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Self, the Ultimate and “others” in pre-Qin conceptions of sagehood

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Dissertation

**SELF, THE ULTIMATE AND “OTHERS”
IN PRE-QIN CONCEPTIONS OF SAGEHOOD**

by

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to my patient husband Chengguo Lu, my wonderful children Sarah, Samuel, my loving parents and godparents Yukui Hu, Deliang Tang,

Arlene and David Mehlman.

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ABSTRACT

This study is an analysis of sagehood in pre-Qin Confucianism from the perspective of the relations between the self, the Ultimate and “others”. By examining the etymological, textual and philosophical evolutions on the concept of *sheng* (聖) in pre-Qin Chinese tradition, I argue that the pre-Qin Confucians developed a dual system of the Ultimate and hence a dual process of sagehood cultivation.

The pre-Qin Confucians since Confucius inherited the ancient idea of the transcendent Ultimate in the names of *Di* (帝) and *Tian* (天) with the transcendent Ultimate, the ancient sage-kings, the people and the Rituals as the authorities. Meanwhile, they developed ideas regarding the immanent Ultimate that linked it to Nature (*Xing* 性), as well as specific corresponding ideas about the self, including Nature, mind/heart (*xin* 心) and body (*shen* 身) rooted in the early Zhou dynasty. The ideas about Nature, mind/heart and

body broke or redefined the self-other boundaries between the self, the Ultimate and “others”. This new perspective made it possible and feasible for the self to know and become one with “others” intellectually, emotionally and empathetically in accordance with the Way of the Ultimate.

Thus, the pre-Qin cultivation of sagehood became a two-fold process. On the one hand, the self willingly chooses to be subjected to, and even internalize, the authoritative “others”, such as the transcendent Ultimate, the sages and the Rituals. On the other hand, the self willingly chooses to be subordinate to the immanent Ultimate via his/her own Nature, mind/heart and body, and to grow from within and enlarge itself from the basic unit *shen* until becoming one with the Ultimate vertically and all others horizontally in accordance with the Way of the Ultimate. This two-sided process is conducted simultaneously, interactively and ceaselessly as different aspects of the same process. In this process “*shen*” is located at the center, being self-consciously transformed by the Ultimate, while also transforming “others” from near to far.

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GLOSSARY

body	身	taishi	太室
cheng	呈	<i>Tian</i>	天
<i>Di</i>	帝	ting	聽
mind / heart	心	ting	壬
ming	明堂	ting	庭
Nature	性	ting	廷
sheng	聖	tong	通
sheng	聲	tu	土
sheng	生	wang	望
sheng-ren	聖人	xing-sheng	形聲
sheng - wang	聖王	zhengyi	正義

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Global and Comparative Background

The meeting of Confucian and Western civilization is the most significant event for China in her modern history. As Li Hongzhang already wrote in 1874, this brought about fundamental changes in China which had never before happened in three thousand years in Chinese history.¹ The nature of these changes, however, as Liang Qichao noted, were far beyond Li's comprehension. As Liang observed, Li knew nothing about the main trends of the modern world from the perspective of the nation, the people and the government.² The key to the main trends was an understanding that influence moved downward from the top of the society to the mass of the people below.³ In addition, with the abdication of the last emperor in 1911, the national Confucian institutions along with the local and familial ones began to collapse. These tremendous changes, as American historian Joseph R. Levenson asserted, implied the disintegration of the Chinese tradition and a transition to its interpretation in the spirit of western ideas in order to save the fragments.⁴ Levenson's insight correctly describes the reality of Confucian China and the response of the best Confucian intellectuals since the late 19th century.

¹ Liang, Qichao, *Li Hongzhang Zhuan* [Biography of Li Hongzhang] (Wuhan: Hu Bei Ren Min Chu Ban She, 2004), 94. It was originally published in 1901. Li Hongzhang stated this view in his proposal (《复议制造轮船未可裁撤折》) to the emperor in 1872.

² *Ibid.*, 7. Here Liang Qichao compared Li Hongzhang with Huo Guang. Liang criticized Li knew neither the principles of a nation nor the development trend of the world. He asserted that like Huo Guang, Li Hongzhang was ignorant.

³ *Ibid.*, 97.

⁴ Joseph R. Levenson, General Preface to *Confucian China and Its Modern Fate: A Trilogy* by Joseph R. Levenson (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968), ix.

For more than 150 years scholars of Confucianism in China and abroad have been devoted to incorporating Western ideas and categories into the creative reconstruction of the Confucian tradition in the modern world. Three generations of New Confucians since the 1919 Chinese May Fourth Movement have been interpreting Confucianism both in the spirit of western philosophy and Confucian tradition. On New Year's Day 1958, Tang Junyi, Mou Zongsan, Zhang Junmai and Xu Fuguan, four of the second generation of the New Confucians, published "A Manifesto to the World's People's On Behalf of Chinese Culture", that displays their insights into the life, transformation and significance of Confucianism in the modern world.⁵ As philosophers possessed of western learning, these New Confucians employed western philosophical categories to interpret Confucian religious categories and to reinterpret the learning of the mind/heart (*xin* 心) and Nature (*Xing* 性), in which they believed the essence and the life of modern Confucianism lie. The third generation of new Confucians followed this same research direction, although they expressed their ideas from different points of view by employing different philosophies. Some contemporary western scholars in Confucian studies like Robert Neville and his Boston colleges, have been working on making it a portable faith and an equal member of

⁵ Mou Zongsan, Zhang Junmai, Xu Fuguan, and Tang Junyi, "为中国文化敬告世界人士宣言 [A Manifesto to the World's People's On Behalf of Chinese Culture]," in 当代新儒家 [*Contemporary New Confucianism*], ed. Feng Zusheng (Beijing: Sanlian Shudian, 1989), 1–52.

the world of contemporary philosophy with their conscious efforts that draw on the spirit of modern philosophical and theological thoughts.⁶

Becoming a sage has been the ideal for a sincere Confucian since the time of Confucius (551-479 BC). Confucius and his disciples in the pre-Qin Period set out norms that they believed the ancient sage-kings had followed and Confucian students were supposed to follow. These norms illuminated the spiritual value of *the Rituals* (*Li* 禮), the core of the tradition, prescribed ideals to which a person should faithfully adhere, and taught the process of self-cultivation that would lead to the fulfillment of these ideals and this eventually to becoming a sage. In the course of their discussion, they formulated categories and ideas on the basis of traditional Chinese *Classics* that were to become the foundation and living source of later Confucian thought. However, since the breakdown of the Chinese tradition as a result of its meeting with Western civilization from the 1840s, Confucianism has found itself requiring more universal and overarching categories through which to interpret the core ideas of Confucianism and to make effective comparisons with other traditions.

On the basis of his studies of rabbinic ethics,⁷ Jonathan Schofer has proposed that all religions, including Confucianism, contain a model of self-formation. In his view, the essential component in this act of self-formation is the chosen subjection of the self to

⁶ Robert C. Neville, *Boston Confucianism: Portable Tradition in the Late-Modern World* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2000), xxii, 1-8.

⁷ Jonathan Wyn Schofer, "Self, Subject, and Chosen Subjection," *Jewish Studies Journal of Religious Ethics*, 33:2 (2005): 255-291.

particular authoritative others⁸. Therefore, to become a sage, a person willingly chooses to subordinate himself to, and even internalize, particular authoritative others. In Confucianism those authoritative others are Heaven, the sages and the *Rituals*.⁹ Schofer attempts to reveal a deep universal structure in the making of “sages” in different traditions by employing general contemporary categories like “the self”, “subject”, and “chosen subjection”. However, as Schofer has himself noted, he has not clarified the different ways that the self, others and Heaven function in the process of Confucian self-formation. Besides, one must ask whether or not these overarching categories can be extended to the study of the nature of sagehood, which I believe constitutes the theoretical precondition for the cultivation of sagehood. Therefore, I believe two inextricably related things should be done: 1) one needs to investigate the nature and the cultivation of pre-Qin Confucian “sagehood” mainly in the light of the overarching categories; and then 2) to move on to study other traditions of sagehood in comparative perspective. By doing so I hope to discern to what degree Confucian sagehood shares some deep intrinsic structure with other religious systems and to what degree it possesses its own unique features.

1.2 Scholarship on Pre-Qin Confucian Sagehood

Modern and contemporary scholars of Confucian studies have already made great contributions to the investigation of the nature and the cultivation of pre-Qin sagehood by

⁸ Ibid., 275, 283.

⁹ Ibid., 283.

consciously employing broad philosophical categories borrowed from western traditions. Their discussion focuses on the relationship between human selfhood, the “others” and Heaven in pre-Qin Confucianism.

Among these relations, Heaven is the key element that defines the nature of other elements. Wang Guowei has pointed out that Heaven has three layers of meanings: sky, the origin of the universe and its cosmic laws, and the giver of the divine destiny for all.¹⁰ Although he began to compare that concept to western philosophical ideas, he did not do so in depth. The first generation of the New Confucians conducted a deep philosophical exploration into the transcendent nature of Heaven. In the 1950s, Tang Junyi and Mou Zongsan began to discuss the religious dimension of Confucianism. They pointed out that Heaven in Confucianism possessed traits that were both transcendent and immanent. Later, Mou Zongsan devoted himself to the Kantian interpretation of immanent transcendence of Heaven which is typically expressed in the dual nature of humanity to be cultivated inside and to correspond with human Nature and the Way of Heaven.¹¹ On the one hand this Kantian interpretation of the immanent transcendence of Heaven emphasizes human moral subjectivity,¹² however, on the other hand, it attempts to characterize spirituality without reference to the Ultimate, which would not be recognized by spiritual people as Robert Neville has correctly argued.¹³ Some of Mou’s students and the later new Confucians

¹⁰ Wang Guowei, *Wang Guowei Ru Xue Lun Ji* (Chengdu: Si Chuan University Press, 2010), 32-41.

¹¹ Mou Zongsan, *Zhong Guo Zhe Xue de Te Zhi* [中國哲學的特質] (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe, 2007), 28-29.

¹² Ibid., *Dao De De Li Xiang Zhu Yi* [道德的理想主義] (Taipei: Tai Wan Xue Sheng, 1978), 1-12.

¹³ Robert Neville, *Boston Confucianism: Portable Tradition in the Late-Modern World* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2000), 65.

including Tu Wei-Ming and Liu Shuxian inherited his idea and insisted on the immanent transcendence of Confucianism. Tu Weiming chose to employ the term “the ultimate reality” or “ontological reality”¹⁴ to refer to Heaven in traditional Confucian terminology so as to increase the comparability between Confucianism and other philosophical and religious traditions. In contrast, David Hall and Rogers Ames admit the immanence of Confucianism but reject the idea of the immanent transcendence of Heaven in Confucianism.¹⁵ Alternatively Neville has shown both the immanent and absolute transcendence of the Confucian ultimate reality from the perspective of unlimit-limit contrast via pragmatic semiotics.¹⁶

As to the notion of selfhood, David Hall and Rogers Ames have denied the existence of the concept of selfhood in Confucianism.¹⁷ In contrast Boston Confucians such as Tu Wei-ming, Robert Neville and John Berthrong have not only recognized the existence of Confucian selfhood but have also expounded on the way in which Confucian selfhood develops via the relationships that exist between the self and others.¹⁸ Tu Wei-ming regards “humanity” as the distinguishing character of the human while viewing the rituals as the externalization and codification of inner humanity.¹⁹ He sees self-cultivation

¹⁴ Tu Wei-ming, *Centrality and Commonality: An Essay on Confucian Religiousness* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1989), 70,77.

Bill Moyers, *The World of Ideals II* (New York: Doubleday Publishing, 1990),110.

¹⁵ David L. Hall and Roger I. Ames, *Thinking through Confucius* (Albany: SSUNY Press, c1987), 13-16.

¹⁶ See note 6, Robert C. Neville, 62-69.

¹⁷ David L. Hall and Roger I. Ames, *Thinking from the Han: Self, Truth, and Transcendence in Chinese and Western Culture* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998), 23-57.

¹⁸ Robert Neville, *Boston Confucianism: Portable Tradition in the Late-Modern World* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2000), 83-105, 147-192.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 97, 98.

as a ceaseless process of relational engagement with all beings in the universe in so far as the self is a moral being and an integral part of the universe.²⁰ Robert Neville believes that the pure center of the Confucian self resides in the readiness to respond aesthetically and harmoniously to the world, with appropriate goals facilitated by a set of physical, psychological, and social structures.²¹ For Neville, self-cultivation means the self is in the process of transformation to perfect the responsibility to the world and thus make the relations between self and the world clearer, less selfish and more sincere and skilled.²² Both Tu and Neville emphasize the relatedness between the self and others although in different ways, but they pay little attention to the otherness between self and others.

The etymological studies on the *sheng* (聖, which can mean sage, sagehood, sagacity and sagacious) have been used by some scholars to interpret Confucian sagehood, which may help us to understand some philosophical discussions about the relation between self, “others” and Heaven. In addition to the traditional etymological interpretations of the *sheng* (聖) in *Baihu Tongyi* (白虎通義, 79 CE) and *Shuo-wen* (說文, 100-121CE), modern scholars have also provided some new interpretations of the concept. Most contemporary scholars, including Roger Ames, David Hall, Rodney Taylor and Julia Ching, believe that the radicals of this character suggest two major functions of a sage, that is, listen/hear (*ting* 聽) with the ear (*er* 耳) and manifest (*cheng* 呈) with the mouth (*kou*

²⁰ Tu Wei-ming, *Humanity and Self-Cultivation: Essays in Confucian Thought* (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1979), 79.

²¹ Robert Neville, *Ritual and Deference: Extending Chinese Philosophy in a Comparative Context* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2008), 95.

²² *Ibid.*, 95.

□), although they disagree on what is heard and manifested by sages. David Hall emphasizes that a sage has the function of communication; Rodney Taylor believes that sages hear and manifest the Way of Heaven; Julia Ching thinks sages acted as mediators between the human and the divine world to hear and transmit the words of the spirits or the deity to others. Alternatively, Ning Chen rejects the argument that the *sheng* (聖) originally referred to a person with the ability of “manifesting” divine messages. He based his views on his studies on the changes of the forms and semantic meanings of the *sheng* (聖) from the oracles of the period of Shang to the scribes of the Warring States.²³ He believes the religious facets of the *sheng* (聖) concerning the association between human and Heaven is a late phenomenon that was created by Confucius.

Textual analysis is critical to the understanding of Confucian sagehood. There are rich classical texts about self-cultivation of sagehood edited or written during the pre-Qin period. The *Four Books* (*The Analects*, *The Mencius*, *The Great Learning* and *The Doctrine of the Mean*) plus *Hsun Tzu* are the most frequently cited to support their ideas by the contemporary scholars of Confucianism. Only a few scholars such as Mou Zongsan cite and comment on some of the *Five Classics* and the new unearthed *Guodian-Chujian* in the modern philosophical spirit.

²³ Ning Chen, “The Etymology of *Sheng* (Sage) and Its Confucian Conception in Early China,” *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 27.4 (2000), 420.

1.3 What is Still Missing from Research on the Issue of Confucian Sagehood?

Pre-Qin Confucian sagehood has been explored philosophically from various aspects. These already existing scholarly discussions have brought the study of Confucian sagehood into a universal and comparative conversation which contributes to the modernization of Confucianism. However, there are still some areas not covered completely or not discussed thoroughly. I believe three major fields need to be expanded by further research related to the construction of Confucian sagehood.

First of all, the relationship between self and “others” especially Heaven as the Other in pre-Qin Confucianism is often partially presented either as being inclusively related or being absolutely different. If we see from the perspective of self and other, we will see the unique dual relationship, namely, the oneness and otherness, systematically going through self, “others” and Heaven in Confucianism.

