

STUDIES IN CHINESE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

FESTSCHRIFT IN HONOUR OF CHRISTOPH HARBSMEIER
ON THE OCCASION OF HIS 60TH BIRTHDAY



EDITED BY CHRISTOPH ANDERL AND HALVOR EIFRING

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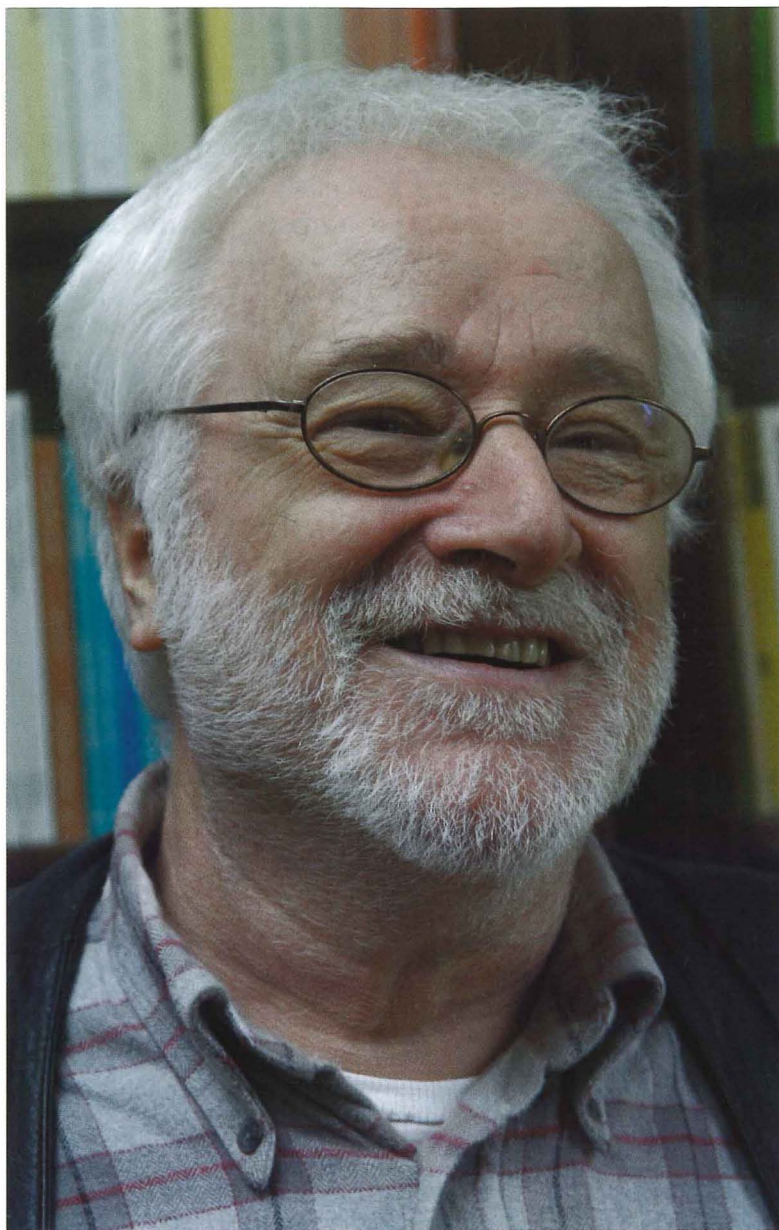
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Christoph Harbsmeier

祝何翁六十寿诞

海德堡即初谿公

奥斯特城是生家

读书学贯中西者

原是北海虬髯翁

From Pang Pu 庞朴 of the Centre for Confucian Studies
at Shandong University
To Christoph Harbsmeier on his Sixtieth Birthday

Translated by David Hawkes

Acquaintance first in HEIDELBERG began,
But OSLO showed the full measure of the MAN:
Holder of learning EAST *and* WEST the key —
Who but old BRISTLEBEARD of the NORTHERN SEA!

Translator: The original 虬髯客 was the hero of a story by the Tang writer Zhang Yue (张悦) who disappeared after various adventures, to reappear much later as ruler of the little kingdom of Fuyu in what is now the Liaodong-Jilin area. In English translations he is generally called "Curlybeard", but as Professor Harbsmeier's facial excrescence is decidedly not "curly", I have ventured to substitute another epithet.
D.H.

