subsequent readers. In the case of repeated words,

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4   Coined by Zhuangzi and first used in the title of Chapter 27, the term "yu yan" in the original sense refers to a particular literary device employed by the philosopher in his writing and has been rendered differently as "imputed words" (Watson [1968] 2013), "dwelling words" (Wu 1988), "metaphor" (Mair 1994), and "fable" (Wang 1999), to cite but a few examples. In this chapter, I adopt Burton Watson's translation of the term.

5 Sometimes Zhuangzi himself also appears on stage and enacts conversations with other contemporaries such as his friend, the Sophist Hui Shi or his disciple(s). However, even when involving the philosopher himself, these conversations are still imaginary and cannot be regarded as reliable information about the author in view of the deliberate fantasy characterizing the whole text (Watson [1968] 2013; Chen 1996).

the philosopher quotes from seniors, whose speech is claimed to possess certain evidential value (Xiang and Pascual in press). In terms of blending, the story characters in the allegories are thus all blended with the philosopher's identity and there is only one character that is blended with his ideas. Furthermore, quoted individuals are always blended with their quotees, whose words are produced by them and hence often blended with their own viewpoints. Figure 1 presents a schematic representation of the interactional network underlying the non-genuine dialogues in the *Zhuangzi* text and its pictorial representation.
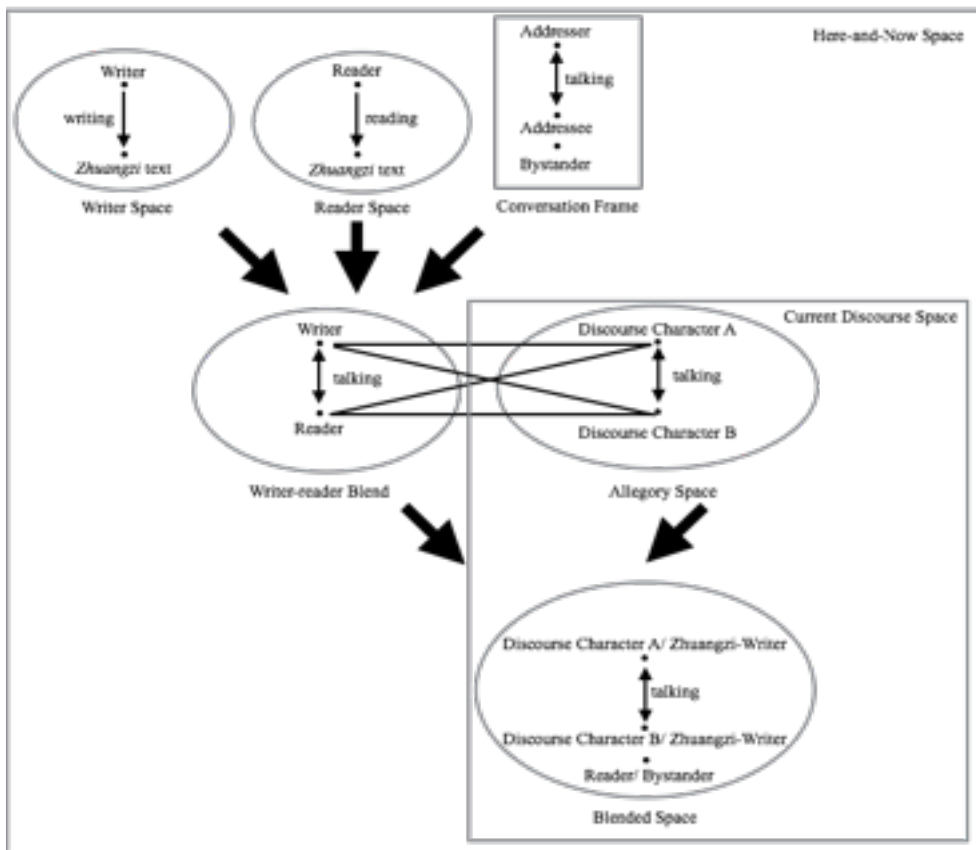
Figure 1. Writer-reader interactional network in the *Zhuangzi* text[6]