By employing contemporary philosophical ideas about self and other, I will attempt to display how that dual relationship between self, “others” and Heaven specifically defines Heaven’s seemingly paradoxical traits: the immanent transcendence and the absolute transcendence. On the one hand, Heaven shares oneness with man and others under Heaven by the omnipresent Way of Heaven that is embodied in the nature *xing* (性) and material force (*qi* 气) of man and other creations. Nature and material force are imparted from Heaven but immanent in man and others under Heaven. This oneness is referred to frequently in classical texts by various terms such as harmony (*he* 和), being one (*he-yi*, 合

一). On the other hand, Heaven possesses the transcendent “Otherness” that provides the ultimate source of the cosmological, ontological and moral orders. In consequence, a person can attempt to be one with Heaven via self-cultivation but could never be identical with Heaven.

I also intend to show that the self shares oneness with all others in the sense of the Way of Heaven while it possesses its unique “otherness” that is distinct from all others but equal in the sense of its right to thrive along with all others under Heaven. In pre-Qin Confucian works, the human self shares oneness with all others via humanity (*ren* 仁) which is both the Way of Heaven and the way of man. As the way of man, humanity shows the unique otherness of the human self that distinguishes the human from Heaven and others under Heaven. As the Way of Heaven, humanity makes it possible for humans to be connected as one with Heaven and others under Heaven. Thus self and “others”, including Heaven, are not dichotomous opposites in pre-Qin Confucianism but rather constitute a dynamic and organic unity with each possessing an “otherness” distinct from others. Neo-Confucians of the Song Dynasty expounded upon this type of relation between self and “others” in terms of the one and the many.²⁴ This indicates their belief in unity as Peter K. Bol has appropriately concluded.²⁵ Brook Ziporyn, who emphasizes the peculiar non-

²⁴ In Cheng Yi’s words: Liyifenshu (理一分殊): the coherent principle is one but its manifestations are many. Jay L Garfield and William Edelglass (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of World Philosophy* (New York : Oxford University Press, 2010), 88.

²⁵ Peter K. Bol, *Neo-Confucianism in History* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Asia Center, 2008), 197-217.

dichotomous connection between self and “others” in Confucianism, expressively depicts it as manifesting “ironies of oneness and difference.”²⁶ However, like previous researchers, he did not pay sufficient attention to the implicit tensions between the self and “others,” which I would prefer to describe in terms of “otherness” than “many” or “difference.”

Second, the popular etymological interpretations of the *sheng* (聖) provide several options to understand the form and meaning of the *sheng* (聖), but none of them analyze the component *ting* (壬). Most of their assumptions are based on the later works that were produced after the Han Dynasty so that they might misunderstand the original structure and meaning of the character *sheng* (聖). Ning Chen analyzes the components of various written forms of the *sheng* (聖) found from Shang Dynasty to the Warring States and correctively points out that manifesting *cheng* (呈) is a later mistaken understanding of the form and meaning of *sheng* (聖). However, he does not further analyze the component *ting* (壬), which I believe strongly indicates the religious meaning of the *sheng* (聖). According to the graphological form in Shang oracles, the character the *ting* 壬 looks like a person who is standing in a humble ritualized way (seen from the pose of the component person (*ren* 人)) upon some earth (*tu* 土) indicating altar). Therefore, the *sheng* (聖) is likely to

²⁶ Brook Ziporyn, *Ironies of Oneness and Difference: Coherence in Early Chinese Thought; Prolegomena to the Study of Li* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2012), 5-11, 89-138.

be a person standing humbly on an earth altar (indicated by the court (*ting* 壬)) and listening attentively (suggested by a big ear (*er* 耳)) to the voice of Heaven (suggested by mouth (*kou* 口)) and the earth (*tu* 土) altar under the person). Thus the elements of human, rituals and Heaven constitute three essential elements of the character *sheng* (聖). Confucius did not create this combination of factors but rather inherited and developed them.

1.4 The Goal, Method, and Structure of the Dissertation

Goal of the Dissertation

1.4.1 Goal of the Dissertation

The goal of the dissertation is to test Schofer's hypothesis about the cultivation of sagehood in the field of pre-Qin Confucianism and to see whether the cultivation of Confucian sagehood share the universal characteristics set out by Schofer's theory or possesses any unique features different from other religious traditions. First I wish to clarify the dual relationship between self, the Ultimate and "others" and then to define the Confucian sage as one who knows how to willingly subject to the Way of the Ultimate and voluntarily sustain the dual relationship between self and "others" under any circumstances. Thus, theoretically, we will be clear what Confucian sagehood is and how to cultivate it from the modern perspective of the relation between the self, the Ultimate and "others". Meanwhile, by examing Confucian sagehood in a universal philosophical

framework, we will know the essential differences between the cultivation of Confucian sagehood from other religious traditions.

The cultivation of sagehood for a person in the pre-Qin period requires the chosen subjection of the self to the Way of the Ultimate (manifested by both external and internal authorities) with an acute awareness of the dual relationship between the self, the Ultimate and “others”. The chosen subjection indicates the subjectivity of the self in the process of sagehood cultivation on the one hand and the willing subjection to the Way of the Ultimate on the other hand. The process of the chosen subjection of the self to the Way of the Ultimate is done with the guidance of both internal and external authorities in pre-Qin Confucianism. The Rituals and humanity are, in my view, indispensable foci among the internal and external authorities for the cultivation of sagehood. They play a critical role in the personal, familial, communal and even cosmic realms. Finally, I want to point out that the cultivation of Confucian sagehood is a dynamic dual process of internalization and externalization that involves multiple forms of formation and transformation of the self and “others” under Heaven.

1.4.2 Methods of Investigation

In the age of globalization and modernization, the traditional terminology employed in the study of Confucian sagehood has been difficult to integrate into an effective comparative framework. Therefore, in order to facilitate a more contemporary interpretation of Confucianism, I will, based on previous research, adopt modern philosophical terminology to analyze and reinterpret the traditional understandings of the

nature and cultivation of sagehood in pre-Qin Confucianism. In this connection I will evaluate the hypothesis that there are certain universal elements embodied in the concept of sagehood in both Eastern and Western religions including Confucianism. And I will examine to what degree this hypothesis is applicable to the cultivation of sagehood in pre-Qin Confucianism. I will, in part, utilize the terminology that Schofer has already advanced in his studies, but will, at the same time, attempt to show how these terms come to mean different things when they are used to analyze the cultivation of sagehood in Confucianism. Furthermore, I will argue that the modern philosophical reinterpretations of the Confucian tradition cannot be successfully done without an adequate understanding of the original prescriptions of Confucian thought. I will, therefore, also engage in serious etymological and textual analysis of the early sources. In the last part of the thesis, I will make some remarks relating Confucian ideas about the cultivation of sagehood to certain Western ideas of sagely cultivation.

1.4.3 Structure of the Dissertation

The dissertation will explore the nature of pre-Qin Confucian sagehood and the manner of its cultivation based on the etymological, textual and philosophical analysis mainly on the pre-Qin Confucian resources.

The three chapters following the *Introduction* will deal with the etymological, textual and philosophical analysis on pre-Qin Confucian sagehood. The etymological analysis will carefully examine the evolution of the structures and meanings of all the characters which refer to “*sheng*” (聖) throughout the history from Shang Dynasty to the

Warring States. It will reveal the secrets of the mission and functions of a sage and give us some hints for our modern understanding of the relations between the self, the Ultimate and “others” in Confucianism.

The textual analysis will review the texts about sagehood, analyzing the traditional concepts about the relations between the self, “others” and the Ultimate. Besides the *Four Books*, the *Five Classics*, especially *the Book of Changes* and *the Rites*, will be the main resources for the textual analysis. The recently unearthed *Guo-dian Chu-jian* will also be given due attention in the research.

The philosophical analysis will focus on the reinterpretation of the essential concepts closely related with Confucian sagehood from the modern philosophical perspective. On the foundation of the etymological and textual analysis carried out in the previous chapter, I will attempt to interpret those traditional Confucian thoughts with more universal and comprehensive terms. The traditional relationship of “Heaven-Earth-Man” or “Heaven-Man” will be reexamined from the perspective of modern philosophy concerning the self, the Ultimate and others. Meanwhile, in the analysis, I will be very careful to distinguish the subtle and peculiar features of Confucian thoughts that are different from the general western understanding of the self, the Ultimate and others.

The nature of Confucian sagehood and the way of its cultivation will then be discussed on the basis of the above etymological, textual and philosophical analysis in the next two chapters. In the light of the relationship between the self, the Ultimate and “others” in Confucianism, Confucian sagehood will manifest itself as a person’s enlightenment of the relationship, the ultimate transformation of the self and the creation or ultimate

transformation of “others” by observing and sustaining that relationship between self, the Ultimate and “others”. The cultivation of Confucian sagehood thus becomes the self’s willing subjection to the Way of the Ultimate and the voluntarily realizing of the dual relations between the self and “others”, that is, oneness and otherness.

The last part of the dissertation will be concerned with the “Conclusion and Comparative Observations”. In this section, I will draw a brief conclusion about the nature and the making of pre-Qin Confucian sagehood and express some observation regarding the comparison with other religious traditions. Hopefully the dissertation will made clear the universal and particular characteristics of Confucian sagehood compared with other religious traditions.

CHAPTER II ETYMOLOGICAL STUDIES ON *SHENG* (聖)

The structure of a Chinese character often indicates its meaning while the evolution of its form often suggests the changes of its meaning in history. It is necessary and helpful to do some etymological studies on the Chinese character *sheng* (聖), which is often rendered as sage or sagecious or sagacity or sagehood , in order to better understand Confucian sagehood in pre-Qin Chinese history.

The Chinese character *sheng* (聖) has been interpreted in the light of etymology by many Chinese and Western scholars. There are two most popular types of etymological interpretation respectively regarding it as a logographic (*xing-sheng* 形聲) or ideographic (*hui-yi* 會意) character. Usually it is regarded as a logographic character. This opinion can be traced back to the *Shuo-wen* (說文) lexicon, the earliest dictionary in Chinese literature. Now a number of modern scholars have questioned the interpretation of *Shuo-wen* (說文) and proposed other possible interpretations. William Boltz, Julia Ching, Rodney Taylor, David Hall, Roger Ames, Shirakawa and Ning Chen all questioned the logographic structure of *sheng* and believe it is essentially an ideographic character. However, they have different opinions about how the character *sheng* (聖) is made up of and how to understand *sheng* (聖) as an ideographic character. Their arguments mainly focus on the

three questions: First, is *sheng* (聖) a logographic or an ideographic character? Second, how many components does the character *sheng* (聖) have? Third, how do they prove the new interpretation plausible from the etymological perspective?

In this chapter, I will present the traditional logographic interpretation, the modern ideographic ideas and my logo-ideographic understanding of the character *sheng* (聖) by answering the above questions.

2.1 Traditional Logographic (*Xing-sheng* 形聲) Interpretation

The authoritative traditional exegetic books and dictionaries usually include *Er-ya* (爾雅), *Bai-hu-tong-yi* (白虎通義, about 79 CE), *Shuo-wen* (說文, about 100-121CE), *Feng-su-tong-yi* (風俗通義, 189) *Yu-pian* (玉篇, about 6th century), *Guang - yun* (廣韻, 1008 CE), *Kang-xi-zi-dian* (康熙字典, 1716) and *Shuo-wen-jie-zi-zhu* (說文解字注, 1815). *Er-ya* was the earliest Chinese dictionary although its editors and the date of its edition were controversial. *Er-ya* and *Bai-hu-tong-yi* were edited earlier than *Shuo-wen*, however, *Shuo-wen* has been usually regarded as the first dictionary of Chinese characters with clear explanations of their forms and meanings. *Shuo-wen* and its exegesis *Shuo-wen-jie-zi-zhu* are the most frequently quoted book by scholars while interpreting the *sheng* (聖) character.

Shuo-wen (說文) is the first to interpret *sheng* (聖) as a logographic character made up of two components, *er* (耳) for semantic function while *cheng* (呈) for phonetic function. The literal meaning of *er* (耳) is ear while *cheng* (呈) has the same vowel *eng* with *sheng* (聖). *Shuo-wen-jie-zi-zhu* (說文解字注) simply follows this logographic structure and confirms *cheng* (呈) as the phonetic indicator. As to other traditional dictionaries, those before *Shuo-wen* (說文) like *Er-ya* (爾雅) and *Bai-hu-tong-yi* (白虎通義) do not mention the formation of the character *sheng* (聖) while those after *Shuo-wen* (說文) such as *Yu-pian* (玉篇), *Guang-yun* (廣韻) and *Kang-xi-zi-dian* (康熙字典) do not question the logographic structure of the *sheng* (聖) given by *Shuo-wen* 說文.

Semantically the *Shuo-wen* defines *sheng* (聖) as *tong* (通). *Shuo-wen-jie-zi-zhu* (說文解字注) quotes a lot related with *sheng* (聖) from classic pre-Qin works such as *Book of Poetry* (詩經), *Book of Documents* (尚書) and *the Book of Rites* (禮記) as well as their exegetic books to explain how *sheng* (聖) is used in the context and how it can be interpreted by *Tong* (通). Those quotations show that *sheng* (聖) is an adjective in most cases which means to be sagacious, in the words of *Mao-zhuan* (毛傳) and *Hong-fan* (洪

範) “to be wise, far-sighted” (睿) and “to be adept at or master of” (精通). It is also used as a noun which derives the meaning sagacity from the adjective *sheng* (聖) meaning to be sagacious. For example, *sheng* (聖) is regarded as one of the six virtues in the *the Book of Zhou Rituals*. This semantic interpretation of *sheng* (聖) becomes an authoritative interpretation, which is followed by the later dictionary *Kang-xi-zi-dian* (康熙字典).

Shuo-wen-ji-zi-zhu (说文解字注) also explains why *er* (耳) is the semantic indicator with two quotations. One quotation is taken from Confucius’ self statement in the *Analects*, *er-shun* (耳顺). According to the exegesis of *Lun-yu-zheng-yi* (論語正義) by Liu Baonan (劉寶楠) and *Lun-yu-ji-zhu* (論語集註) by Zhu Xi 朱熹, *er-shun* (耳顺) means knowing all the subtle meanings in the mind without any obstacles while hearing with ears. Cheng-zi interprets it concisely “one all know thoroughly (*tong* 通) at all one heard (*wen* 闻).” He uses *tong* (通) to interpret *shun* (顺). Even now *tong-shun* (通顺) can be used as one word or taken the place of each other in Chinese. The second quotation is taken from *Feng-su-tong-yi* (風俗通義). It points out that *er* (耳) suggests hearing (*wen* 聞) the sounds (*sheng* 聲) with one’s ears then knowing (*zhi* 知) immediately the situation (feelings or needs) of others. Therefore the two quotations are consistent in the sense of ear

(*er* 耳) signifying to know (*zhi* 知) throughly (*tong* 通). This interpretation of *er* (耳) as the semantic indicator of *sheng* (聖) thus corresponds with the semantic interpretation of *sheng* (聖) on the whole.

There are some questions about *Shuo-wen*'s interpretation about *sheng* (聖). *Shuo-wen* and *Shuo-wen-jie-zi-zhu* simply point out that *cheng* (呈) is the phonetic indicator but do not explain why it is *cheng* (呈) rather than other part like *ting* (壬) is the phonetic indicator. Compared with *cheng* (呈), *ting* (壬) is the smallest radical to possess the similar pronunciation with *sheng* (聖). If it were *ting* (壬) to be the phonetic indicator, what is the function and meaning of *kou* (口) (its literal meaning is mouth or hole)? If it is *cheng* (呈) as the phonetic indicator, does it have any semantic meaning or simply stay as an phonetic indicator?

2.2 Modern Ideographic (*Hui-yi* 會意) Interpretations

The *Shuo-wen* (说文) structure of the character *sheng* (聖) has not been questioned until the modern time with the archaeological discoveries relating with the character *sheng* (聖) and the rising of the Confucian studies by international scholars from non-Chinese

cultural background. Some modern scholars have challenged the two-component logographic structure with their ideographic interpretations and thus different semantic understandings of the *sheng* might come into being.