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EDITORS' PREFACE

This Festschrift is not only a collection of contributions to the field of Chinese philology by some of the foremost scholars in the field; it is a highly personal homage from both editors, authors, and congratulants to a dear friend, a good colleague, a revered teacher and an outstanding scholar.

The contributors were asked to provide something off the beaten track, maybe a little eccentric or naughty, something that might provoke a smile on Christoph's face, or even one of his characteristic outbursts of laughter.

The articles cover a wide range of topics. However, virtually all these topics lie within the broad range of Christoph's interests. Many of the contributors worked for extended periods with Christoph on texts belonging to their respective fields of research. Christoph's immense love of ancient (and sometimes not so ancient) texts, his sharp analytical mind, and his sensitivity to finer nuances of meaning, context and rhetorical force often make him provide surprising insights on virtually any topic under discussion.

This book is an attempt at expressing our gratitude. It is a product of the same passion for

Christoph, 4 years old (to the right), dressed in the traditional Lederhose (with his brother Michael)



the close reading of texts (be they literary, philosophical, religious, divinatory or even filmatic) that lies at the heart of Christoph's work.

Childhood

Christoph was born on April 16th, 1946 in the German hamlet Reiffenhausen as number four of five boys. His father was a priest and professor of theology, his mother a theologian and housewife.

THE NOSE

Christoph's nose has played a crucial role in his personal life as well as his scholarly career. A slightly off-centre position of his nose eventually caused a reduction in the sight of one eye (weakened by the constant effort to look beyond the tip of the nose). In turn, the fact that one of his nostrils is bigger than the other brought too much air into the Eustachian tract, eventually leading to a chronic inflammation of the ear, greatly impeding his hearing. As a result, Christoph is virtually blind in one eye, deaf in one ear, and has no sense of smell in one of his nostrils! In addition, the nose caused problems for breathing activities during night. This again – together with a naturally alert and active state of mind – has lead to a chronic problem of insomnia. Becoming used to an average of four, five hours sleep per night already at an early stage in his life, Christoph could devote additional time to his studies and the night-time

consumption of Greek and Latin literature, as well as 18th century European literature. So if we would have counted Christoph's awake-time as compared to other people's we might as well have celebrated his 70th birthday!



Christoph and his brothers (from left to right): Michael, Christoph, Eberhard, Dietrich, and Georg

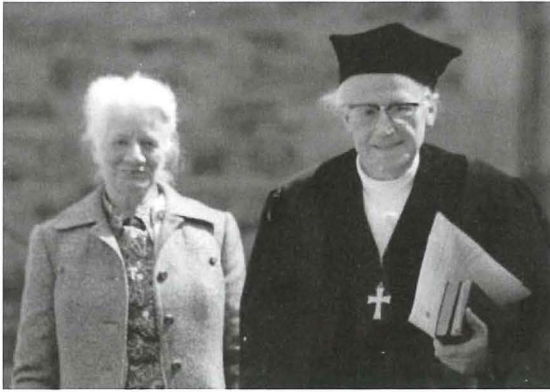
THE BODY

In 1953 the Harbsmeier family moved to Lüneburg and Christoph entered the local Gymnasium 'Johanneum'. His performance at school was very poor during this period, and he even had to repeat the fifth grade. His interests were clearly focused on other aspects of life, in particular football, handball, squash (and a little bit later the smoking of fat cigars), as well as the performance of mischievous acts. Reportedly, one of his father's most frequently uttered phrases during that time was "Was macht der Christoph? Finde ihn und sage ihm, dass er es nicht darf!" ("What is Christoph doing?

Find him and tell him that he is not allowed to do it!"). Christoph's most ardent wish during that time was to enter a professional career within sports, however, his body turned out to be too short for this purpose, and his lack of stereoscopic eyesight was also a problem, and he eventually had to discard the idea.