As can be seen in Figure 1, we first have the Here-and-Now Space, where the Writer Space, the Reader Space and the conversational roles from the Conversation Frame are projected into the fictive writer-reader blend. [7] In the blend, the writer is conceptualized as directly speaking to the reader (cf. Herman 1999; Fauconnier and Turner 2002). In the embedded Current Discourse Space[8] (Langacker 2001, 2008, 2013), we have the writer and reader jointly attending to the story enacted by discourse characters in the Allegory Space. Since the discourse participants in the Allegory Space speak in the voice of the writer (Zhang [1948] 2007; Ye [1979] 2004; Wang

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[6] Instead of following the notational convention of using dotted lines to indicate projections into the blended space, I only use thick lines with arrow in the integration network diagrams, mainly to avoid overlapping lines in the diagram, which could be confusing and difficult to understand. Additionally, I omit the blending process involved in the construction of the writer-reader blend in the other figures below to avoid repetition. Thanks to Alan Cienki for suggesting this to me.

[7] In the Writer Space and the Reader Space, the possible different authors of the text and the subsequent readers along the centuries become massively compressed into one single fictive writer and one single fictive reader (Xiang and Pascual in press).

[8] The Current Discourse Space is defined as "the mental space comprising those elements and relations construed as being shared by the speaker and hearer as a basis for communication at a given moment in the flow of discourse" (Langacker 2001, p. 144).

2013), and since the reader will mentally simulate the dialogues while reading (Bergen 2005, 2012), the discourse characters are blended with both the writer and the reader. In the blended space, the writer talks to himself in the disguise of other discourse participants, the reader becoming the bystander (Goffman 1963, pp. 88-99) of the ongoing fictional conversation.

3.1. Non-genuine dialogues between realistic discourse participants

Of all the 147 non-genuine dialogues in the *Zhuangzi* text, 135 are enacted between realistic discourse characters, real or fictional. Among the real characters, some are historical figures, for instance, the enlightened kings Yao and Shun and senior philosophers such as Laozi and Confucius; the others are contemporaries of Zhuangzi, for instance, his friend Hui Shi. Among the fictional characters, some can be very eccentric and consequently easy to recognize as being entirely made-up, for instance, "Mad Stammerer, Lipless Clubfoot Scattered, Fancypants Scholar, [and] Sir Plow" (Mair 1986, p. 24). Consider a short piece of discourse involving Confucius:

(2) [......] 仲尼恐其广己而造大也，爱己而造哀也，曰："回！无受天损易，无受人益难。无始而非卒也，人与天一也。夫今之歌者其谁乎？" [......] "何谓无受人益难？" 仲尼曰："[......] 君子不为盗，贤人不为窃。吾若取之，何哉？故曰：鸟莫知于鹞鸸，目之

所不宜处，不给视，虽落其实，弃之而走。其畏人也，而袭诸人间，社稷存焉尔。" [……] (53/20/52–59)[9]

[[…] Confucius, fearful that Yan Hui's respect for him was too great, that his love for him was too tender, said to him, "Hui! It is easy to be indifferent to the afflictions of Heaven but hard to be indifferent to the benefits of man. No beginning but has its end, and man and Heaven are one. Who is it, then, who sings this song now?" […] (Yan Hui asked) *"And what do you mean when you say that <u>it is hard to be indifferent to the benefits of man</u>?"* "[…] A gentleman will not pilfer, a worthy man will not steal. *What business would I have, then, trying to acquire such things?* So it is said, There is no bird wiser than the swallow. If its eyes do not light on a suitable spot, it will not give a second look. If it happens to drop the food it had in its beak, it will let it go and fly on its way. It is wary of men, and yet it lives among them, finding its protection along with men in the village altars of the soil and grain." […]] (Watson [1968] 2013, pp. 163-164).