2.2.1 William Boltz

William Boltz has a revolutionary hypothesis about the formation of the character *sheng* 聖²⁷. His ideas are inspired by his research on the Ma-wang-tui (MWT) Lao-zi manuscripts which were unearthed in 1973. In MWT A manuscript the *sheng* (聖) is regularly written as *sheng* (聲) while in B manuscript as (𠄎). There are two most influential points in Boltz' hypothesis.

First, in the character *sheng* (聖) he believes it is clear that *ting* (壬) in stead of *cheng* (呈) is a phonetic. This idea not only challenges *Shuo-wen*'s interpretation regarding *cheng* (呈) as a phonetic indicator but also turns *sheng* (聖) into a *er* (耳)-*kou* (口)-*ting* (壬) structure, a structure composed of three components in stead of two.

If so, two questions will arise. One is how to prove *ting* 壬 is a phonetic radical except it shares similar vowel with *sheng* (聖). The other is what is the function and

²⁷ William G. Boltz, "The Religious and Philosophical Significance of the 'Hsiand 'h' "Lao tzu" 相爾老子 in the light of the "Ma-wang-tui" Silk Manuscripts," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 45, no. 1 (1982), 95-117.

meaning of *kou* (口) in the character *sheng* (聖)? Is it a phonetic or semantic element? What does it refer to? Unfortunately, Boltz simply regards it as an obvious fact without giving any explanation.

Second, Boltz proposes that the *er* (耳) of the *sheng* (聃) is both a phonetic and semantic radical since the *sheng* (聃) does not have the bottom phonetic element *ting* 壬 but share the common element *er* (耳) with *sheng* (聲). He reasons from the set *er* (耳) in *sheng* (聲) and *ting* (聽) that the *er* (耳) of *sheng* (聃) associates with “hearing” and “hearability”. Thus the *sheng* (聖) should be some one who is adept at hearing. He makes an interesting comparative conclusion that the Indo-European language shows wisdom is gained via seeing while the Chinese via hearing.

Boltz’ semantic understanding about *er* (耳) is persuasive and coherent with the interpretation of *Shuo-wen-ji-zi-zhu* (说文解字注). However, the phonetic hypothesis may be problematic because in the *sheng* (聲), it is the *sheng* (声) rather than the *er* (耳) that is its phonetic indicator while in the *ting* (聽) it is *ting* (壬) rather than the *er* (耳) that is its phonetic indicator. In addition, is it necessary for a Chinese character to have two phonetic indicators? If *er* (耳) does not have phonetic function, it should be more plausible that

sheng (耶) is an ideographic character while in its later form *sheng* (聖) , *ting* (壬) is added to indicate its pronunciation.

Besides, the logic of the ear's phonetic function is based on the idea to take *sheng* (聲) as a loan word of *sheng* (聖) while *sheng* (耶) as the abbreviated form of *sheng* (聖).

The problem is that Boltz did not explore which one of the three characters *sheng* (聲 - 聖 - 耶) appeared first in the history. With the new discoveries of the Shang oracle bone and the Zhou bronze scripts , it has become possible to explore the evolution of the *sheng* (聖) and figure out its

2.2.2 Julia Ching

Julia Ching has a brief but very significant etymological research on *sheng* (聖) on the basis of the study of oracle bone script and the bronze script²⁸. In her analysis, Julia Ching gives her opinion about the character *sheng* (聖): how many components, whose's ear and mouth , what they signify for, what is heard and transmitted, what's its part of speech and its meaning.

²⁸ Julia Ching, "The Ancient Sages (sheng): their Identity and their Place in Chinese Intellectual History," *Harrassowitz Verlag* 30 (1983-1986), 1-18.

She has four important discoveries. First, she points out directly that the modern Chinese character *sheng* (聖) made up of three rather than two components: ear (*er* 耳) - mouth (*kou* 口) -court (*ting* 壬). Second, she points out, *ting* (壬) resembles person (*ren* 人) , a component in the character for “court”. Third, the character *sheng* (聖) is dominated by a large ear *er* (耳) shown in the oracle bone scripts and bronze scripts, which suggests acute hearing, a gift that was most useful in primitive society, in both secular and purportedly religious pursuit, such as the hearing of the invisible spirits. The last one is that the character appears on bronze vessels more as an adjective than a noun, usually signifying a high degree of intelligence. These last two discoveries from the oracle bone and bronze scripts support the traditional semantic interpretation of *sheng* (聖), in particular, the semantic radical *er* (耳). Thus, she concludes that a sage might be the person who heard the voice or the words of the spirits or the deity and then transmitted it to others with his own mouth.

There are a few problems in her analysis. First, she points out the three components structure but does not give any proof with her studies on the oracle bone and bronze scripts. She might be inspired by Boltz’s idea about the structure of this word. Second, she notices the special feature of *ting* (壬) in the sense of its resemblance and meaning, but she does not analyze further what that means to the formation and the meaning of *sheng* (聖). Third,

from the historical discussion in front of the etymological analysis in the article, she draws the conclusion about the content of the hearing, however, how do we know *kou* (口) refers to the person's mouth rather than others'? She does not give us any etymological evidence.

2.2.3 Roger Ames and David Hall v.s Rodney L. Taylor

The most popular ideographic interpretations of the *sheng* (聖) may be those of Roger Ames²⁹, David Hall and Rodney L. Taylor³⁰. They agree with *Shuo-wen*'s *er* (耳) -*cheng* (呈) structure but believe *sheng* (聖) is an ideographic rather than logographic character. Semantically they believe *sheng* (聖) is both aural and oral. The aural sense is mainly expressed by *er* (耳) as interpreted by the traditional dictionaries and Boltz while the oral sense is mainly expressed by the other part *cheng* (呈). They both believe *cheng* (呈) is not simply a phonetic indicator but also suggests a semantic meaning.

Roger Ames and David Hall have this hypothesis based on two reasons. One is the meaning of *cheng* (呈), that is "to manifest and disclose." Inspired by the method of Boltz to regard *er* (耳) as a semantic and graphic component, they believe it is also plausible for

²⁹ See note 15, David L. Hall and Roger I. Ames, 255-261.

³⁰ Rodney Lenon Taylor, *The Religious Dimension of Confucianism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, c1990), 23-25.

cheng (呈) to carry semantic meaning in addition to its graphic meaning. Second is their creative translation and understanding of the exegesis on *sheng* (聖) in *Bai-hu-tong-yi*, especially the key words *tong* (通), *dao* (道) and *sheng* (聲). Roger Ames and David Hall understand these three words as verbs and the quotations concerning sagehood in *Bai-hu-tong-yi* (白虎通義) to be profoundly active. They translate *tong* (通) into “to communicate, to connect, to penetrate through”, *dao* (道), “the process of becoming and the mode in which it unfolds” and *sheng* (聲), “to speak to sound, sound, voice.”³¹ Therefore, a sage is depicted by them as a person to manifest an order and communicate it broadly. Third, they cite the exegesis on *sheng* (聖) in *Er-ya* (爾雅), an exegesis book earlier than *Shuo-wen*, to support their interpretation of *sheng* (聖). *Sheng* (聖) is interpreted into *xian* (獻) in *Er-ya* (爾雅), which is translated by them as “to present, exhibit, show, to present, exhibit, show, to be prominent”³².

Rodney L. Taylor prefers to translate *tong* (通) into “penetrate” or “pass through”³³ and attaches emphasis on the ability of understanding things and hence Heaven or the Way

³¹ See note 15, David L. Hall and Roger I. Ames, 258.

³² Ibid.

³³ See note 28, Julia Ching, 24.

of Heaven thoroughly. He takes *cheng* 呈 as the phonetic radical carrying a semantic meaning of “manifest”³⁴. Thus, the sage is he who hears the message of Heaven and manifests it to humankind. However, for Taylor, it is by those works that record the deeds of the sages that the sages manifest Heaven or the Way of Heaven.

Their hypothesis is based on *Shuo-wen*'s *er* (耳)-*cheng* (呈) structure of the *sheng* (聖) and their understanding of its interpretation *tong* (通) in *Bai-hu-tong-yi* (白虎通義). If this structure or their understanding of the *tong* (通) is problematic, their hypothesis may be untenable. This needs to investigate the graphic and semantic evolution of the *sheng* (聖), which requires the more ancient resources.

2.2.4 Shirakawa Shizuka

Japanese scholar Shirakawa Shizuka gives his interpretation of *sheng* (聖) on the basis of a etymological studies on different forms of *sheng* in oracle bone and the bronze scripts³⁵.

Like Boltz and Julia Ching, he believes *sheng* (聖) is an ideographic character , composed by three components *er* (耳) - *kou* (口)-*ting* (壬). He contributes a lot to the

³⁴ Ibid., 24.

³⁵ Shirakawa Shizuka, *Jou You Ji Kai* [常用字解], trans. Su Bing (Beijing: Jiuzhou Press, 2010), 253-254.

religious dimension of the *sheng* (聖) with his analysis on its components *kou* (口) and *ting*(壬).

The key of his interpretation lies in his religious understanding of *kou* (口). Different from Julia Ching, he believes originally *kou* (口) refers to a sacred container for holding prayers of a religious person to gods. By comparing the different forms of *sheng* (聖) in oracle bone and the bronze scripts together with the *sheng* (聖) we have used, he finds the *er* (耳) had always been attached with the *ting*(壬) rather than the *kou* (口) until this relation becomes not clear in the form of *sheng* (聖). Besides, *ting* (壬) looks like a person who is standing to pray. Thus he believes *sheng* (聖) means the person who is praying towards the sacred vessel and hears the voice or the command of gods. Therefore, for him originally, *sheng* (聖) is a noun, a religious leader who understands the command of gods. In the hand of Confucians, *sheng* (聖) becomes the highest state of personhood, that is, sagehood. He also points out that *sheng* (聖) can also be an adjective, which means “sagacious.”

Shizuka’s understanding of the *kou* (口) and *ting* (壬) provides a fresh religious perspective to interpret the *sheng* (聖). Like Julia Ching, he does not explain the function

and meaning of the flat slash at the bottom of the *ting*(壬). The religious indications of the two components requires textual support and other character with the same components.

2.2.5 Chen Ning

Chen Ning finds the previous etymological studies of *sheng* (聖) is not complete and rather unclear either in the graphical sense or in the semantic sense. He makes his own contributions to the etymological study of *sheng* (聖)³⁶.

First, he thoroughly reviews the evolution history of the formation of *sheng* (聖) from the oracle bone scripts to pre-Qin times including the most recent archaeological discoveries. He gives etymological evidence to the ideological structure of *sheng* (聖) and asserts *ting* (壬) should be attached to *er* (耳) rather than *kou* (口). Therefore the *kou* (口) does not belong to the person who listens but to the one who speaks. Thus he denies *cheng* (呈) as an independent component to indicate either pronunciation or meaning.

Second, he finds the meaning of *sheng* (聖) and its part of speech also undergoes an evolution history. It starts as a verb and as a noun in Shang oracle scripts, which means

³⁶ See note 23, Chen Ning, 409–427.

“to hear” and “sound” or “news”. Later on, in Zhou dynasty, it begins to carry the adjective meaning of “wise or “sagacious.” Chen finds this is a general word to describe an intelligent and capable person until Confucius restricts the accessibility of sagehood to a few selected moral rulers. But there is no hints to suggest the *sheng* (聖) is a title for professional religious leader or priest in charge of sacrifice and prayer as Shirakawa Shizuka believes.

Third, contrast to nearly all the modern scholars, Chen finds the character *sheng* 聖 does not convey religious dimensions until the Warring State period. He tends to illustrate that it is in the hands of the Confucians that the *sheng* (聖) is specifically related with Heaven or the Tao of Heaven.

Chen’s analysis takes advantage of nearly all earlier resources related with *sheng* (聖) discovered in modern time. He has a complete comparative studies on the different forms, different parts of speech and different meanings of *sheng* (聖) mainly between Shang to Han texts. He supports the ideographic structure of the character but disagrees on the view that the “religious” dimension was already implied in the *sheng* character when it was created. However, his analysis on the structure of *sheng* (聖) neglects the function and meaning of *ting* (壬). Besides, the Confucians’ special contribution to the religious aspect of *sheng* (聖) cannot denies the religious dimension that this character carries since it was

created. It only shows the special contribution of those Confucians to the shaping of its religious dimension in history. Therefore, it is necessary to illustrate the changes of religious dimension during different historical periods in order to understand the meaning of the *sheng* (聖) character.

2.3 Logo-ideographic Interpretation

The modern scholars' etymological research challenged the traditional view on the interpretation of *sheng* (聖) in its formation structure, graphic and semantic reference as well as its general meaning. They have achieved some convincing discoveries to decode the *sheng* (聖) and meanwhile their new interpretations are still problematic in some aspect. The biggest problem is their neglect or insufficient interpretation on the key radical *ting* (壬). In order to interpret the *sheng* (聖), it is necessary to analyze the graphic evolution of this component. On the foundation of the modern scholar's research, I propose a logo-ideographic interpretation on the *sheng* (聖) character. There are three major points.

First of all, the graphic evolution of *ting* (壬) as a component of *sheng* (聖) experiences four major forms from Shang dynasty to the Warring States³⁷. In the beginning

³⁷ See the Illustration 2, Gao Ming, *Guwenzi Leibian* [古文字類編](Beijing: Zhonghua Pres 1980), 135; taken from Ning Chen, 423, see note 23.

it looks like a rather tall standing/bowing person (*ren* 人) on a high place. Then a flat stroke is added at the bottom of the standing/bowing person. Later on, we see a shorter stroke is marked upon the flat one upon which the person is standing/bowing. It has already looked very like the final form, a standing person upon the radical earth (*tu* 土). The character *tu* (土) at the bottom part of person (*ren* 人) is gradually and more and more clearly marked. Or it is better to say the component *tu* (土) of the character *ting* (壬) also experienced a process of evolution. Late Shang dynasty is a transitional period for the graphic evolution of *sheng* (聖) since the original form of *ting* (壬) began to be added under the component ear *er* (耳) of *sheng* (聖) in the oracle bone scripts. Shirakawa Shizuka suggests the original component under the ear *er* (耳) in the character *sheng* (聖) looks like a person standing to pray on tiptoes³⁸. In his research on the *ting* (壬) in oracle bone scripts, Tang Lan points out the first three forms are often used interchangeably and actually all means *ting* (壬), that is, the forth one in effect³⁹. In addition, according to this component's unusual proportion of the line for body and the process of its graphic evolution, it seems more convincing to interpret it as a person standing/bowing on earth rather than on tiptoes.

³⁸ See note 35, Shirakawa Shizuka, 253-254.

³⁹ Yu Shengwu, ed., *Jiagu wenzi gulin* [甲骨文字诂林], vol. 1 (Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 1996), 12-13.

Second, to add *ting* (壬) in the character *sheng* (聖) further complements and clarifies the meanings of *sheng* (聖). It answers who is listening, to whom he is listening, how and where that person is listening. According to the graphic revolution of *sheng* (聖), Cheng Ning points out that various forms of *ting* (壬) have always been put under the radical ear *er* (耳) until the warring states when it begins to be put under the two components *er* (耳) and *kou* (口)⁴⁰. It should be clear that the ear *er* (耳) belongs to the person *ren* 人 on the earth *tu* (土) while *kou* (口) belongs to the other. Therefore, it will be sound to say it is wrong to interpret *sheng* (聖) in the sense of *cheng* (呈) (manifest or present) by combining *ting* (壬) and *kou* (口). Thus all the religious interpretations due to the radical *cheng* (呈) can not make sense.