THE BRAIN

In 1961 the family moved to the old University town Göttingen and Christoph entered the 'Max Planck' Gymnasium. This seems to have been one of the turning points in Christoph's intellectual development. Being denied a career within football or handball, he started to concentrate his energies on intellectual activities. And this was met with much success! He



Christoph's mother
(Dora) and father (Götz)

soon became an excellent student, and alongside Greek and Latin, he studied French, English, Russian, and even secretly studied Polish under his desk during other classes. During the last years of Gymnasium he was frequently excused from participation in regular classes and instead took private lessons in

philosophy with the famous philosopher Günther Patzig.

The family

Christoph has often stressed the importance of his family (and in particular his father) for his development as a scholar. He often characterizes the members of the family as 'hyperarticulate', meaning that communication and discussions were very important factors in family life. This sharpened his intellectual and dialectical abilities from an early age. The five boys – often mockingly – used to bombard their father with difficult philosophical and theological questions. One of the characteristic memories during that time is Christoph's father already dressed in his night gear and ready to go to bed, and the five sons chasing him around through the sleeping room while

interrogating him about the theological and philosophical implications of the concept of 'Trinity'.

Christoph's mother had a profound influence on his intellectual development. But even more often, he will cite with much admiration the many characteristic utterances of his father. He also vividly remembers his father's great sense of humour and his sharp observations concerning aspects of human behaviour. Christoph obviously inherited this gift.

At Oxford

After his final exams Christoph received the Robert Birley scholarship to study Western philosophy at Merton College, Oxford. Christoph soon acquired the reputation of a brilliant student and fully took advantage of the vivid intellectual environment at Oxford, attending classes in many different subjects. In the course of pursuing his widespread interests, he made the acquaintance of David Hawkes and not long afterwards also commenced his studies under Angus C. Graham, two persons who significantly influenced his future scholarly development within Sinology. Graham aroused in him a great interest in Chinese syntax, a passion that would follow Christoph throughout his career.



Christoph,
Theodor, and
Ingeborg in
Malaysia

Christoph enjoyed his life and studies at Oxford so much that he postponed his graduation several times and was about to become an 'eternal student'. Only after a concrete job offer from a Malaysian university he decided to conclude his studies with a master's degree in Chinese studies.

In the jungle

His appointment as lecturer at the University Sains Malaysia put an end to Christoph's stay at Oxford. In Oxford, he got acquainted with Ingeborg Rørdam Thaning, a Danish girl who worked as physiotherapist in Oxford. Ingeborg's father was also a priest and theologian and the two families had

known each other for a long time. (They had actually met in their teens, when Ingeborg remembers the 15-year old Christoph as lying on a couch smoking a cigar and asking about Latin studies in Denmark!) Christoph and Ingeborg got married and together they moved to Penang where Christoph commenced his teaching in logic and philosophy. Ingeborg remembers that Christoph tried to give his lectures in Malay, much to the enjoyment of his students, since his initially limited language skills forced Christoph to express complicated philosophical and logical problems as simply as possible. During the stay in Malaysia Christoph's son, Theodor, was born in 1974.⁴

The cello-playing 'husfar' in Denmark

After the three-year contract had ended, the Harbsmeier family moved to Denmark, and Ingeborg found work as physiotherapist. Their daughter Laura Marie⁵ was born in 1977 and Christoph

assumed the title of 'live-at-home

father' (a male housewife, or, in Danish,

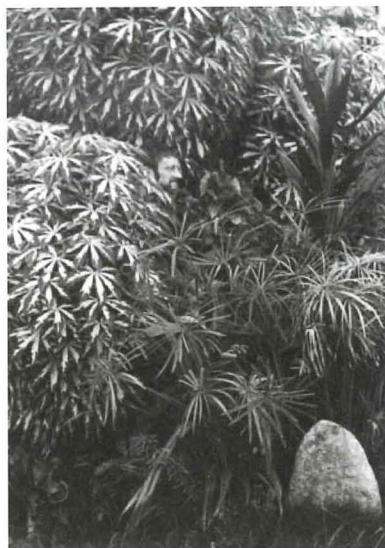
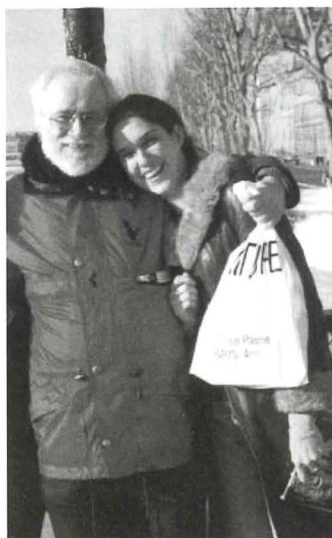
'hjemmegående husfar'). In a long article in the newspaper *Fyens Stiftstidende* he presented himself as a model of a cello-playing 'husfar'. However, Ingeborg remembers this period a little differently.