The above piece of discourse is enacted between real historical figures Confucius and his favorite disciple Yan Hui to present Zhuangzi's view that man should be contented and cheerful in adversity. Confucius in his speech to Yan Hui puts forward four Daoist propositions, while Yan Hui produces four questions to inquire about the philosophical implications of these propositions, which Confucius answers in subsequent conversational

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[9] While citing examples from the classical Chinese original, I follow the Yenching convention by indicating the page, chapter, and line number(s) from left to right (Harvard-Yenching Institute 1956, pp. v–vi). Discourse fragments relevant to the analysis are indicated with emphasis marks (.) in the classical Chinese original, while their corresponding English translations are generally italicized (unless otherwise specified).

turns. Since Confucius, the founder of Confucianism, has a very different –
in fact an opposite – philosophy from Zhuangzi, he would never talk like a
Daoist as he does here. Hence, the above piece of discourse is no quote from
an actual conversation between these two historical figures and could never
have happened (Lu 1981, p. 364), despite the fact that the discourse charac-
ters Confucius and Yan Hui do originate from a Reality Space. In the
Zhuangzi text, Confucius "sometimes preaches conventional Confucian
morality, while at other times he speaks in the words of a true Daoist
sage" (Watson [1968] 2013, p. xxviii). In this allegorical dialogue the image
of Confucius, which is a reconstruction in a new and imagined context (cf.
Lu 1998), belongs to the latter case.

The above allegorical dialogue is an instance of Zhuangzi's com-
bined use of both *yu yan* ('imputed words') and *chong yan* ('repeated
words') (Ye [1979] 2004, p. 43). Confucius is presented not as having be-
come a Daoist in a Fiction Space, but his words need to be interpreted as a
rhetorical strategy to convey Zhuangzi's views. Instead of presenting his
views in his own voice, as he does in the monologic argumentative episodes
(cf. Xiang and Pascual in press), the philosopher has Yan Hui pose informa-
tion-seeking questions to Confucius and quotes the latter's answers as the
actual philosophical message of the dialogue. In this sense, the fictional
question by Yan Hui is further used fictively as an expository question. In-

deed, in terms of discursive function, a parallel can be drawn between the fictive use of the genuine question in Yan Hui's conversational turn and the expository question in 1(c). In (2), Confucius also produces a rhetorical question ("What business would I have, then, …?") in his response to Yan Hui's inquiry (the Daoist proposition being underlined in the English translation). Rhetorical questions are fictive per definition, as they are non-information-seeking, the answers being presupposed in the immediate context and can elicit mental responses in the addressee's – in this case primarily Yan Hui's and ultimately the prospective readers' – mind. The elements of fiction and fictivity as illustrated by the use of question-answer pairs in the above non-genuine dialogue are made more explicit in the comic book rendition (see Comic Strip 1 in the Appendix), which pictorially represents the "swallow" analogy that Confucius draws in his speech.

In the comic strip, the philosopher appears only in the first and last panels, which are visually separated from the rest, representing the Current Discourse Space and the Allegory Space respectively. In the first panel, the philosopher is dressed in the same robe as Confucius in the story and there is a swallow standing on his left index figure, much resembling the pictorial image of Confucius in the fourth closed panel. In the last panel the philosopher, sitting with eyes closed, produces a puzzle about the swallow's nesting among men in a speech bubble. The answer to the puzzle, which constitutes