Does this mean *sheng* (聖) itself does not carry religious meanings in its components but its religious meanings are given by the later confucians' interpretation as Chen Ning indicates? I agree with Shirakawa Shizuka that *ting* (壬) actually has a role to indicate its religious meaning in the formation of the character *sheng* (聖). Shuo-wen

⁴⁰ See note 23, Ning Chen, 411.

interpreted the *ting* (壬) as good for two possible combinations: person (*ren* 人) plus warrior (*shi* 士) or a thing rising from the earth (*tu* 土). Xu Xuan, a scholar of Song Dynasty, comments that it should be a person (*ren* 人) standing upon earth (*tu* 土)⁴¹. The shape of the *ting* (壬) in the character *sheng* (聖) on the Shang oracle bones and Zhou bronze vessels looks like a person (*ren* 人) standing or bowing or even kneeling down upon earth (𠄎, 土)⁴². The *ting* (壬) in the oracle bone scripts is used either as the name of a person or the name of a sacrifice⁴³. This image not only proves Xu is right but also indicates more than that. The shape of the person *ren* (人) suggests that the person is performing some rituals with great reverence possibly with offering sacrifice and prayers while the earth (*tu* 土) should refer to the place, possibly an earth altar, where the person is doing that for listening to the message from the other or others. *Shuo-wen* (說文) interprets the character *zheng* (徵) as *ting* (壬), which means *zhao* (召), that is, “call” or “evoke”⁴⁴. According to *Kangxi Dictionary*, *ting* (壬) used to be one of the forms of *zheng* (徵).

⁴¹ Xu Shen, *Shuowen Jiezi* [說文解字], Xu Xuan ed. (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju Press, 1963), 169.

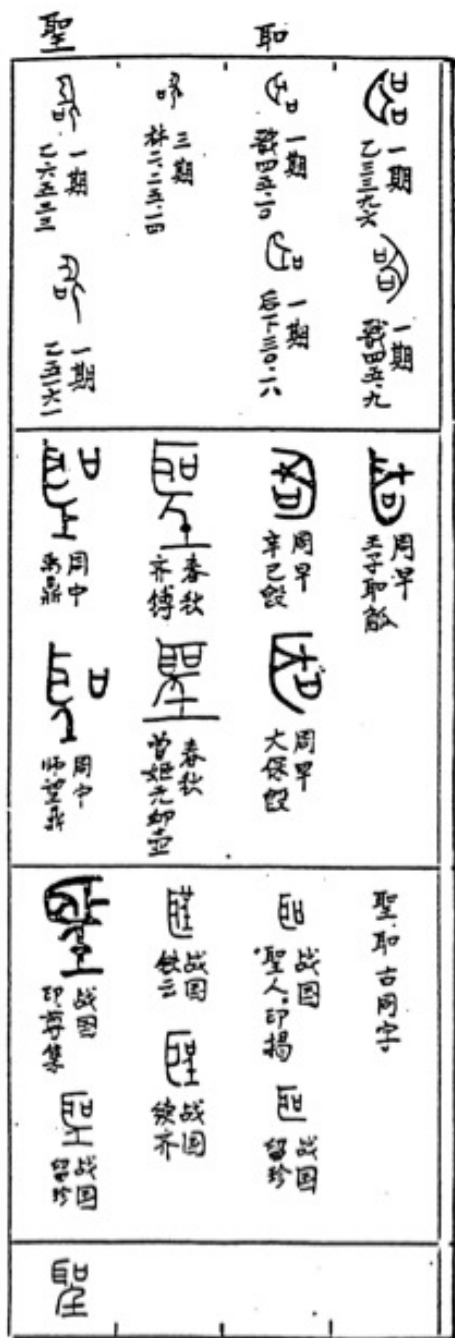
⁴² See the Illustrations 1, 2, taken from Ning Chen, 423, 424, see note 23.

⁴³ See the multi-function Chinese character Database, <http://humanum.arts.cuhk.edu.hk/Lexis/leximf/search.php?word=壬>

⁴⁴ See note 41, Xu Shen, 169.

Here, I think Xu Xian correctly describes the structure or image of the *ting* (壬) while the interpretation of *zheng* (徵) indicates the purpose of this structure of the image *ting* (壬), that is, to call or evoke the spirit of the divine or the ancestors in order to listen to the message or command of the divine or the ancestors. Xu points out that this meaning can also be found in other characters such as *wang* (望), *ting* (聽) and *ting* (廷). As is known the *ting* (聽) and the *sheng* (聖) are often interchangeable in the texts of ancient Shang, Zhou and even the Warring States. As to the *wang* 望, it refers to a type of ritual for offering sacrifice to mountains and rivers recorded in the pre-Qin texts⁴⁵.

⁴⁵ James Legge, *The Chinese Classics, volume III-Part 1: The Shoo King or the Book of Historical Documents* (London: Trubner; Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1960), 34-35.



Sources: Gao Ming, *Gu Wen Zi Lei Bian* [古文字類編] (Beijing: Zhonghua) 1980, 135.

Placeholder for the Second Illustration: *Sheng*(聖) in the Shang and Zhou Dynasties

Who is this person? From the big ear (*er* 耳) upon the person (*ren* 人) we can see this person's acute hearing ability or unusual understanding ability of others as nearly all scholars have agreed. There might be two reasons for using the ear (*er* 耳) rather than the eye (*mu* 目) to indicate the person's wisdom: the invisibility of the other (s) the person is listening to and the voice (or words, speech or sound) as the best way of self-expression. From the standing pose of the person we can see the humbleness, sincerity and reverence to the one the person is listening to. Besides, the person looks gender-free, that is, it does not emphasize it is a male or female. From the earth the person stands upon, we can see this person has a particular sacred place to establish the connection with the other(s) and listens to the other (s) sincerely. These components of the *sheng* (聖) suggests that the person *ren* (人) of the *sheng* (聖) has unusual intellectual and spiritual qualities standing on a particular sacred place humbly listening to the other(s). This person may be a religious or political leader but not necessarily be a man or an inherited priest or king.

Who/what is the other(s) he is listening to? Since *Kou* (口) does not belong to the person, it should be the one to which the person's ear is turning to. Shirakawa Shizuka believes *kou* (口) is the image of a ritual vessel while the person (*ren* 人) of *sheng* (聖) is

praying to it and hearing the voice of the spirits from it⁴⁶. Shirakawa Shizuka's assumption about *kou* (口) sounds reasonable but cannot get etymological support from the Shang oracle bones and Zhou bronze scripts or be proved by the rituals of ancient Chinese tradition. The character *Kou* (口) is usually interpreted as mouth in its narrow sense. Besides, it has a more general meaning, that is, "hole", or "opening", which serves as a channel to be open to or be connected with others. "Mouth" is just a hole or opening of a creature's head with which one can take food and speak his/her mind. It apparently cannot make sense to regard the *kou* (口) as the mouth of the divine since the divine is invisible to human beings. Considering the outstanding physical talent and sincere spiritual state of the person (*ren* 人) of *sheng* (聖), I find it hard to take the *kou* (口) as the mouth or mouths of another person or other people. In addition, compared with the big size of the ear (*er* 耳), the size of *kou* (口) looks always too small. It may suggest that the voice is so subtle to recognize and understand that the acute hearing is needed. Therefore, I believe the component *kou* (口) of *sheng* (聖) is more likely to be a kind of a hole or opening through which the voice of the invisible divine is delivered. In this sense the *kou* (口) of *sheng* (聖) can be any hole or opening to deliver the message of the divine. It is possible to be the

⁴⁶ See note 35, Shirakawa Shizuka, 253.

mouth of the person who plays the role of an passed ancestor or the divine in ritual performance or the mouths of people or the holes of the nature that express the order or will of the divine.

Third, the *ting* (壬) in the formation of *sheng* (聖) serves both as an phonetic and semantic indicator. As a phonetic indicator *ting* (壬) is added to mark the pronunciation of *sheng* (聖) for their similarity of pronunciation. As a phonetic indicator *ting* (壬) is also used in other characters such as 聽, 廷, 徵, 廳, 庭, 霆. As a semantic indicator *ting* (壬) is added to suggest the religious meanings of *sheng* (聖) for its sincere standing pose upon the earth altar. The religious dimension can also be seen from other characters with it as a semantic indicator, such as 聽, 望, 徵, 廷, 庭. Besides, as many paleographers have found that *sheng* (聲), *sheng* (聖) and *ting* (聽) are cognate characters and often used interchangeably in the texts of Han and before Han dynasty.

In conclusion, the evolution of the character *sheng* (聖) shows it starts as an ideological character and ends as a logo-ideographic character by adding the component *ting* (壬) which evolves from the image of a standing/bowing person (*ren* 人) on a high place. The forms of the character *sheng* (聖) on the Shang oracle bones and Zhou bronze inscriptions show the emphasis on the unusual hearing ability and the reverence of the

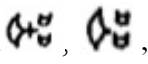
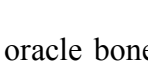
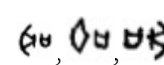

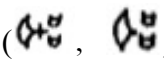







person as well as the subtlety of the voice / sound of the divine. It may indicate a person's acute hearing ability to listen to the voice of the divine with great reverence upon some particular place like an earth altar or a court with an earth altar. What does the *sheng* (聖) exactly refer to? What is its part of speech? Is the etymological assumption of the *sheng* (聖) based on its graphic evolution correct? I believe it will be clearer if we make an investigation of its semantic evolution on the basis of the pre-Qin texts. That will be what I want to do in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III TEXTUAL STUDIES ON *SHENG*(聖)

This chapter will investigate the use of *sheng* (聖) in the pre-Qin texts including the classical texts that emerged before and after Confucius. The pre-Qin texts that date to before Confucius will include the unearthed Shang oracle bones, Zhou bronze inscriptions, the *Book of Documents* and the *Book of Poetry*. The pre-Qin texts from the post-Confucius era will focus on the *Analects* and the commentaries on the Book of Changes. The texts composed after the time of Confucius will be highlighted as their creative works lay the foundation for understanding the key concept of Confucian *sheng* (聖). With the help of these texts, I will explore the semantic evolution of the term and the changes of its part of speech. I hope to show how the Confucians shaped a new image of *sheng* (聖) out of the old ideas that Confucius inherited and passed on.

3.1 The Semantic and Part of Speech Evolution of the *sheng* (聖) before Confucius

3.1.1 The Studies of Shang Oracle Bones

Sheng (聖) in the Shang dynasty has three major types of forms: 1. , , 2. , 3. ⁴⁷. According to Yao Xiaosui⁴⁸, in the Shang oracle bones there are 52 items of the first form (, , ), 21 items of the second form (, , ) and 5 items of the third form (, ). After studying the transformation of the three forms, it is reasonable to argue that the first form is most probably the earliest form. It evolved into the second one with only one mouth / opening (*kou* 口) to represent the meaning of the two mouths / openings (*kou* 口). The third one came into being by adding a person standing or bowing which may be intended to make the meaning clearer. The *sheng* (聖) in the later period inherits and develops this structure by marking the *tu* 土 earth under the standing/bowing *ren* (人) person. In the following, discussion I intend to solve what is symbolized by the parts mouth / opening (*kou* 口) and person (*ren* 人) by analyzing

⁴⁷ I made this classification on the basis of Ning Chen's article "The Etymology of Sheng (Sage) and its Confucian Conception in Early China, 410-411, 425-426 and Yao Xiaosui's Book: *Yinxu Jiagu Keci Leibian*, 236-237.

⁴⁸ Yao Xiaosui, *Yinxu jiagu Keci Leizuan* (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1989), 236-237.

its meaning and part of speech in the context of the items collected in *Yinxu Jiagu Keci Leizuan* by Yao Xiaosui⁴⁹.

1. 𠬞, 𠬞, 𠬞 (52 items)

A. 32 Verbs: Listen to /hear

a. political/judicial issues, 30 items: 1-10, 14, 16, 17, 19, 26-31, 33-38, 46, 50-52.

b. Religious ritual, 2 items: 47; 48

B. 3 Nouns

a. message/information/news, 2 items: 43, 45,

b. The court for listening/hearing, 1 entry: 49

Not clear: 17 items: 11-13,15,18, 20-25, 32, 39, 40-42, 44

2. 𠬞, 𠬞, 𠬞 (21 items)

Verbs: listen to/hear, 10 items:

a. Political/judicial issues, 9 items: 1,2,3,7,8,10,11,12, 17

b. Religious ritual, 1 entry: 16

Noun: 6 items:

⁴⁹ Ibid, 236-237.

a. Message/information/news, 5 items: 9,14,15,18,19

b. Court, 1 entry: 6

Not clear: 5 items: 4,5,13, 20,21

3. 消息 (5 items)

Noun: message/news: 1, 2

Not clear: 3-5.

The following is the illustration taken from Yao's book, *Yinxu jiagu Keci Leizuan* (Sources from Yao Xiaosui, *Yinxu jiagu Keci Leizuan* (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju,1989), 236-237.)


Illustration 1.1 er (耳)+kou (口) (𦍋, 𦍋, 𦍋) p.236

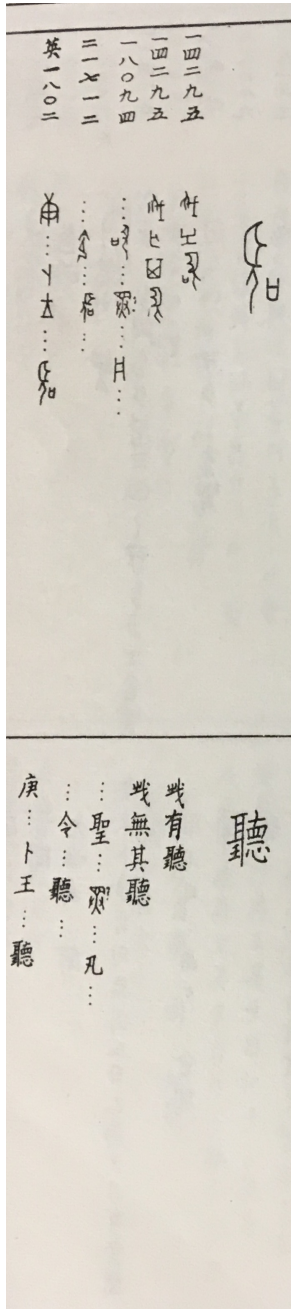
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𦍋	𦍋	𦍋	𦍋	𦍋	𦍋	𦍋	𦍋	𦍋	𦍋	𦍋	𦍋	𦍋	𦍋	𦍋	𦍋	𦍋	𦍋
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辛卯	丁亥	癸亥	辛卯	戊子	辰	辛卯	壬辰	壬辰	壬辰	壬辰	壬辰	壬辰	壬辰	壬辰	壬辰	壬辰	壬辰
婦無聽十一月	呼：取享	歸其有聽	婦無取十一月	貞：無聽	來與：聽	無：在聽	聽：聽	聽：聽	聽：聽	聽：聽	聽：聽	聽：聽	聽：聽	聽：聽	聽：聽	聽：聽	聽：聽

1.2 er (耳)+[kou (口)+kou (口)] (𦍋, 𦍋, 𦍋) p.237

Number	Character	Meaning
100	耳	Ear
101	聾	Deaf
102	聵	Deaf
103	聶	Deaf
104	聶	Deaf
105	聶	Deaf
106	聶	Deaf
107	聶	Deaf
108	聶	Deaf
109	聶	Deaf
110	聶	Deaf
111	聶	Deaf
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200	聶	Deaf


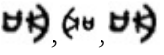

1.3 [er (耳) + ren (人)] + kou (口)  P.237



Placeholder for the Third Illustration: *Sheng* (聖) in the Shang Oracle Bone Scripts.









The items of the *sheng* (聖) cognate group on the oracle bones show that originally *sheng* (聖) was used mainly as a verb meaning “listen to or hear,” and sometimes as a noun meaning “voice or messages/news” (what is heard), which is possibly derived from the verb.

All the items show that the *sheng* (聖) has two basic parts of speech: verb and noun.