Christoph and his daughter Laura Marie in Paris

Christoph merged into the Malaysian jungle

Christoph's activities as 'husfar' were usually restricted to bringing the children to the local

kindergarten (and sometimes forgetting to pick them up!), afterwards



⁴ Theodor is a scholar of Latin and Greek (as well as being a very gifted musician) and is presently participating in the work on a gigantic dictionary project on the Latin language in Munic.

⁵ Laura Marie holds a degree in French language and literature and is presently working at the Norwegian embassy in Paris.

disappearing in his study and working on his Ph.D. thesis. In addition, he wrote several articles for the local newspaper on contemporary Chinese issues.⁶ In 1979 he also published a book on Wilhelm Humboldt and his involvement with Chinese syntax.⁷ The 'houseman' period lasted for 5 years and during that time the family lived far below the poverty threshold. However, in retrospect, Christoph remembers this period as one of the most happy and productive periods of his life. Christoph finally completed his pioneering Ph.D. thesis in which he analyzes the syntax of Classical Chinese in unprecedented detail and in the spirit of Greek and Latin philological studies. In contrast to a common view of that time he shows how much grammar there actually is in Classical Chinese and how rewarding a detailed and analytic reading of these texts can be.⁸ Christoph's supervisor was Prof. Søren Egerod, and he submitted the thesis at the Univ. of Copenhagen. The conclusion of his Ph.D. and the positive response he received for his work was the precondition for his successful application for employment at the University of Oslo.

Professor in Oslo

From 1980 until 1985, Christoph worked as Senior Lecturer in Chinese at the University of Oslo. In 1985, he became professor in East Asian Languages and Literatures. During his initial time in Oslo Christoph intensified his research on the famous Chinese cartoonist Feng Zikai 豐子愷 and in 1985 he published the outcome of his studies.⁹ In private conversations, he repeatedly emphasized that this actually was the

⁶ "Parti og kærlighed: en hverdagshistorie fra Kina." In: *Information* (26.07.1979); "Kinesisk reportage fra besøg i Danmark." In: *Berlingske Tidende* (12.02.1978); "Fra dansk til kinesisk – og retur." In: *Jyllands-Posten* (04.03.1978); "Galileis og Brechts budskap til Kina." In: *Weekendavisen* (28.12.1979); "Danmark set i et kinesisk spejl." In: *Jyllands-Posten* (17.07.1979); "Skandale i Kina." In: *Berlingske Tidende* (04.11.1979); "'Kabale und Liebe' i Kina: - en beretning om tre Shangaistudenters eksamensopgave, der blev til lystspillet 'Artillerikaptajnens søn' (med tak til såvel Aristoteles som Schiller) – og om stykkets effect siden uopførelsen fornylig." In: *Information* (03.09.1979); "Kærlighed i Kina." In: *Berlingske Tidende* (04.05.1979).

⁷ Wilhelm von Humboldts Brief an Abel-Rémusat und die philosophische Grammatik des Altchinesischen. *Grammatica Universalis*, vol. 17. Stuttgart 1979 (279 pp.). As proof for his amazing productivity during that period he published nearly at the same time: Konfuzius und der Räuber Zhi. Frankfurt, Suhrkamp 1978 (166 pp.). Please note that the editors decided to refer only to a few of Christoph's numerous publications in this Festschrift, since more complete versions of his publications are readily available on the internet (see for example his webpage at the Institute for Culture Studies and Oriental Languages (IKOS) at the University of Oslo: <http://www.hf.uio.no/ikos/om-instituttet/ansatte/vit/harbsmei.xml>).