part of the intended philosophical message of the allegory ascribed to Confucius in the original text, can be located in his speech in the comic strip. Moreover, there are two swallows in the last panel: one seems to be preparing for landing in front of the philosopher and the other flying away from him. Since the swallow originally comes from Confucius' response to Yan Hui, not only Zhuangzi the narrator and Confucius the story character but also the Current Discourse Space and the Allegory Space they inhabit are blended in the first and last panels. This further confirms that the dialogue is constructed by the author to present his actual views to the reader, since the character Confucius speaks for the narrator Zhuangzi. This is the case even though the characters come from a Reality Space, and the dialogue takes place in a Fiction Space. Figure 2 presents the integration network underlying this piece of discourse:
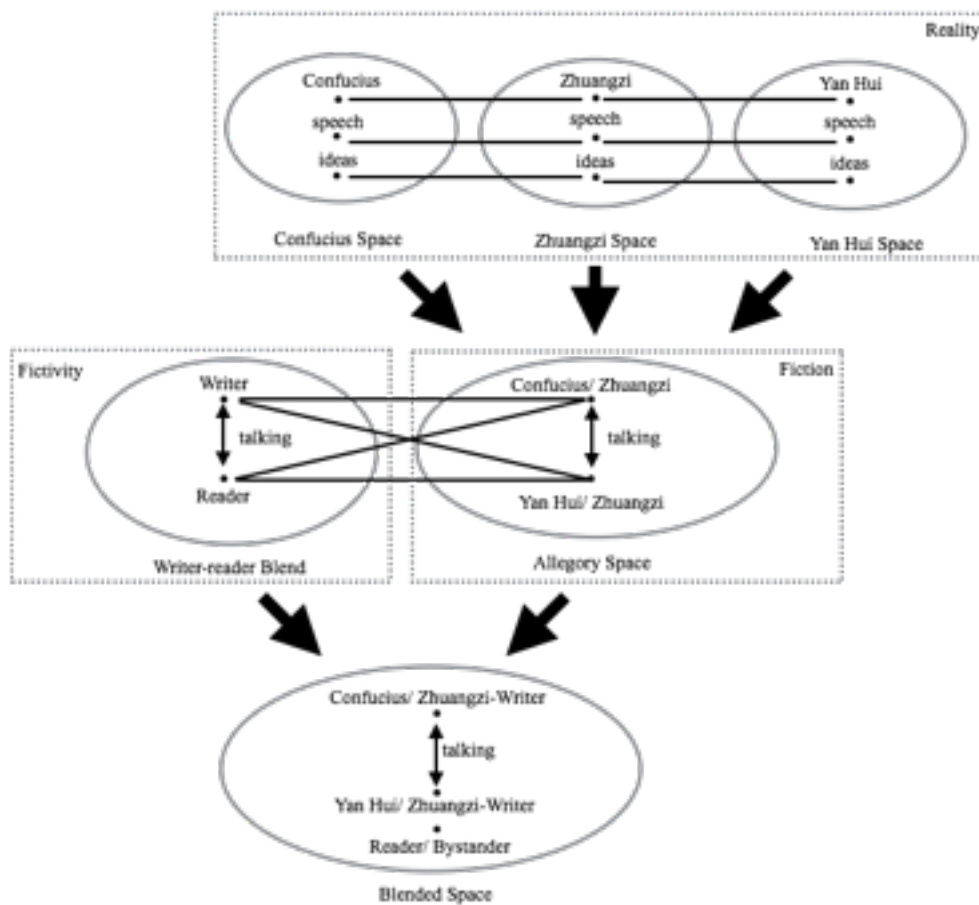
Figure 2. Confucius as spokesman of Zhuangzi

In Figure 2, we have the blended identity of Confucius as Zhuangzi,
since Zhuangzi's philosophical message is presented by Confucius. This is
the output of the conceptual integration of two input spaces, namely, the
Confucius Space and the Zhuangzi Space in Reality. In the blend, we have
Confucius' identity and Zhuangzi's ideas fused together. Thus, Confucius
becomes the spokesman of Zhuangzi. In addition, Yan Hui is also a blended
identity with Zhuangzi. In the blended space, the philosopher talks through

other discourse characters, while the reader becomes the bystander (Goffman 1963, pp. 88-99) of this fictional conversation on the philosopher's view. The juxtaposition of dashed-line squares marks the co-presence of reality, fiction, and fictivity in the above dialogue. The same also applies for the integration networks in the following figures.

3.2. Non-genuine dialogues between fantastic discourse participants

The fantastic discourse participants in this type of non-genuine dialogues are deities (2 instances) or personified animals, plants, and other nonhuman entities (5 instances), as well as abstract concepts (5 instances). Consider first the following short piece of dialogue between Penumbra and Shadow:

(3)　　罔两问景曰："曩子行，今子止，曩子坐，今子起，何其无特操与？"景曰："吾有待而然者邪？吾所待又有待而然者邪？吾待蛇蚹、蜩翼邪？恶识所以然？恶识所以不然？" (7/2/92–94)

[Penumbra said to Shadow, "A little while ago you were walking, and now you're standing still; a little while ago you were sitting, and now you're standing up. *Why this lack of independent action?*" Shadow said, "*Do I have to wait for something before I can be like this? Does what I wait for also have to wait for something before it can be like this? Am I waiting for the scales of a snake or the wings of a cicada? How do I know why it is so? How do I know why it isn't so?*"] (Watson [1968] 2013, pp.17-18)