There are 32 verbs and 3 nouns out of 52 items of the form , 10 verbs and 6 nouns out of 21 items of the form , and 2 nouns in the 5 items of the form . The part of the speech and the meaning of the other references to *sheng* (聖) in those treaties are not clear because of the absence of any context that would help in decipher its meaning. We can see that the *sheng* (聖) as a verb takes the majority of the first two forms, however, the percentage of the *sheng* (聖) as a noun in the treaties of the three forms can be seen to be increasing.

As Yu Shengwu first pointed out, the basic meaning of the verbs is listening or hearing⁵⁰. The subject of the act is usually the king, and *Wangting* (王聽) (the king listened/ heard) occurs frequently. The words on the oracle bones are very succinct. They

⁵⁰ See note 39, Yu Shengwu, vol. 1, 659.

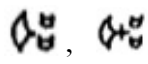


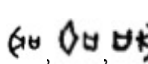




usually do not state clearly what the king listened to or heard. Yu Shengwu believes that *wangting* (王聽) usually refers to the situation in which “the king heard litigation” and “affairs of state”⁵¹. Here *sheng* (聖) means *ting* (聽), which actually means dealing with or resolving juridical and political issues by listening and discerning the presentations of the parties involved or the statements of the ministers. He cited the verses and their exegesis that were related with *wangting* (王聽) in the Classics in order to justify his idea. This view has since been confirmed by other scholars. Xu Zhongshu agrees with Yu Shengwu’s interpretation but points out that some of the sources also refer to a kind of sacrifice offering⁵². Xu cited two examples from the form , , . There is one more to suggest a sacrifice offering in the items of , , , but none among the items of , .

Although neither scholar pointed out its part of speech, the contexts of the examples indicate that all the characters *sheng* (聖) that are found in these treaties are verbs. Xu does not point out the connection between these two types of meanings. According to the context, both of them can be classified as verbs usually with the king as their subjects. These verbs are often used to describe the activities of the king. One of the king’s activities

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Xu Zhongshu, *Jiaguwen Zidian* (Chengdu: Sichuan Cishu Chubanshe, 1988), 1289.

is to listen to or hear the political/judicial issues of the day as the national political head, while the other is to listen to or hear the message from the divine world (the Lord of Heaven with the king's ancestors serving above) as the national religious head. This reading is supported by the historical fact that in ancient times kings were both the political and religious authority. As such, he works and dwells in the *mingtang* (明堂)⁵³, which is both the political and religious sacred center. The king communicates with the divine and governs the world mainly by listening/hearing the message above and below so that he will make the right decision.

The *sheng* 聖 as a noun in the treaties of the oracle bones has a variety of meanings mainly related to the act of listening or hearing except a few references that possibly refer to the name of a nation⁵⁴. One type of noun is related with what is listened to or heard, that is, message, information or news. The *sheng* 聖 of 9 treaties (2 in the form , ,  and 5 in the form , , ) and 2 in the form , ) belongs to this type. Another type of noun is related to the location where the sound listened to or heard should be literally translated as court (*ting* 廷 /庭). Only two items of the *sheng* 聖 belong to this type. The subject of these items is also the king. Yu Shengwu believes it is the abbreviated

⁵³ Wang Guowei, “Mingtang Miaoqin Tongkao”, *Wang Guowei Xiansheng QuANJI Chubian* (Taipei/Beijing: Beijing Tushuguan Chubanshe, Datong Shuju, 1976/2000), 121-142.




⁵⁴ Xu Zhongshu, *Jiaguwen Zidian*, 1289.

form of the 廷, which is the court (*ting* 廷 / 庭) of later ages⁵⁵. The court (*ting* 廷 / 庭) is the very central place of the *mingtang* (明堂) where religious and political activities are conducted under the leadership of the king or the princes.

Thus from what we know about the *sheng* (聖) on the oracle bones, the *sheng* (聖) was used as both a verb and a noun. There is no *sheng* (聖) used as an adjective. The meaning of “being sagacious” did not exist at all during the time of the oracle bones. Even as a noun, no *sheng* (聖) on the oracle bones means “a sage”. As a verb, the *sheng* (聖) is closely related with the political and religious activities of the king. It may indicate the acute hearing ability that a king requires in order to receive accurate information and then to make the right decisions.

However, there is not sufficient evidence to indicate that the *sheng* (聖) is exclusively used to refer to a king’s political and religious activities. The person (*ren* 人), added in its later form (𠄎) on the oracle bones, is not necessarily a king although in most case it refers to a king. It looks more like the profile of a person performing rituals by bowing humbly. It indicates that this person is subordinate to the one who is giving the

⁵⁵ See note 39, Yu Shengwu, 659.

message transmitted by the openings (*kou* 口). The character *king* (*wang* 王) in the oracle bone scriptures is represented by a different type of forms . It looks like a positive image of a person majestically sitting on the earth or between the Heaven and earth⁵⁶. Some scholars suggest it may be an ax that symbolizes the power of the king to give orders to the army. No matter what it is, it indicates the power and the authority of the king to give orders rather than listening or receiving messages. If the part person (*ren* 人) in the form  only refers to the king, it is not necessary to use a different form to represent the king unless the two forms are used to emphasize the different roles or functions of the king. If it was being used to emphasize the different roles or functions of the king, it suggests that the king in the character  is to willingly and humbly subject himself to some one or some thing that is above himself. This assumption is going to be further clarified by the Zhou bronze inscriptions.

3.1.2 The Studies of Zhou Bronze Inscriptions

The forms and contexts of the Zhou bronze *sheng* (聖) are listed in *Jin Wen Gu Lin* (金文詁林) edited by Zhou Fagao. They display the further evolution of the graphic forms of the *sheng* (聖). They gradually make it clear that the component “person” (*ren* 人) in the

⁵⁶ Ibid, 3246.

character (*sheng* 聖) is standing upon earth (*tu* 土), which is represented in its early form by a simple horizontal line and in its later form by the character earth (*tu* 土). Thus it may refer to the fact that the person is performing some rituals while standing upon an altar made of earth. Where is this person in the character *sheng* (聖) actually standing? Yu

Shengwu believes that place is called *ting* (廷 / 庭), which was written as 𠄎𠄎 on the

oracle bones and 𠄎 廷 in the bronze inscriptions⁵⁷. We can see that this character shares

the same pronunciation and the same component ear (*er* 耳) or court (*ting* 壬) (*ren* person

人 + *tu* earth 土) with the earliest forms of *sheng* (聖) on the oracle bones (𠄎, 𠄎,

𠄎) (𠄎, 𠄎, 𠄎); 𠄎 (𠄎) and in the bronze inscriptions as shown in the below chart.

This close connection between these characters may indicate the act of acutely and humbly

hearing the message which has been written as *ting* (𠄎, 𠄎, 𠄎); 𠄎, 𠄎; 𠄎

(𠄎) while the place for the person to perform the required act is written as *ting* (𠄎;

𠄎 廷).

⁵⁷ See note 39, Yu Shengwu, 659

According to Wang Guowei's *Mingtang Miaoqin Tongkao*, the *ting* (廷 / 庭) is the center of the *taishi* (太室), while *taishi* (太室) is the center of *mingtang* (明堂)⁵⁸. *Maoshi Zhengyi* points out that *taishi* (太室) is the most sacred place for a king to offer sacrifices to Heaven as well as to the spirits of his past ancestors as His servants or companions⁵⁹. It is usually believed that *mingtang* (明堂) is the proper name specifically used for royal ancestral temples⁶⁰. However, the literature and the maps about ancestral temples in the *Zhou* dynasty show that ancestral temples were not owned by the kings alone. The noble class, including the king, the princes, the ministers, and the scholars, all had the privilege of having their own ancestral temples while a court (*ting* 廷/庭) constituted a necessary part of the temple. In the bronze inscriptions of the *Zhou* dynasty it is common to see the kings of the *Zhou* dynasty working at the *taishi* (太室) of the local princesses' ancestral temples⁶¹. Therefore, it may be reasonable to conclude that *ting* (廷 / 庭) is the place for the noble class to communicate with Heaven, although their specific rights and ways might be different according to their degrees.

⁵⁸ Wang Guowei, *Mingtang Miaoqin Tongkao* (Beijing: Beijing Tushuguan Chubanshe, 2000), 315.

⁵⁹ Li Xueqin ed., *Maoshi Zhengyi: Daya* (Taipei: Taiwan Juji, 2001), 1222.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.* 1223.

⁶¹ See note 39, Yu Shengwu, 659.

The bronze inscriptions display the gradual yet clear process to add or mark the earth (*tu* 土), under the person (*ren* 人) in the character *sheng* (聖). The study of the structure of the ancestral temples and the bronze inscriptions related to them proves the unique religious function of the court (*ting* 廷 / 庭), which is very likely to be marked by the earth (*tu* 土). Since the Heaven is regarded as the King Above (上帝), and the nobles as those who received the heavenly or divine mandate to rule the world according to their degrees, it is reasonable for the nobles to deal with the political or judicial issues at the court. Among the nobles, the kings of the Zhou dynasty, as the sons or elder sons of the Heaven and the representatives of the whole nation, are certainly the most important individuals, but they are not the only ones to listen to the voice from Heaven and to perform some of the sacred rituals at a sacred place.

Jin Fagao listed the different forms of *sheng* (聖) as well as their contexts found in the bronze inscriptions. Among the 11 bronze ritual utensils, seven of them (No. a, b, c, d, e, j, k) were made in West Zhou Dynasty while three utensils (No. f, h, i) were made in the period of the Spring and Autumn and only one (No. j) in the period of the Warring States. The contexts of those forms of *sheng* (聖) show the changes of meaning and its usage in speech between the Zhou dynasty and the period of the Warring States. To sum up the characteristics of the usage of *sheng* (聖) in these inscriptions I would note the following:

- 1) Adjective. Among the 11 examples of *sheng* (聖), nine of them, from No. a to No. i, are adjectives and the last two are proper nouns, that is, the first names of the princes of Chu state and Yan state. Although the names are proper nouns, it is also a common practice in Chinese culture to take adjectives with positive meanings as first names. Therefore, all of these 11 examples of *sheng* (聖) are, in essence, adjectives.

- 2) Among the 9 examples of *sheng* (聖) used as an adjective, 5 *sheng* (聖)(No. b, d, f, g, i) are predicative adjectives, while 4 *sheng* (聖) (No. a, c, e, h) are attributive adjectives in front of nouns. Despite this difference, both the predicative adjective *sheng* (聖) or the attributive adjective *sheng* (聖) are used to describe the characteristic or the virtue of the person that it refers to.




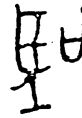


- 3) That person can be a living person like Mugong in No. b or a dead person like those in no.d,f,g,i/a,c,e,h.

- 4) That person is gender free. It can be gender-neutral like *sheng-ren* (聖人) in no.a, or it can be a male or a female as *sheng-ji* (聖姬) in no.e and *sheng-jiang* (聖姜)in no.h.

- 5) That person can be a king of the Zhou Dynasty as in no. d, or the feudal princes as in most cases. This situation is coincident with the location and function of *ting* (廷 / 庭) in the design of the *mingtang* (明堂) in the ancestral temple.

6) That person can be a proper noun or a general noun. Considering the function of the ritual utensils, most of those nouns are the names of past ancestors except no.a. In the example of no.a *sheng* (聖) is an attributive adjective modifying a gender-free general noun, that is, person (*ren* 人). *Sheng-ren* (聖人) is now literally translated as the term sage in English, however, the connotations carried by the term might be different between *sheng-ren* (聖人) in the bronze transcripts and *sheng-ren* (聖人) in later ages.

These characteristics are clearly shown in the illustration from Zhou's book *Jinwen Gulin* on page 36 of this dissertation. I put it here again and figure out the usage of *sheng* (聖) in the context by making a table.

 <p>从火 匡伯匜 <2940> 正匡永用</p>	 <p>鐘 王珣 <0060> 聖武 卣 曾姬無 <2828> 曾姬無卣</p>	 <p>鐘 井人 <0056> 聖 齊 齊鐘 <0062> 有叔 皇祀 聖姜</p>	 <p>師 師趙 鼎 <0624> 師趙作文考聖公 文母聖姬尊教 曾伯 <1446> 曾伯來臨 聖元武</p>	 <p>先 禹鼎 <0678> 肆武公亦弗望厥聖 且若出大叔懿叔 克鼎 <0675> 聖位且祖師</p>	 <p>師 師望鼎 <0669> 王用弗結志 聖人之後 穆公 <0659> 休天居弗望穆 公聖 拜月 祀事</p>
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Source: Zhou Fa-gao 周法高, ed. *Jinwen gulin* 金文詁林 (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1974), Vol. 13, p. 6582.

Placeholder for the Fourth Illustration: *Sheng* (聖) in the Zhou Bronze Inscriptions.

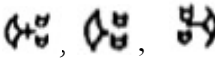
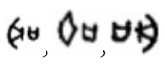

No.	Name of the bronze utensil	Time	The verse with <i>sheng</i> 聖	The meaning of <i>sheng</i> 聖	its Part of the speech
a	Shiwang ding	Middle West Zhou	聖人之後 the descendants of	sagacious	Adj, before a noun
b	Mugong ding (or Yiji ding)	middle West Zhou	穆公圣舜明 (弼) 事 先王	sagacious	Adj, predicate
c	Yu ding	Late west Zhou	圣且 (祖) 考幽大叔, 懿叔	sagacious	Adj, before ancestor
d	Dake ding	West Zhou dynasty	至念毕聖,保且師華父	sagacious	Adj, before the name of the ancestor
e	Shijing ge	Middle West Zhou	寅, 师趁 (音金) 作文考聖公、文母聖姬尊趁。	sagacious	Adj, before the name of the ancestors, male and female
f	Zengbo Fu	Early period of the Spring and Autumn	曾白哲聖元武	sagacious	adj, predicate
g	Jingren Zhong	Late west Zhou	究究圣爽	sagacious	Adj, predicate
h	Qi Bo	Middle period of the Spring and Autumn	用享用孝于皇祖圣叔、皇妣圣姜	sagacious	Adj, before the name of the ancestors

No.	Name of the bronze utensil	Time	The verse with <i>sheng</i> 聖	The meaning of <i>sheng</i> 聖	its Part of the speech
i	Wangsun Yizhe Zhong	Late period of the Spring and the Autumn	肅愨(哲)聖武	sagacious	Adj, predicate
j	Zengji Wuxu Hu	Middle period of the Warring States	聖（可能是惠王）之夫人曾姬無卹（姬女曾侯之女）望祭山川，祝告之於簡冊，鑄此宗廟尊壺	Sheng	First Name of a prince in the state of Chu
k	Yanbosheng yi	Late west Zhou	匱伯聖作正匝永用	Sheng	First Name of a prince in the state of Yan

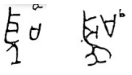
Table 1. My First Table: *Sheng* (聖) in the Zhou Bronze Inscriptions

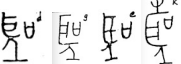
From the above summary we can see that *sheng* (聖) is a very popular adjective in the Zhou bronze inscriptions. It is used to describe a certain kind of virtue possessed by a person, especially one's ancestors. This shift of *sheng* (聖) from a verb to an adjective marked the beginning of its popular Confucian use to emphasize its ability or virtue rather than an act. In this earlier era, it was not seen as a rare virtue that only a few people could attain. It was not only men or only the highest rulers who had the privilege of possessing this virtue.

Since the bronze ritual utensils were usually made to commemorate the ancestors, the inscriptions were usually intended to praise the great deeds and virtues of the ancestors or the king who rewarded them. Therefore, although the inscriptions did not explain exactly what *sheng* (聖) meant, their context indicates that it is one of the most desirable or characteristics that a person may possess.