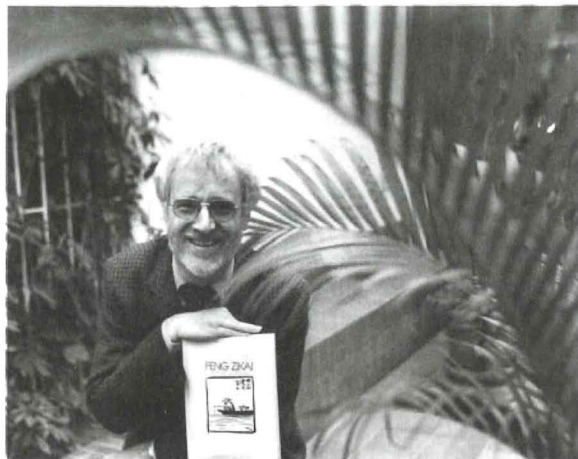
⁸ The book was published as: *Aspects of Classical Chinese Syntax*. London, Curzon Press 1981 (303 pp.).

⁹ *Socialism with a Buddhist Face: The Cartoonist Feng Zikai*. Oslo, Universitetsforlaget 1985.

publication most dear to him. The interest in this cartoonist whom Christoph loved for his humanness and his gentle, and at the same time ironic and critical view of manhood and society, has been a lifelong pursuit and in 2005 an expanded and revised version of the book was translated into Chinese by the artist, poet, and art historian Zhang Bin 張斌.¹⁰

Christoph contributed immensely to the development and internationalization of Chinese studies in Oslo.

During his career he has managed to build up an impressive network, including Chinese scholars from all over the world, as well as connections to numerous Sinological institutions. Having gained the reputation as one of the leading specialists in Chinese syntax and semantics he was asked to be the author of volume 7.3 of the prestigious series on traditional Chinese civilization initiated by Joseph Needham. This was the beginning of a tedious period of work, lasting for several years. He was so immersed in his research that he for long periods only occasionally emerged from the cellar where his study was located at that time.¹¹



The TLS project

In the early 1980s Christoph initiated the project which would keep him extremely busy up till now (and most probably until the end of his days...): The "Thesaurus Linguae Sericae (*TLS*) – An Historical and Comparative Encyclopaedia of Chinese Conceptual Schemes" (subtitle: "A Construction Site on the Web") has without doubt developed into his *opus magnum*.¹² Although Christoph was already a well-known sinologist before initiating this project, *TLS* made him famous throughout the Sinological world (and beyond!), and the work on the database has become a focal point of

¹⁰ He Moye 何莫耶 (Christoph Harbsmeier): *Feng Zikai* 丰子恺. Jinan 济南, Shandong Huabao chubanshe 山东画报出版社 2005 (257 pp.).

¹¹ *Language and Logic in Traditional China. Science and Civilisation in China*, vol. 7.3. Cambridge, Cambridge Univ. Press 1998 (480 pp.).

¹² The database cannot be discussed in details here. For a thorough presentation of the *TLS* database see: <http://www.hf.uio.no/forskningsprosjekter/tls>.

international scholarly cooperation.¹³ Christoph is extremely fond of working together with other people, as well as working on topics which go beyond his fields of specialization. The database has been the ideal tool for these purposes. Christoph has spent extensive periods of time with his scholar-friends, working on many aspects of Chinese language and culture, e.g. the semantics of pre-Buddhist Chinese (arranged in synonym groups), phonology, Ancient Chinese mathematics, philosophical and cultural key concepts, Ancient Chinese lexicography, material culture, Buddhist sutra translations, Chinese film from the 1930s, etc. The database perfectly fits Christoph's interests and preferences: It contains a massive amount of information, at the same time it always stays fragmentary; it is accumulative, at the same time it is flexible and the results of one's work are under constant revision.¹⁴

Christoph loves the fragmentary. Actually many of his works have never been published. He easily gets tired with the tedious work of revising and editing, and his interests frequently shift to new projects before previous ones have been completed. This being the case many interesting articles, notes, and even book-length manuscripts circulate privately or are made public only as pdf files on the internet.¹⁵

There are so many anecdotes and characteristic situations that can be told about Christoph. His first encounters with people and his great enthusiasm he displays during these situations (the editors themselves vividly recall their first encounters with Christoph). It is also very characteristic that nearly everybody remembers even short meetings with him (while often forgetting everybody else present) - reportedly even the Queen of Norway, during a meeting with somebody from the University of Oslo, exclaimed in her first sentence: "Do you know Christoph Harbsmeier? He is such an interesting person!"