In (3), the personified characters Penumbra and Shadow are talking. In the dialogue, Penumbra is presented as producing a factual information-

seeking question ("Why this lack of independent action?") to Shadow, who in turn answers this question with a succession of rhetorical questions ("Do I have to wait for something before I can be like this? …"). Since penumbras and shadows in Reality are inanimate entities and cannot talk, the dialogue between these two discourse characters is entirely made up and hence fictional. However, this non-genuine dialogue is not introduced for entertainment purposes but serves as a rhetorical device to express the philosopher's actual thought, thereby exemplifying his use of "imputed words" (Ye [1979] 2004, p. 8). Instead of the writer asking about the reason for the dependent action of the shadow he has observed in Reality and answering it himself as in (1c), he has two nonverbal entities talk to each other in a ventriloquial manner in the Fiction Space. The rhetorical questions by Shadow should produce silent answers in the mind of his interlocutor, which is the very message that Shadow wants to convey to Penumbra. More importantly, this message is also the moral of the allegory that change is a law of nature. In this sense, the genuine question of Penumbra in the Fiction Space is used fictively as an expository question. Different from the expository question in (1c), the fictive questioner and answerer roles in this question are no longer taken by the author's split selves but rather by individual participants. In this light, the writer is blended with the discourse characters. This conceptual

link is foregrounded in the corresponding comic book rendition (see Comic Strip 2 in the Appendix).

In the pictorial representation of the dialogue, we have the philosopher Zhuangzi turning his head backwards and observing the ongoing conversation between his own shadow and the shadow's shadow (Penumbra) in the first panel; in the last panel, Zhuangzi's shadow expresses the moral of the story to him. The pictorial images in the first and last panels clearly demonstrate the use of "imputed words" in (3), as the shadow and penumbra are specified as the philosopher's, while in the original text they have generic references. By presenting the shadow and penumbra in the image of the philosopher, the cartoonist projects his interpretation of the conceptual configuration underlying the text onto the cartoon and intends it to be interpreted as suggesting that the author is blended with both characters and speaks through them. A more extended version of the blending involved in the above piece of discourse is given in Figure 3.
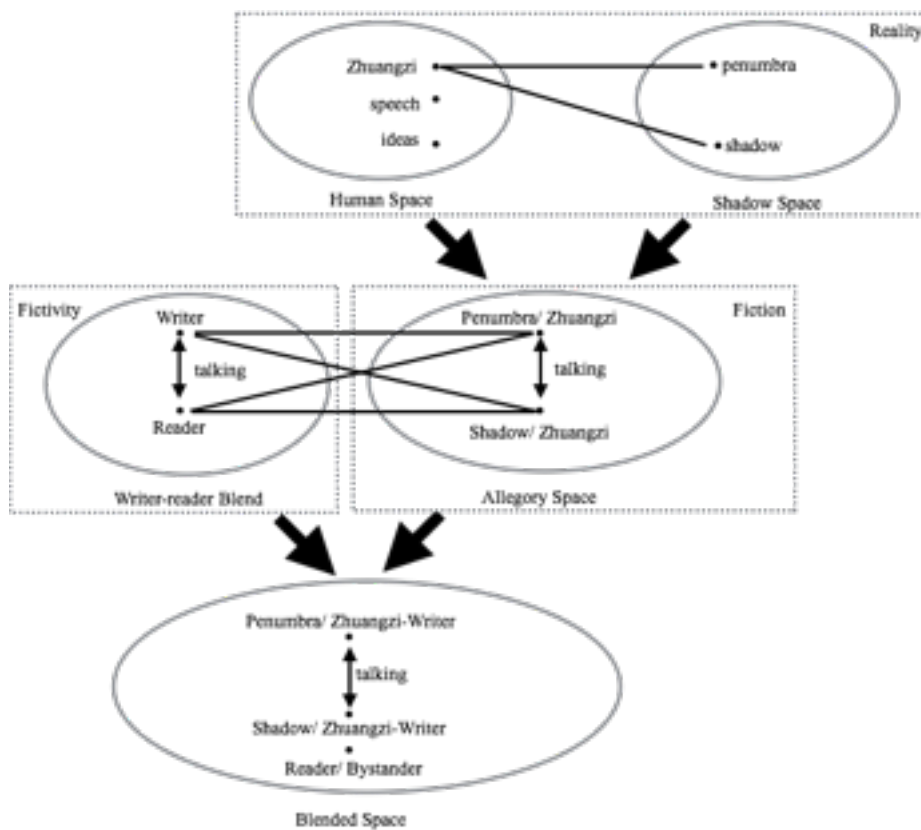
Figure 3. Talking shadows