Compared with the character *sheng* in Shang oracle bones, there are some changes in its graphic form, part of speech and meanings. In the texts of the Shang oracle bones, there are three major graphic forms: 1.  2.  3.  These









show the simplification of its original form ear (*er* 耳) plus mouth / opening (*kou* 口) and the adding of another sign, a *person* (*ren* 人) who looks like he is performing a ritual with reverence. In Zhou bronze inscriptions, although there are some slight changes about the three signs for ear (*er* 耳), mouth/opening (*kou* 口) and person (*ren* 人), the most remarkable graphic change is the adding of another sign for earth (*tu* 土). According to the appearance of earth (*tu* 土), we can classify those different forms of *sheng* 聖 into two

types: 1) there is a horizontal line under *person* *ren* 人 to indicate earth *tu* 土: 

 2) one more stroke is added upon the horizontal line to emphasize the






reference of earth tu 土 𠩺 𠩻 𠩼 𠩽. This combination of person (*ren* 人) and earth (*tu* 土) later on come to form a new character court (*ting* 壬), that suggests the sacred place that the person is performing the ritual act. The fluid graphic transformation became stabilized on the basis of the second type of *sheng* (聖) in the Zhou bronze inscriptions although other earlier forms still occasionally occurred.

The part of speech of *sheng* (聖) seems to have experienced dramatic changes between the texts of Shang oracle bones and Zhou bronze inscriptions. *Sheng* (聖) in the Zhou bronze inscription was used as adjectives to suggest a great virtue in most treatise and used as proper nouns only in two treatises possibly because of its wonderful denotation as adjectives. No *sheng* (聖) among all the Zhou bronze inscriptions was used as a verb. Even when it was used as a proper noun, it did not carry the same meaning as the nouns in the texts of the Shang oracle bones. In the Shang oracle bones *sheng* (聖) was mainly used as a verb or a noun. The verb *sheng* (聖) meant “listening/hearing” while the noun meant message, news, court or religious ritual. The meaning of the noun *sheng* (聖) was very likely to be derived from its verb and referred to what was heard or where it was heard.

We may be confused with the abrupt changes of the meaning and the part of speech of *sheng* (聖) as they are formed in the texts of Shang oracle bones and Zhou bronze inscriptions. Are they the same word of various forms and part of speech in different historical period or simply different words? Guo Moruo believed that the three traditional Chinese characters *ting* (聽), *sheng* (聲) and *sheng* (聖) were originated from the same character made of *er*(耳) + *kou*(口) on the Shang oracle bones. The *sheng* made of *er* (耳) + *kou*(口) was the original character while the *ting* (聽), *sheng* (聲) and *sheng* (聖) appeared to play a different role respectively⁶². He explained how the ear (*er* 耳) responding to the utterance of the mouth *kou* 口 turned into the character *ting* (聽) while what the ear (*er* 耳) received from the utterance of the mouth (*kou* 口) was expressed by the character *sheng* (聲)⁶³. These two kinds of meanings and their respective parts of speech as a verb and a noun did correspond with the usage of sheng (1. , ,  2. , ,  3. ,  in the texts of Shang oracle bones. Yu Shengwu agreed with Guo, but added that the character *ting* (廷 / 廳), the place for the ear (*er* 耳) listening to /hearing

⁶² Guo Moruo, *Buci Tongzuan Kaoshi* in *Guo Moruo Quanji* Vol. 2 (Beijing: Science Press, 1982), 489.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

the utterance of the mouth (*kou* 口), might also have evolved from the original form of *sheng* (*er* 耳 + *kou* 口)⁶⁴. *Sheng* (聲) and *ting* (廷 / 廳) had already been found in the texts of Shang oracle bones in the respective form of  and , , , .⁶⁵ Xu Zhongshu agreed with Guo too, but added that the later character *sheng* (聖) came into being to emphasize the ability or effect of the ear's acute hearing⁶⁶. This explanation makes sense in terms of semantic perspective. However, this usage of *sheng* (聖) was not found in the Shang oracle bones. It did not occur until Zhou dynasty in the bronze text together with the various graphic forms of *sheng* (聖) with the sign for earth (*tu* 土) or court (*ting* 壬) indicating a sacred place. This may suggest that in the Zhou dynasty the fluid process of the transformation of *sheng* (聖) was nearly completed. Different functions of *sheng* (聖) was assigned to various characters with the most basic form *er* (耳) + *kou* (口) such as like *ting* (聽), *sheng* (聲), *ting* (廳) and *sheng* (聖). From then on, *sheng* (聖) has been gradually stable to refer the ability or effect of acute hearing mainly as an adjective or a noun derived

⁶⁴ See note 39, Yu Shengwei, 658.

⁶⁵ Ibid, 658- 659.

⁶⁶ Xu Zhongshu, 1287.

from the adjective. However, *ting* (聽) and *sheng* (聲) were still sometimes used to mean *sheng* (聖) in a number of texts of later historical periods⁶⁷. The recently unearthed Ma-Wang-Tui Lao Tzu (abbreviated to MWT) manuscripts show that the two earlier versions of *sheng* (聖), *sheng* (聲) and *sheng* (𦇧) still coexisted together with *sheng* (聖) during Han dynasty as seen in the following illustration⁶⁸. William G. Boltz correctly pointed out the vocal connection between *ting* (聽), *sheng* (聲), *ting* (壬), but he was incorrect in regarding *sheng* (𦇧) as the abbreviated form of *sheng* (聖). Actually the various forms in the texts of shang oracle bones obviously show that *sheng* (𦇧) was among the original forms of *sheng* (聖) and simply continued to be used in later texts.

A.3 Chapter 12

MWT A	是以聲人之治也爲腹不□□
MWT B	是以𦇧人之治也爲腹而不爲目
R	是以聖人爲腹不爲目
HE	是以聖人爲腹不爲目

⁶⁷ See note 39, Yu Shengwu, 664.

⁶⁸ See note 27, William G. Boltz, 101-102.

A.4 Chapter 22

MWT A 是以聲人執一以爲天下牧。
MWT B 是以聃人執一以爲天下牧。
R 是以聖人抱一爲天下式。
HE 是以聖人抱一爲天下式。

Placeholder for the Fifth Illustration: *Sheng* (聖) in the MWT

Therefore, if we see the various forms of *sheng* (聖) as a process of its evolution during Shang and Zhou Dynasties in terms of graphic form, pronunciation, meaning, part of speech and function, it might be easy to understand how *sheng* (*er* 耳 + *kou* 口) became *sheng* (聖) and how a verb or a noun became an adjective.

The brief Zhou bronze inscriptions provide the context for the use of *sheng* (聖) during the Zhou dynasty. We can see the completion of its transformation in various forms. However, what exactly was meant by saying “*sheng* 聖” during that period? The classic texts of that time may provide more clues in terms of the part of speech and its exact meanings.

3.1.3 The Texts of the Classics

3. 1.3.1 The Book of Documents (*Shangshu* 尚書)

The *Book of Documents* is one of the *Five Confucian Classics*. It consists of speeches and creeds made by rulers and important politicians from mythical times to the middle of Western Zhou period (11 century--770BCE). Traditionally it was believed that Confucius edited it while modern scholars believe it was edited by Confucians in the Warring State period⁶⁹. After the burning of books during the Qin dynasty, two versions of the *Book of Documents*, the new and the old scripts, were transferred today, although some Ming and Qing scholars proved that the old one was a pseudepigraphic text. Some documents allegedly derived from the Shang and even earlier periods but were written or revised in the early Eastern Zhou period. The 16 documents of the Zhou books in the new script between “Mu-shi (牧誓)” till “Lu-xing (吕刑)” are believed to be faithful historical records during Zhou period. However, it is possible that those documents might have been orally handed down and then written down in later times. On the whole, the literary style of the *Book of Documents* is consistent with Zhou bronze inscriptions. In this part, we will examine how the character *sheng* (聖) was used in the *Book of Documents*, what it meant and what part of speech it belonged to.

In the *Book of Documents*, *sheng* (聖) appears 22 times in total. In the five documents of *Yu*, there is only 1 mention of *sheng* (聖). In the four documents of *Xia*,

⁶⁹ Yang Weisheng 楊渭生, "Shangshu 尚書", in *Zhongguo da baike quanshu 中國大百科全書, Zhongguo wenxue 中國文學* Vol. 2 (Beijing/Shanghai: Zhongguo Dabaike Quanshu Chubanshe, 1986), 694-695.

there is again only 1 mention of *sheng* (聖) too. The word *sheng* (聖) appeared more frequently in the documents of *Shang* and *Zhou*, respectively 8 times in the 17 Shang documents and 12 times in the 32 Zhou documents.

In “Dayumo (大禹謨)”, one document of *Yu*, *sheng* (聖) is used to describe the great virtue of King Yao. According to the commentary of *Shangshu Zheng-yi* (尚書正義) by Kong Yingda, it is very likely to be an adjective, which means being capable of knowing/understanding everything. Its meaning here is close to the word “sagacious”. *Sheng* (聖) appeared in this context together with other characters like *shen* (神), *wu* (武) and *wen* (文), indicating different abilities or powers of the king Yao. In “In-zheng (胤征)”, one document of *Xia*, *sheng* (聖) is used as a noun which means a sagacious person. *Sheng* (聖) has changed into a noun from an adjective referring to a person who had achieved that ability or power.

In the documents of *Shang*, the 8 characters of *sheng* (聖) show how it is used in a variety of ways. Two of them, in “Shuoming I”, again mean to be sagacious as adjectives, while one in “Yi-xun” is a noun changed from an adjective to indicate the virtue/ability of sagacity. The remaining five all refer to a person who possesses this virtue/ability, among which two references in “Shuoming II, III” obviously refer to a sagacious king in particular,

while the other three in “Tanggao” and “Yixun” very likely refer to those people who simply have this virtue regardless of their position.

The books of Yu and Xia were supposed to report the historical record before the Shang dynasty while the book of Shang was supposed to record the history during Shang Dynasty. The texts of Shang oracle bones show that the character *sheng* (聖) during Shang dynasty was mainly used as a verb meaning listening to/hearing or a noun signifying message or court. None of the cases of *sheng* (聖) was used as an adjective meaning sagacious or a noun referring a sagacious person. It seems to conflict with the use of *sheng* (聖) in the books of Yu, Xia and Shang, in which *sheng* (聖) had already been an adjective or a noun to mean sagacious, sagacity or a sagacious person. Historians at the court of the state of Song (宋), whose rulers were descendants of the Shang Dynasty, had supposed that the language showed at least a part of the documents allegedly derived from the Shang period was written or at least revised during the early Zhou period. As to the the still older and more remote parts, it might be that most of them were written down in the early Eastern Zhou period⁷⁰. Therefore, it makes sense that those chapters in Yu, Xia and Shang might be handed down from very ancient time, however they were written or revised later at least in the Western Zhou dynasty or in the early Eastern Zhou dynasty. *Sheng* (聖) in Zhou

⁷⁰ Liu Qiyu 劉起鈞, "Shangshu 尚書", in *Zhongguo Dabaike Quanshu* 中國大百科全書, *Zhongguo Lishi* 中國歷史, Vol. 2 (Beijing/Shanghai: Zhongguo Dabaike Quanshu Chubanshe, 1992), 904-905.

bronze inscriptions was typically used an adjective to mean sagacious and derived as an noun to mean a sagacious person or sagacity.

In the documents of *Zhou*, the 12 characters of *sheng* (聖) also shows the various ways in which they were used, ranging from the basic meaning of “being sagacious” as an adjective to its derived meanings as a noun, such as “sagacity” or “the sagacious person”. Half of these characters *sheng* (聖) are used as adjectives indicating that a person, and especially a king, should be as sagacious as those in “Hongfan”, “Weizi” and “Jiongming”⁷¹. The others can be interpreted as a person/way/quality to be sagacious as in the texts of “Duofang”, “Juchen” and “Qinshi”⁷². This variety of usage of *sheng* (聖) is consistent with the variety of usage of *sheng* (聖) found in the books of the Shang Dynasty. This may indicate that the books of Zhou might have been written in the same period as the books of Shang.

Besides various parts of speech, the *Book of the Documents* reveals two other important characteristics of *sheng* (聖). Its texts show that *sheng* (聖) is not a special word only used to describe a few ancient great kings who did marvelous things. It shows that it was normal to expect a person to be *sheng* (聖) no matter whether that person was a king

⁷¹ See the table 2 of this dissertation on 77-81.

⁷² Ibid.

or not, passed or still living. In “Tanggao”, the king called for *yuansheng* (元聖) to help him fight against the evil king. The contexts in which the term is employed indicate that *sheng* (聖) is a wonderful ability or a quality rather than a supreme moral sensibility that few people are qualified to have.

Most importantly, some texts in the *Book of Documents* provide key clues to understand the meaning of *sheng* (聖), in particular during the period of the *Shang* and *Zhou* dynasties. The most significant ones are found in “Shuo-ming”, “Hong-fan” and “Duo-fang”. As we know, the graphic form of *sheng* (聖) is connected with ear (*er* 耳), which indicates “listening”, “following” or “obeying” in Chinese. But then the question arises: Who does the person listen to? The “Shuoming I” provides a case about how to be *sheng* (聖) for a sovereign. It says,

“As wood will be made straight by following the line (of a carpenter’s ink marker), a sovereign will be made *sheng* (聖) by following the remonstrance (of his officials)⁷³”.

According to this metaphor, a carpenter’s ink marker is a tool that helps one make a straight line on wood that allows the wood to be cut into straight timber. The court

⁷³ The original text is from “Shuo-ming I”, see the table 2, No. 7.8, Wood by the use of the line is made straight, and the sovereign who follows reproof is made sagacious (“惟木從繩則正，后從諫則聖” ---“說命上”).

officials likewise offer wise opinions and even point out the mistakes of the sovereign by giving remonstrations. If a sovereign listens to them and follows them, he will be corrected in his errors and become sagacious. Here, it is being suggested that listening to others is a way for a sovereign to become sagacious (*sheng* 聖). The one to whom the sovereign listens in this instance is not a deity above but a person with wise opinions. Sagacity *sheng* (聖) as a quality can be obtained or shaped through personal efforts. These ideas are echoed in the “Shuoming III” in the brief expression “good ministers make the sagacious king” (良臣惟聖) .

“Hong-fan” points out that the process of the cultivation of virtues, including sagacity, involves personal daily manners, that is, one’s personal appearance, speech, vision, listening and thinking. In this document, it is thinking *si* (思) rather than listening *ting* (聽) that finally leads to sagacity *sheng* (聖). *Si* (思) usually has intellectual, emotional and psychological connotation. It can be translated into “thinking”, “reflecting” or “thinking of”, “missing”. From its context “五曰思...思曰睿.....睿作聖.” we can see here *si* (思) meant an intellectual activity rather than an emotional state because *rui* (睿) suggests a person’s intellectual state that can discern any subtle differences. It is this intellectual state that could make a person sagacious or act sagaciously. Therefore Zhengyi (正義) was right to clearly point out that here *si* (思) meant “thinking what one will act” .

In the text, the distinction between listening (聽) and thinking (*si* 思) shows that listening should be distinct and being distinct will finally lead one to being deliberate, while thinking should be subtle and thus lead to being sagacious *sheng* (聖)⁷⁴. The key change of *sheng* (聖) in “Hong-fan” is its shift from being a function of the ear (耳) to the working of the mind, thinking *si* (思). It seems to suggest that *sheng* (聖) is not a natural result of listening but requires a person’s subtle thinking in order to differentiate between things and ideas and in order to clearly understand the information that one has gained through the senses like listening. Thus, being sagacious indicates the intellectual capability or state that a person can achieve by thinking subtly and carefully.