¹³ In 1989 Christoph received an award from the Norwegian Research Council for the work on the database ("Grant for Outstanding Research in the Humanities"). In 2005 he received the Research Award ("forskningspris") from the Univ. of Oslo.

¹⁴ The gradual development of *TLS* into a superb (FileMaker-based) multifunctional tool for linguistic and textual analysis has to be credited to the great technical, as well as sinological, expertise of Jens Østergaard Petersen (Univ. of Copenhagen). The creation of a new Unicode On-line version of *TLS* has been under progress since 2005, undertaken by Gavin LaRowe (Indiana University). The new On-line version will be publicly accessible from Autumn 2006 and will also enable collaborators to simultaneously work in *TLS*, regardless of their location.

¹⁵ See for example the papers listed under 'Supplementary Materials' at <http://www.hf.uio.no/forskningsprosjekter/tls/publications/index.html>: There you find a mix of articles, such as theoretical discussions of Sinology, lists of synonyms for 'to die' (33 pp.!) and 'to laugh', a book-length paper titled 'The Rhetoric of Self-construal: The Cases of Ancient China, Greece, and Rome' (more than 500 pdf pages!), and many other things of interest.

The (nearly permanently) visiting professor

Possibly, Christoph holds the world record in sabbatical leaves. From 1999 until 2005 he continuously held positions as guest professor, guest lecturer, or guest researcher at numerous research institutions:

August 1999 – July 2000: Group Leader for a project on Chinese philology at the Centre for Advanced Study, Academy of Science, Oslo (in the framework of *TLS*)

January 2001: Visiting Professor at the Department of Chinese, Leuven University, Belgium

January – February 2001: Visiting Professor at the National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS), Paris

March – July 2001: Fellow at the Centre for Advanced Study, Collegium Budapest

May 2001: Herlee Glessner Creel Memorial Lecturer at the University of Chicago; in the same month Andrew Markus Memorial Lecturer at the University of Washington, Seattle

September – October 2001: Visiting Professor at the Department of Chinese, Peking University

October – December 2001: Visiting Professor at the Charles University, Prague

January – March 2002: Visiting Senior Research Fellow, Merton College, Oxford

May – June 2002: Visiting Professor at Charles University, Praha

August – December 2002: Visiting Professor of philosophy, Department of Philosophy, University of California, Berkeley

March 2003: Visiting Professor at the Catholic University, Leuven

April 2002: Visiting Professor at Charles University, Praha

July – December 2003: Visiting Directeur d'Etudes at CNRS, Paris

January – April 2004: Visiting Professor at the University of Michigan

April 2004: Lincoln Lecturer, Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures, University of Michigan

May 2004: Visiting Fellow, Max Planck Institute for History of Science

August 2004 – June 2005: Fellow and organizer of a research group on Chinese cognitive schemes at the Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences (SCASSS) in Uppsala.