In the integration network, we first have a particular instance of blending, that is, personification, which involves the conceptual integration of the Human Space and an inanimate Shadow Space (cf. Turner 2002, 2014) in Reality. In the blended space, the writer conceptually integrates himself with the discourse participants Shadow and Penumbra, although only the former, who is the mouthpiece of the writer, is blended with his ideas. The writer is thus engaged in talking with himself through a split-self;

while the reader, also blended with the story characters through mental simulation (Bergen 2005, 2012), becomes a bystander of this fictional conversation in the Allegory Space.

Finally, consider an instance of non-genuine dialogues between abstract concepts with Daoist philosophical implications, which are even less material than the shadows in (3):

(4) [......]泰清以之言也问乎无始，曰："若是，则无穷之弗知，与无为之知，孰是而孰非乎？" 无始曰："不知深矣，知之浅矣；[......]" 于是泰清中而叹曰："弗知乃知乎! 知乃不知乎! 孰知不知之知？"无始曰："道不可闻，闻而非也；道不可见，见而非也；道不可言，言而非也。知形形之不形乎？道不当名。无始曰："[......] 道无问，问无应。无问问之，是问穷也；无应应之，是无内也。[......]"（60/22/59–64）

[Grand Purity, having received these various answers, went and questioned No-Beginning, saying, "If this is how it is, then between No-End's declaration that he doesn't understand and No-Action's declaration that he does, *which is right and which is wrong?*" No-Beginning said, "Not to understand is profound; to understand is shallow. […]" Thereupon Grand Purity gazed up and sighed, saying, "Not to understand is to understand! To understand is not to understand! *Who understands the understanding that does not understand?*" No-Beginning said, "The Way cannot be heard; heard, it is not the Way. The Way cannot be seen; seen, it is not the Way. The Way cannot be described; described, it is not the Way. *That which gives form to the formed is itself formless—can you understand that?* There is no name that fits the Way" No-Beginning continued, "[…] The Way is not to be asked about, and even if it is asked about, there can be no answer.

To ask about what cannot be asked about is to ask for the sky. To answer what cannot be answered is to try to split hairs. […]"] (Watson [1968] 2013, pp. 184-185)

In the above piece of dialogue, the personified Grand Purity and No-Beginning[10] are talking. This dialogue is fictional as these two abstract concepts, coined by the philosopher himself and appearing in the *Zhuangzi* text for the first time, do not exist as actual living entities, let alone conversational participants, in a Reality Space. In the fictional dialogue, Grand Purity is presented as producing two genuine information-seeking questions to No-Beginning ("which is right and which is wrong?", "Who understands the understanding that does not understand?"); in his reply, No-Beginning produces one expository question ("That which gives form to the formed is itself formless—can you understand that?"), which he answers subsequently ("There is no name …"). This dialogue instantiates Zhuangzi's use of "imputed words" (Ye [1979] 2004, p. 52). Instead of elaborating on these two concepts in his own voice, the philosopher chooses to have the concepts themselves engage in a philosophical debate to present his argument that the Way cannot be named. In this sense, the two factual questions by Grand Purity are also fictively used as expository questions. As a result, the above

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[10] In the comic strip, the name of the discourse character "无始" is translated by Brian Bruya as "Beginningless". To be consistent in the analysis, I follow Burton Watson's literal translation of the original as "No-Beginning".

dialogue is not just simultaneously fictional and fictive, but the elements of fiction and fictivity are embedded into one another.