The text of “Duofang” further reveals the intellectual dimension of *sheng* (聖). It makes a contrast between *sheng* (聖) and *kuang* (狂). *Sheng* (聖), according to the text, can become *kuang* (狂) if a person is not thinking, while *kuang* (狂) can also become *sheng* (聖) if that person manages to think. James Legge translates *sheng* (聖) into “wise” and *kuang* (狂) into “foolish”. It is a good translation, but not sufficiently concise. The text of “Duofang” points out that thinking and not thinking is the key to the transition between

⁷⁴ See the table 2. No. 11, Hongfan: The respectfulness becomes manifest in gravity; accordance (with reason), in orderliness; the clearness, in wisdom; the distinctness, in deliberation; and the perspicaciousness, in sagacity. (恭作肅，從作义，明作哲，聰作謀，睿作聖。洪範).

sheng (聖) and *kuang* (狂). *Zhengyi* (正義) argues that a person's ability to think of the good determines whether that person is *sheng* (聖) or *kuang* (狂). However, we can not see the direct moral dimension from the original text although it does have a moral tone. I would, therefore, rather understand these two concepts within the contexts suggested by the *Book of Documents*. The *sheng* (聖) in "Hong-fan" points to a person's state of subtle and clear thinking about what he/she receives on the basis of his/her senses. "Shuo-ming" points out that officials can help a king to achieve this state if he listens to their wise opinions. These texts all indicate a person's complete and clear knowledge of things in themselves. Therefore, I would argue that in the "Duofang", "not thinking" does not mean "not thinking of the good" but "not thinking right", that is, not thinking subtly and thoroughly. Such a person will be conceited and will not consider the views of others⁷⁵. He will often act impulsively and boldly without careful reflection of the reality at hand.⁷⁶ This may also suggest that the mind/heart (心) loses its ability to distinguish the real from the fake, right from wrong, and good from evil⁷⁷. Any of these internal and external symptoms can be regarded as *kuang* (狂). In this sense we can see that *kuang* (狂) is

⁷⁵ In the commentaries of "Hongfan" in *Shangshu Zhengyi*, Zheng Kangcheng interpreted *kuang* 狂 as self-conceited and having no reverence for others.

⁷⁶ This aspect of *kuang* (狂) is also found in the *Analects*, 13:21, "狂者進取，狷者有所不為也".

⁷⁷ *Kangxi Dictionary* explained the meaning of *kuang* (狂) from the perspective of the function of the mind or heart-mind by citing the words related with *sheng* (聖) from *Guangyun* (廣韻).

essentially the result of the absence of intellectual activity. The text explicitly points out that *sheng* (聖) is the opposite of *kuang* (狂) and that these qualities can be reversed by thinking or not thinking. Considering the meanings of *kuang* (狂), as we can see in “Hongfan”, *sheng* 聖 has not only an intellectual dimension but also emphasizes the right relation between self and others.

The following is a table I made about the *sheng* (聖) in the *Book of Documents*.

No.	Title	Chinese	English	Part of speech
1	虞書：大禹謨： Yu Shu Da - yu - mo	益曰：「都，帝德廣運，乃聖乃神，乃武乃文。皇天眷命，奄有四海為天下君。」	Yi said, 'Oh! your virtue, O Di, is vast and incessant. It is sagacious, spirit-like, awe-inspiring, and adorned with all accomplishments. Great Heaven regarded you with its favour, and bestowed on you its appointment. Suddenly you possessed all within the four seas, and became ruler of all under heaven.'	Predictive adjective
2	夏書：胤征 Xia Shu： Yin - zheng	嗟予有眾，聖有謨訓	Ah! ye, all my men, there are the well-counselled instructions of the sage (founder of our dynasty)	Noun derived from adjective

No.	Title	Chinese	English	Part of speech
3	商書：湯誥 Shang Shu : Tang - gao	聿求元聖，與 之戮力，以與 爾有眾請命。	Then I sought for the great Sage, with whom I might unite my strength, to request the favour (of Heaven) for you, my multitudes.	Noun derived from adjective
4	伊訓 Yi - xun	惟我商王，布 昭聖武，代虐 以寬，兆民允 懷。	Our king of Shang brilliantly displayed his sagely prowess; for oppression he substituted his generous gentleness; and the millions of the people gave him their hearts.	predictive adjective
5	伊訓 Yi - xun	敢有侮聖言， 逆忠直，遠耆 德，比頑童， 時謂亂風。	if you dare to despise sages' words, to resist the loyal and upright, to put far from you the aged and virtuous, and to seek the company of procacious youths, that is called the fashion of disorder.	Noun derived from adjective
6	伊訓 Yi - xun	聖謨洋洋，嘉 言孔彰。	The sages' counsels of vast importance, admirable words forcibly set forth!	noun derived from adjective

No.	Title	Chinese	English	Part of speech
7.8	說命上 Shuo - ming I	惟木從繩則 正，后從諫則 聖。后克聖， 臣不命其承， 疇敢不祗若王 之休命？	Wood by the use of the line is made straight, and the sovereign who follows reproof is made sagacious. When the sovereign can (thus) make himself sagacious, his ministers, without being specially commanded, anticipate his orders - who would dare not to act in respectful compliance with this excellent charge of your Majesty?'	predicative adjective Predicative adjective
9	說命中 Shuo - ming II	惟天聰明，惟 聖時憲，惟臣 欽若，惟民從 乂。	It is Heaven which is all-intelligent and observing - let the sage (king) take it as his pattern. Then his ministers will reverently accord with him, and the people consequently will be well governed.	noun derived from adjective
10	說命下 Shuo - ming III	股肱惟人，良 臣惟聖。	As his legs and arms form the man, so does a good minister form the sage (king).	noun derived from adjective

No.	Title	Chinese	English	Part of speech
11	周書 Zhou Shu 洪範 Hongfan	二、五事：一曰貌，二曰言，三曰視，四曰聽，五曰思。貌曰恭，言曰從，視曰明，聽曰聰，思曰睿。恭作肅，從作乂，明作哲，聰作謀，睿作聖。	Second, of the five (personal) matters. The first is the bodily demeanour; the second, speech; the third, seeing; the fourth, hearing; the fifth, thinking. (The virtue of) the bodily appearance is respectfulness; of speech, accordance (with reason); of seeing, clearness; of hearing, distinctness; of thinking, perspicaciousness. The respectfulness becomes manifest in gravity; accordance (with reason), in orderliness; the clearness, in wisdom; the distinctness, in deliberation; and the perspicaciousness, in sagacity.'	
12	洪範 Hong - fan	曰謀，時寒若；曰聖，時風若	of deliberation, emblemed by seasonable cold; and of sagacity, emblemed by seasonable wind,	predictive adjective
13	微子之命 Wei-zi-zhi-ming	乃祖成湯克齊聖廣淵，皇天眷佑，誕受厥命。	your ancestor, Tang the Successful, was reverent and sagacious (with a virtue) vast and deep. The favour and help of great Heaven lighted upon him, and he grandly received its appointment,	predictive adjective
14-15	多方 Duo - fang	惟聖罔念作狂，惟狂克念作聖。	The wise, through not thinking, become foolish, and the foolish, by thinking, become wise.	noun derived from adjective; adjective

No.	Title	Chinese	English	Part of speech
16-17-18	君陳 Jun – Chen	凡人未見聖，若不克見；既見聖，亦不克由聖，爾其戒哉！	Ordinary men, while they have not yet seen a sage, (are full of desire) as if they should never get a sight of him; and after they have seen him, they are still unable to follow him. Be cautioned by this!	noun derived from adjective: sagacious way
19	冏命 Jiong – ming	昔在文、武、聰明齊聖，小大之臣，咸懷忠良。	Formerly Wen and Wu were intelligent, august and sagacious, while their ministers, small and great, all cherished loyalty and goodness.	predictive adjective
20	冏命 Jiong – ming	僕臣正，厥后克正；僕臣諛，厥后自聖。	When these household officers are correct, the sovereign will be correct; when they are flatterers, the sovereign will consider himself sagacious.	predictive adjective
21	秦誓 Qin – shi	人之彥聖，其心好之，不啻若自其口出。	when he finds accomplished and sagacious men, loving them in his heart more than his mouth expresses,	Noun derived from adjective
22		人之有技，冒疾以惡之；人之彥聖而違之	when he finds accomplished and sagacious men, he oppose them	noun derived from adjective

Table 2. My Second Table: *sheng* (聖) in the *Book of Documents*

3. 1.3.2 *The Book of Poetry* (*Shijing* 詩經)

The Book of Poetry is another ancient classic that contains poems composed in the Zhou dynasty before Confucius. Compared with the *Book of Documents*, the term *sheng* (聖) appears only infrequently and does not have various parts of the speech. The character *sheng* (聖) is used only 9 times in the 305 poems that comprise this volume. Among the 9 cases, nearly all of them use the term as an adjective except in one case in which the term might be a noun that is derived from the adjective. As to other characteristics, the use of *sheng* (聖) in the *Book of Poetry* agrees with that in the *Book of Documents*.

In the use of *sheng* (聖) in the *Book of Poetry* there was no bias vis-a-vis social status or genders. Kings did not have the privilege of being the only individuals to possess this attribute. Actually, in the 9 poems, 6 characters of *sheng* (聖) were used as predicative adjectives to describe people of different genders and from various social classes. It was used to praise a mother in “Kaifeng”, to mock the diviners and the prime minister Huangfu respectively in “Zhengyue” and in “Shi-yue-zhi-jiao”, to praise the king Tang in “Changfa”, and to refer to officials or people in Xiaomin and “Xiaowan”. Two *sheng* (聖) out of the nine in “Qiao-yan” and “Sang-rou” serve as attributive adjectives to modify person (*ren* 人), which means “person” free of any gender identity. The *sheng* (聖) in

“Ban” is often interpreted as a noun derived from the adjective, that is the laws published by the sagacious person⁷⁸.

Sheng (聖) in the *Book of Poetry* is used in the intellectual rather than the moral sense, although the moral sense is encoded in it. In the relevant contexts, *sheng* (聖) is often connected with the real knowledge of a certain situation or event. In “Zheng-yue”, the diviner of dreams called themselves *sheng* (聖), however, the author of the poem mocked them because they did not have even the ability to distinguish between the male and female birds.

The intellectual dimension of *sheng* (聖) also involves real insight and proper consideration of all and each element. In “Shi-yue-zhi-jiao”, the author criticized the prime minister Kongfu for building the city for his own sake even though it left the king in poverty and danger. Therefore the praise of his sagacity is actually meant as satirical comment that contrasts the poem’s description of him with his actual behavior.

This table shows the use of *sheng* (聖) in the *Book of Poetry*, trans. by James Legge.

⁷⁸ See Li Xueqin, ed., *Maoshi Zhengyi* (Beijing: Beijing University Press, 1999), 1144.

No.	Title	Chinese	English	Part of Speech
1	國風 – 凱風 Lessons from the States: Kai-feng	母氏聖善、 我無令人。	Our mother is wise and good; But among us there is none good.	Predicative adjective
2	小雅 – 正月 Minor Odes of the Kingdom: Zheng-yue	召彼故老、 訊之占夢。 具曰予聖、 誰知烏之雌 雄。	You call those experienced ancients; You consult the diviner of dreams: They all say, ' We are wise; But who can distinguish the male and female crow? '	predicative adjective
3	小雅 – 十月之 交 Minor Odes of the Kingdom: Shi-yue-zhi-jiao	皇父孔聖、 作都于向。 擇三有事、 壹侯多藏。 不憚遺一 老、俾守我 王。 擇有車馬、 以居徂向。	Huang-fu is very wise; He has built a great city for himself in Xiang. He chose three men as his ministers, All of them indeed of great wealth. He could not bring himself to leave a single minister, Who might guard our king. He [also] selected those who had chariots and horses, To go and reside in Xiang.'	predicative adjective

No.	Title	Chinese	English	Part of Speech
4	小雅－小旻 Minor Odes of the Kingdom: Xiao-min	國雖靡止、 或聖或否。 民雖靡盬、 或哲或謀、 或肅或艾。	Although the kingdom be unsettled, There are some who are wise, and others who are not. Although the people may not be numerous, Some have perspicacity, some have counsel, Some have gravity, and some have orderliness.	predicative adjective
5	小雅－小宛 Minor Odes of the Kingdom: Xiao-wan	人之齊聖、 飲酒溫克。 彼昏不知、 壹醉日富。	Men who are grave and wise, Though they drink, are mild and masters of themselves; But those who are benighted and ignorant, Are devoted to drink, and more so daily. Be careful, each of you, of your deportment; - What Heaven confers, [when once lost], is not regained.	predicative adjective
6	小雅-巧言 Minor Odes of the Kingdom: Qiao-yan	奕奕寢廟、 君子作之。 秩秩大猷、 聖人莫之。	Very grand is the ancestral temple; - A true sovereign made it. Wisely arranged are the great plans; - Sages determined them.	Attributive adjective

No.	Title	Chinese	English	Part of Speech
7	大雅 – 板 Greater Odes of the Kingdom: Ban	靡 ^聖 管管、 不實於亶。 猶之未遠、 是用大諫	As there are not sages, you think you have no guidance; You have no reality in your sincerity. [Thus] your plans do not reach far, And I therefore strongly admonish you.	Noun derived from the adjective
8	大雅 – 桑柔 Greater Odes of the Kingdom: Sang-Rou	維此 ^聖 人、 瞻言百里。 維彼愚人、 覆狂以喜。 匪言不能、 胡斯畏忌。	Here is a wise man; - His views and words reach to a hundred li, There is a stupid man; - He on the contrary rejoices in his madness. It is not that I could not speak [all this]; - How is it I was withheld by my fear?	attributive adjective
9	大雅 – 長發 Greater Odes of the Kingdom: Chang – fa	帝命不違、 至于湯齊。 湯降不遲、 ^聖 敬日躋。	The favour of God did not leave [Shang], And in Tang was found the subject for its display. Tang was not born too late, And his wisdom and virtue daily advanced.	Predictive Adjective or Noun derived from the adjective

Table 3. My Third Table: *sheng* (聖) in the *Book of Poetry*

The texts of the Shang and Zhou dynasties before Confucius reveal both changes and continuity. The graphic forms of *sheng* 聖 in different periods show the gradual process of change by adding more graphic components to make its implications increasingly manifest and complete. The adding of person (*ren* 人) and earth (*tu* 土) and finally the combination of court (*ting* 廷) may indicate the emphasis of the role of human activity in the political and religious realms as well as the development of the ritual system in the Zhou dynasty. The court *ting* (廷) suggests the place where a person (possibly the king or princes or other nobles) exercised their political and religious roles. Therefore the voice for the person to hear in the character *sheng* (聖) might be from Heaven above or from the people below. The emphasis on the human role in worldly and religious affairs is also indicated in the semantic emphasis on human intellectual activity rather than simply passive hearing, although hearing is still an important aspect involved in becoming sagacious *sheng* (聖). Most of the texts in the *Book of Documents* and *Book of Poetry* indicate that hearing other people's opinions and thinking thoroughly about all matters make a person sagacious *sheng* (聖). It is therefore seen more as an intellectual state than as a moral or religious state or activity, regardless of that person's social status and gender. *Sheng* (聖) is often regarded as one of the primary virtues or capabilities that can be gained and cultivated and, alternatively, can be lost if one does not listen to the opinion of others

or does not pursue right thinking. Since the Zhou dynasty, it appears to be the case that the religious connotations of the term receded and yielded to human intelligence as indicated in the texts of the *Document of Zhou* and the *Book of Poety*. However, while the religious dimension about a personal divinity did recede during the later period of Zhou dynasty, it did not disappear completely. Rather, it was transformed into the rational ideas about the Ultimate that still determined the formation of *sheng* (聖). I will explore in details the rational transformation in the chapter on the philosophic study of *sheng* (聖).

3.2 *Sheng* (聖) in the pre-Qin Confucian Texts Since Confucius

In this continuation of my linguistic analysis I intend to explore some typical *Confucian* texts composed since the time of Confucius in order to see whether any significant changes of *sheng* (聖) take place in this later period. I will focus on the *Analects*, *Ten Wings Shi-yi* (十翼) and the *Book of Rites*. I chose these three works rather than *Mengzi* or *Xunzi* because they have long been regarded as the common spiritual source for the understanding of Confucianism together with the earlier Chinese classical texts.

