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Zheng Zi Study Group

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New Email Draft

To: Michael Green <mg343@wodu.edu>

Subject: Regarding recent remarks on “Edu+” podcast

Dear Dr. Green,

I've always been an avid listener of the Edu+ podcast, as a student interested in areas of higher education. Recently, I had the pleasure of listening to your interview on episode 108, “Partitioning our priorities”. While many of the points you made with regards to the state of modern humanities education resonated with me, in particular the growing emphasis on quantifiable or marketable skills rather than genuine learning, I cannot agree with your conclusion that our best choice is to therefore abandon the teaching of subjects like literature entirely in favour of “more practical fields of development”.

As an example of the unique and transformative power of literature, I've recently become involved with a group of WODU students attempting to catalogue the influence of a single writer, relatively unknown, who lived and wrote in China during the early 20th century. Zheng Zi's writings, which alternate between satirical, frustrated, and philosophical, have despite his relative obscurity nevertheless influenced works in Japan, the UK, France, and more. I have attached selected clippings of various experimental works which reference in some way Zheng Zi, or reference works that were themselves related to him.

In these works, we can see pictures of resistance, resilience, and the willingness to speak truth to power, combined with truly exciting and experimental ways of conceiving about how we read, write, and think. The power of literature is the power of the human mind, unleashed, and I hope that reading these extracts will give you a little sense of how much effect even one devoted worker of literature can produce.

Yours truly,
Arthur Exeter
WODU class of '25