In the pictorial representation of the above discourse fragment in the comic strip (see Comic Strip 3 in the Appendix), which depicts a much longer string of text, we have in the first panel the philosopher sitting on a cushion with a gourd lying to his left, exactly the way No-Beginning is depicted in the comic strip. In the last panel the philosopher Zhuangzi carries a gourd on his back with his palms put together and pronounces the philosophical message with a satisfied face, as if he has been enlightened and attained Dao. This mirrors the penultimate pictorial image of Grand Purity in the comic strip, in which he accepts No-Beginning's teaching by repeating the latter's speech in the original text. The visual representations of the philosopher in the first and last panels suggest that he is conceptually integrated with both characters and thereby speaks through them. Figure 4 presents the entire integration network underlying the above piece of discourse:
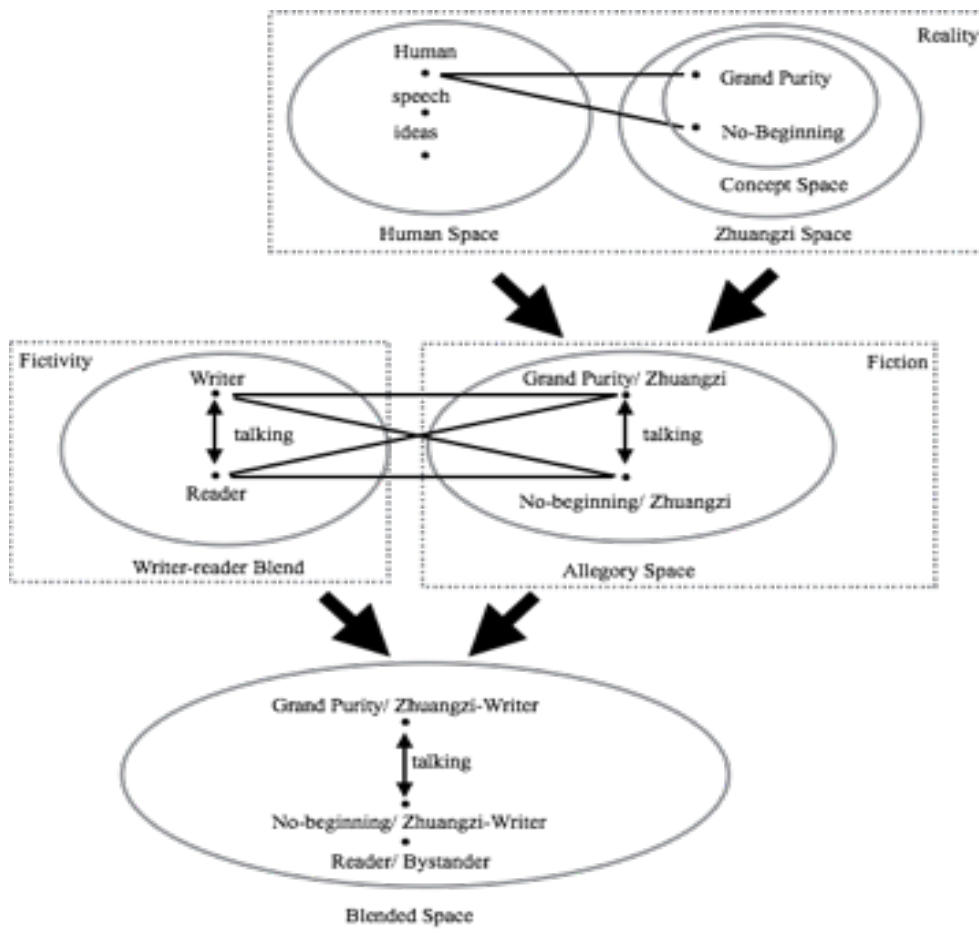
Figure 4. Conversing concepts

The integration network in Figure 4 is the most complex in this chapter. We first have a negation blending of a Counterfactual Space and a Reality (or Belief) Space (Fauconnier and Turner 2002) to produce the negative or missing concept, "No-Beginning". Then this negative concept together with the abstract concept "purity" in the Concept Space, which is

embedded in the Zhuangzi Space in Reality[11], is blended with the Human Space to yield personified concepts (cf. Turner 2002, 2014), which can now engage in a fictional conversation in the Allegory Space. In the blended space, the writer is fused with the discourse characters Grand Purity and No-Beginning. This can be seen clearly from the visual representation of the philosopher blended with both characters respectively in the first and last panels. The two selves are then interacting with each other through personified concepts, while readers become bystanders of the fictional conversation.