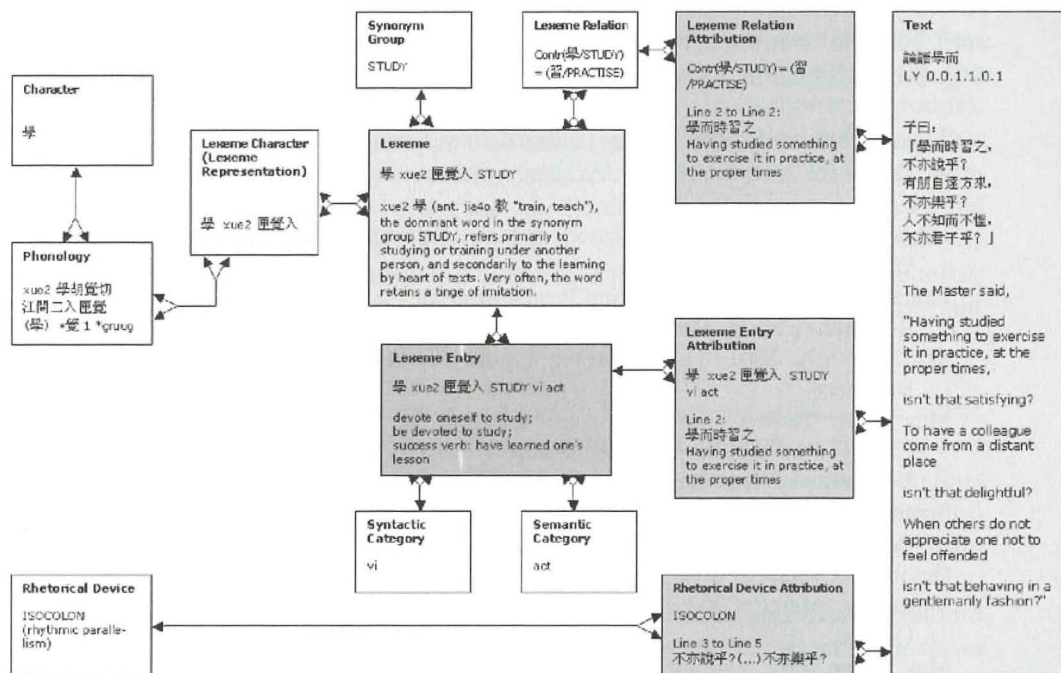
In addition, Christoph holds numerous permanent positions and affiliations to academic institutions and editorial boards:

1989- : Member of the Norwegian Academy of Science

1992- : Co-editor of *Cahiers de Linguistique Asie Orientale*, Paris

1993- : Member of the Editorial Board *T'oung Pao*, Leiden

Structure of the Thesaurus Linguae Sericae database



The multiple functions of the *TLS* database, schematically illustrated by the information provided for the character 學 in a passage in *Lunyu*.

- 1996- : Advisory Professor at the Fudan University, Shanghai
- 1997- : Advisory Professor at the Shanghai Normal University
- 1997- : Permanent Guest Professor at the Department of Chinese, Peking University
- 1998- : Co-director for the International Center for Research on Bamboo and Silk Documents
- 1998- : Permanent Fellow at the National Centre for Linguistic Research, Peking University
- 1998- : Member of the Editorial Board of *Studies in Historical Linguistics*, Chengdu, Sichuan
- 2000- : Member of the Advisory Council of the European Center for Digital Resources in Chinese Studies, Heidelberg
- 2001- : Advisory Professor at the Department of Chinese, Zhejiang University, Hangzhou
- 2001- : Member of the Editorial Board of *Studies in Linguistics*, Peking University

- 2001- : Member of the Editorial Board, Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm
2001- : Member of the Editorial Board, *Journal of Medieval and Pre-modern Linguistics*, Zhejiang University
2002- : Permanent Guest Scholar, Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Berlin
2002- : Member of the Editorial Board of the *Journal for Classical Studies*, Wuhan University

Christoph is an enthusiastic person, and his enthusiasm often spreads to the people around him. At any point in time, a large number of people are involved on a voluntary basis in his projects, especially *TLS* – typing texts, adding comments, or contributing their own research on entire periods or genres. One of the keys to this effect is Christoph's own generosity. He himself willingly shares with others the more or less ripe fruits of his own research and therefore easily makes others do the same. His generosity also extends to newcomers in the field, and this has benefited both his students and those of others. This is one of the reasons why two of his former students have undertaken to put this *Festschrift* together.

One person is more important to Christoph's success than anyone else: his wife Ingeborg. Her love continues to provide a human atmosphere without which Christoph would have hardly been able to breathe. Her care and immense patience have given him the freedom to pursue his interests without too many distractions. (Once one of the editors received a phone call from Ingeborg asking: "Do you know where Christoph is?" The editor could inform her that her husband was in Sweden at a conference.) Finally, Ingeborg is also an important intellectual partner, often reading and commenting Christoph's drafts and in recent years also providing her own massive input to *TLS*. The most authoritative statements from Christoph invariably begin with: "Fruen siger..." ("My wife says..."). The editors would also like to thank her for the contributions to this preface.