4.   Summary and conclusions

In this chapter I analyzed two different types of allegorical dialogues enacted between both realistic and entirely fantastic discourse participants in the *Zhuangzi* text. In these dialogues, the philosopher has fictional characters – or actual ones, construed within a fictional scenario – talk for him in a kind of ventriloquism (Cooren 2010, 2012) in order to teach readers about his philosophical views. With Zhuangzi, these seemingly anecdotal dialogues

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[11] The embedding of the concepts "beginning" and "purity" in the Zhuangzi Space seems to imply that they exist as individuated entities in reality. However, I do not assume anything in particular about this. Thanks to Sergeiy Sandler for pointing this out to me.

are "no longer an appendage to the argument but the argument itself" (Watson 1983, p. x). This is made especially explicit in the first and last panels of the comic strips in the comic book (Tsai [1986] 2013), where the philosopher is often pictorially blended with a particular discourse character and where the context often has elements from the scenario described in the story. This involves a blending of not just identities but also mental spaces, more specifically the Current Discourse Space and the Allegory Space. Furthermore, the first and last panels are largely open and pictorially separated from the visual representation of the fictional dialogue, suggesting that although the Allegory Space is embedded in the Current Discourse Space, there still exist some differences between the two. The pictorial separation in the comic strips shows that the cartoonist is well aware that all the allegorical dialogues are a rhetorical strategy to present the philosopher's views.

The discourse characters in the examples discussed above, i.e. historical characters in example (2), personified characters in (3), and entirely fictional characters in (4), instantiate a continuum with reality and fiction as its both ends. Despite the fact that some interlocutors in the dialogues do inhabit a Past Reality space, as in example (2), these dialogues are simultaneously fictional and fictive, as they are constructed by the writer to present his philosophical ideas. Consequently, readers understand the moral of the narrative through reality, fiction, and fictivity, as illustrated by the use of

questions in the text analyzed above. While reading the text, readers will mentally simulate the questioning and come up with possible silent answers in their mind, which form (at least part of) the philosophical message that the philosopher intends to convey. Therefore, I claim that the distinction between reality, fiction, and fictivity is not clear-cut and that fiction can be embedded within fictivity.

I propose to view the blended spaces represented in the above diagrams as instances of fictive interaction blends at the discourse level (Pascual 2002, 2014). Different from the conventional writer-reader blend, where the writer is conceptualized as speaking directly to the reader (Herman 1999; Fauconnier and Turner 2002), the writer as shown by the examples in this chapter is engaged in talking to himself, while the reader becomes a bystander of this fictive conversation. This often involves the writer conceptually splitting himself into two or even multiple selves, each self blended with a discourse participant and taking turns in conversation.

Fictive interaction, as shown by studies in various languages and discourse genres (see overview in Pascual 2014; Pascual and Sandler this volume), is a successful communicative strategy. According to Brandt (2008, 2013), fictive interaction blends appear to be a standard argumentative structure in Western philosophical texts, as also instantiated in Plato's Dialogues (Blondell 2002). My analysis in this chapter seems to suggest that

the same also holds true for classical, highly influential texts in the Eastern philosophical tradition, which have survived many centuries.

The large number of dialogues found in the *Zhuangzi* text, as is also the case in Plato's works and other ancient texts analyzed by various scholars in Goldhill (2008), confirms that these influential texts are conversationally structured. The typical conversationalized structures in ancient written texts may have to do with their oral features, since these texts emerged in a predominantly oral culture and were meant to be read aloud or even performed and commented on in a community (Bowery 2007). This characteristic feature of ancient texts seems to suggest that conversationalization, namely "the modeling of [...] discourse upon the discursive practices of ordinary life, 'conversational' practices in a broad sense" (Fairclough 1994, p. 235), is more fundamental than what has been claimed. It is thus certainly not restricted to modern institutional discourse (Fairclough 1994; Vis 2011; Vis, et al. 2012) or spoken informal speech by the contemporary youth (Streeck 2002). The ubiquitous conversational structures in both ancient and contemporary discourse emerge from our intrinsically conversational mind as interacting social beings (Brandt 2013; Pascual 2014).

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Appendix

Comic Strip 1. 'Swallows Nest in the Eaves' (Tsai [1986] 2013, p. 83)

Comic Strip 2. 'Dialogue with a Shadow' (Tsai [1986] 2013, p. 26)

Comic Strip 3. 'The Dao Transcends Knowledge' (Tsai [1986] 2013, pp. 202–203)