The three works have a very close relationship with the earlier Chinese classical texts. The *Analects* is generally believed to contain the most reliable Confucius' teachings on ancient Chinese tradition. *Ten Wings* is the commentary on the *Book of Changes* and the *Book of Rites* is a collection of texts describing and commenting on the various rites of

Zhou dynasty. Both of these two works have been integrated into indispensable parts of the Confucian Classics by later generations.

The authors and the ideas of the three works had close relationship with Confucius. Most of the authors were either his distinguished disciples or the students of his disciples, living in the same period with him or not long after his death. The *Analects* mainly recorded the words of Confucius, written down by Confucius' disciples and the students of his disciples during Eastern Zhou Dynasty. *Ten Wings* was traditionally attributed to Confucius, though its basic ideas and structure might have been written down by his followers⁷⁹. *The Book of Rites* is a diverse collection of texts that were transmitted by Confucius' seventy disciples according to *Hanshu*⁸⁰ and possibly written down or edited by their followers. Although the exact writing time of the three works is still a rather controversial problem, the most recent textual and archaeological study show that they were very likely to be composed in the pre-Qin period instead of the Qin-Han Dynasties. Jin Jiande's comparative analysis on the texts of the *Ten Wings* and the *Books of Zisi* especially "Zhong-yong" revealed that the *Books of Zisi* had already cited materials from the *Ten Wings*⁸¹. Kong Yingda believed some chapter of the *Book of Rites* like "Wang-zhi" were written in the Western Han Dynasty, however, many scholars since the Song Dynasty like Jin Luxiang, Wu Cheng, Chen Shiyuan, Shen Wenzhuo, Wang E and Lu Youren found that Mencius had already cited frequently from "Wang-zhi"⁸². In addition,

⁷⁹ Li Xueqin, *Zhouyi Suyuan* (Chengdu: Bashu shushe, 2006), 104-105.

⁸⁰ Lu Youren, *Liji Jiangdu* (Taibei: Duli Zuoja-Long shijie, 2014), 25.

⁸¹ Jin Jiande, *Xianqin Zhuzi Zakai* (Kaifeng: Zhongshou Shuhua She, 1982), 171-175.

⁸² Lu Youren, *Liji Jiangdu* (Taibei: Duli Zuoja-Long shijie, 2014), 26.

the silk manuscripts unearthed at Ma-wang-dui tomb (built about 173 BCE) in 1973 and at Guo-dian tomb (built about the middle 4th-3rd Century BCE) in 1993 prove that like the *Analects*, the *Ten Wings* and the *Book of Rites* are also pre-Qin rather than Qin-Han works⁸³.

The three works contain rich philosophical ideas of Confucianism that will help us understand the Confucian concepts of sages and sagehood. Whether as an adjective or as a noun, *sheng* (聖) in the *Analects* suggests the exalted features of the reality of *sheng* (聖) but cannot establish a clear and full description in the brief conversations between Confucius and his students. *Ten Wings* and the *Book of Rites* give more subtle and thorough descriptions about the nature and features of *sheng* (聖) by commenting on the *Book of Changes* and the rites of Zhou dynasty. I believe these three works reflect the most important ideas of Confucianism since Confucius through the pre-Qin period. Therefore, I now propose to analyze their use of the term *sheng* (聖).

3. 2.1 *The Analects*

The term *sheng* (聖) appears only eight times in the *Analects*. In four cases, *sheng* 聖 is used as an adjective to modify “person *ren* 人” and thus frequently appears as a term

⁸³See note 79, Li Xueqin, 94, 129. See note 82, Lu Youren, 29.

sheng-ren (聖人). *Sheng-ren* is usually translated as “sage/sages” in English but actually it should be literally translated as “sagacious person”. In one case, “person *ren* 人” is placed by “*zhe* 者”, which means a certain kind of person. In the other three cases, *sheng* (聖) serves as a noun that means sagacity or sagehood, although it may, at times, be interpreted as “a sage”. The following are the relevant texts with *sheng* (聖) found in the *Analects*. The *sheng* (聖) used as an adjective is marked in blue together with the noun it modified while the *sheng* (聖) as a noun is marked in red. The translations of No. 2, 3 and 6 were done by James Legge while the others were prepared by Wing-Tsit Chan and are cited from the pages 31, 35 and 45 of his *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*. I will make some slight changes to make sure the accuracy and consistency of the terms in the translation.

1. 雍也第六 30. 子貢曰：「如有博施於民而能濟眾，何如？可謂仁乎？」子曰：「何事於仁，必也聖乎！堯舜其猶病諸！夫仁者，己欲立而立人，己欲達而達人。能近取譬，可謂仁之方也已。」

6:28 Confucius said, "Why is that only humanity? That is without doubt **sagehood/sagacity**. Even (the sage-emperors) Yao and Shun fell short of it. A man of humanity, wishing to establish his own character, also establishes the character of others, and wishing to be prominent himself, also helps others to be prominent. To be able to judge others by what is near to ourselves may be called the method of realizing humanity."

2. 述而第七：26. 子曰：「**聖人**，吾不得而見之矣；得見君子者，斯可矣。」子曰：「善人，吾不得而見之矣；得見有恆者，斯可矣。亡而為有，虛而為盈，約而為泰，難乎有恆矣。」

7:26 The Master said, "A **sagacious person** it is not mine to see; could I see a man of real talent and virtue, that would satisfy me." The Master said, "A good man it is not mine to see; could I see a man possessed of constancy, that would satisfy me. Having not and yet affecting to have, empty and yet affecting to be full, straitened and yet affecting to be at ease - it is difficult with such characteristics to have constancy."

3. 述而第七 34. 子曰：「若**聖**與仁，則吾豈敢？抑為之不厭，誨人不倦，則可謂云爾已矣。」公西華曰：「正唯弟子不能學也。」

7:34 The Master said, "The man of sagacity and humanity - how dare I rank myself with them? That I strive to become such without satiety, and teach others without weariness - this much can be said of me." Gong Xi Hua said, "This is just what we, the disciples, cannot imitate you in."

4. 子罕第九 16. 大宰問於子貢曰：「夫子聖者與？何其多能也？」子貢曰：「固天縱之將聖，又多能也。」子聞之，曰：「大宰知我乎！吾少也賤，故多能鄙事。君子多乎哉？不多也。」

9:6: A great official asked Tzu-kung, "Is the Master a **sagacious one**? How is it that he has so much ability [in practical, especially things]?" Tzu-kung said, "Certainly Heaven has endowed him so liberally that he is to become **a sage**, and furthermore he has much ability." When Confucius heard this, he said, "Does the great official know me? When I was young, I was in humble circumstances, and therefore I acquired much ability to do the simple things of humble folk. Does a superior man need to have so much ability? He does not." page. 35

5. 季氏第十六： 8. 孔子曰：「君子有三畏：畏天命，畏大人，畏聖人之言。小人不知天命而不畏也，狎大人，侮聖人之言。」

16:8. Confucius said, “ The superior man stands in awe of three things. He stands in awe of the Mandate of Heaven; he stands in awe of great men; and he stands in awe of the words of the sagacious people. The inferior man is ignorant of the Mandate of Heaven and does not stand in awe of it. He is disrespectful to great men and is contemptuous towards the words of the sagacious people.” -- Wing-Tsit Chan, page 45.

6. 子張第十九: 12. 子游曰: 「子夏之門人小子, 當洒掃、應對、進退, 則可矣。

抑末也, 本之則無。如之何? 」子夏聞之曰: 「噫! 言游過矣! 君子之道, 孰先傳焉? 孰後倦焉? 譬諸草木, 區以別矣。君子之道, 焉可誣也? 有始有卒者, 其惟聖人乎! 」

19:12. Zi You said, "The disciples and followers of Zi Xia, in sprinkling and sweeping the ground, in answering and replying, in advancing and receding, are sufficiently accomplished. But these are only the branches of learning, and they are left ignorant of what is essential. How can they be acknowledged as sufficiently taught?" Zi Xia heard of the remark and said, "Alas! Yan You is wrong. According to the way of the superior man in teaching, what departments are there which he considers of prime importance, and delivers? what are there which he considers of secondary importance, and allows himself to be idle about? But as in the case of plants, which are assorted according to their classes,

so he deals with his disciples. How can the way of a superior man be such as to make fools of any of them? Is it not the sagacious person alone, who can unite in one the beginning and the consummation of learning?"

The texts of the *Analects* here cited suggest that a number of subtle and profound changes regarding the usage and meaning(s) of *sheng* (聖) have occurred. No use of *sheng* (聖) in the *Analects* was connected to any particular average person, nor even to a king as was the case in the bronze inscriptions, the *Book of Documents* and the *Book of Poetry*. Only a few ancient great kings like Yao and Shun are acknowledged as sage-kings or sagacious kings. Instead, “*ren* 人”, the general term for human beings, has more frequently occupied the position of any particular name to be modified by *sheng* (聖). *Sheng-ren* (聖人) is thus crystalized into a peculiar and rather lofty ideal for superior man (*jun-zi* 君子), a particular group of people, who cling to personal cultivation as well as the cultivation of the world.

Sheng (聖) is placed at the top of the ideal system in the *Analects*, even higher than the acknowledged cardinal Confucian virtue humanity (*ren* 仁). Confucius and his students discussed many concepts of virtues in the *Analects*. Scholars of later generations summed them up into different groups, such as the dual emphasis of humanity (*ren* 仁) and

wisdom (*zhi* 智) throughout history especially in Deng Zhongshu (c. 179-c.104), sometimes the three universal virtues supplemented by adding courage *yong* (勇), then the Four Beginnings by Mencius (c.372- c. 289) adding righteousness *yi* 義 and propriety *li* 禮⁸⁴, and the Five Virtues by adding faithfulness (*xin* 信) since Deng Zhongshu⁸⁵.

Although there are different types of formulations of the basic Confucian virtues, humanity (*ren* 仁) has always been listed as the first and most important virtue. In the *Analects*, *sheng* (聖) and *ren* (仁) are put together twice. In one case, these two virtues are put together for comparison. In chapter 6 verse 28, Confucius student Tzu-kung asked Confucius what was humanity *ren* (仁). Tzu-kung cited a possible act and asked whether it was an act of humanity. Confucius answered that it was more than humanity, that was doubtlessly sagehood/sagacity, of which even the sage-king Yao and Shun fell short⁸⁶. In chapter 7 verse 34, Confucius modestly refused to be called a man of sagacity *sheng* (聖) and humanity (*ren* 仁). He regarded himself simply a person learning to become sagacious

⁸⁴ Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), 30.

⁸⁵ Tu Wei-Ming, *Centrality and Commonality* (Albany: State University of New York Press), 56-57.

⁸⁶ Confucius, the *Analects*, 6:30.

without satiety while teaching others to do so without weariness⁸⁷. Here *sheng* (聖) and *ren* (仁) were also put together but *sheng* (聖) was placed in the first place.

The *Analects* show that a sage *sheng-ren* (聖人)⁸⁸ has a mysterious connection with Heaven. On the one hand, it's Heaven that endowed the Mandate to someone to become a sage. In chapter 9:16 Tzu-kung believed that Heaven endowed the Mandate to let Confucius become a sage. In the verse 1 of the last Chapter, when the sage-king Yao passed on his position to Shun, Yao said it was Heaven's Mandate now resting on Yu to take that position. The words of sages have power and authority because the sages spoke them out in accordance with the Mandate he received from the Ultimate, Tian (天). Therefore, a superior man would stand in awe of three things: the Mandate of Heaven, the great man and the words of sages while an inferior man would not since he is ignorant of Heaven's Mandate⁸⁹. On the other hand, it is sages' responsibility to fulfill Heaven's Mandate to take care of the world, especially the people and make all under Heaven thrive. This responsibility can be seen from the interpretation of other related concepts especially humanity *ren* (仁), the closest to *sheng* (聖). Confucius called the act of extensively conferring benefits on the people and bringing salvation to all is even more than an act of

⁸⁷ Confucius, the *Analects*, 7: 34.

⁸⁸ I will translate it into a sage or sages for convenience, although its word-for-word translation should be a sagacious person if we consider translation of the part of speech of *sheng* (聖).

⁸⁹ Confucius, the *Analects*, 16:8.

humanity but an act of sagacity⁹⁰. He thus points out the altruistic principle of humanity, that is, to establish the character of others if one wishes to establish his own character, to help others become prominent if one wishes himself to become prominent⁹¹. If a king fails the Heaven's Mandate and leads to the distress and want within the four seas, he will lose his Heavenly revenue⁹². It will be justified for another one to receive the Heavenly Mandate and take the place of him, which is illustrated by the examples of King Tang and King Wu⁹³.

To sum up, in the *Analects*, *sheng* (聖) is placed at the top of the system of ideals that Confucius and his students pursued throughout their lives but never completely realized. Indeed, the ideal became such a lofty and mysterious state that even Confucius' master virtue of humanity did not surpass it⁹⁴. What is more, this ideal has become closely and mysteriously connected with Heaven. As Chen Ning observes, its sense of mystery is enhanced by various comments linking sagehood to Heaven, the ultimate source of value for most Chinese⁹⁵.

Whether as an adjective or as a noun, *sheng* (聖) in the *Analects* suggests its exalted features. However, it cannot establish a clear and full description in the brief conversations between Confucius and his students. This more complete analysis is provided in the

⁹⁰ See note 86.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Confucius, *The Analects*, 20:1.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Stephen Angle, *Sagehood* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2009), 14.

⁹⁵ See note 23, Chen Ning, 416-417.

commentaries on the *Book of Changes* and the *Book of Rituals*. These two ancient classic works reflect the most philosophical ideas of Confucianism since Confucius during the Pre-Qin period. I now propose to analyze their use of the term *sheng* 聖 together with its employment in the *Analects*.

3. 2.2 Ten Wings *Shiyi* (十翼)

The *Book of Changes* consists of three parts: the hexagrams, the hexagram statements, and the Confucian commentaries called *Ten Wings Shi-yi* (十翼). It is traditionally believed that the first two parts can be traced back to the legendary ancient times. It is believed that King Wen of Zhou (周文王) attached the hexagrams statements to the hexagrams. In the first two parts, *sheng* (聖) never occurs either among the name of the hexagrams or the hexagram statements. However, in the *Ten Wings*, the later Confucian Commentaries, *sheng* (聖) appears 40 times. Among these 40 appearances, *sheng-ren* (聖人) is used 38 times. The other two terms that are connected with *sheng* (聖) are *sheng-xian* (聖賢, the sagacious and the virtuous) and *sheng-gong* (聖功, the achievement of a sage). *Sheng* (聖) was used as an adjective in nearly all cases except in the term *sheng-xian* (聖賢), in which *sheng* (聖) has turned into a noun

from an adjective to mean the sagacious. *Sheng-ren* (聖人) appeared 3 times in “*Wen-yan* (文言)” of *Qian Hexagram* (乾卦), 6 times in “*Tuan* (象)” of six hexagrams, 26 times in “*Xi-ci* (繫辭)” and 3 times in “*Shuo-gua* (說卦)”. *Xi-ci* (繫辭) is believed to express the most representative thoughts of the ten Confucian commentaries on the *Book of Changes*. Therefore the frequent occurrence of *sheng-ren* (聖人) indicates that *sheng-ren* (聖人) has become a key independent concept in the Confucian understanding of the *Book of Changes* during the pre-Qin period. *Sheng-ren* (聖人) became a specific term with specific virtue/ability and specific mission rather than a general description or praise of some one to be sagacious. It should be more accurate to translate it into sages than sagacious person/people.

The context of *sheng-ren* (聖人) in the *Ten Wings* displays important features of *sheng* (聖) in the Confucian thought. On the whole, *sheng* (聖) is never used in these Confucian commentaries to praise or describe any particular person. Furthermore, no proper human names are attached with *sheng* (聖). This is very different from the usage of *sheng* (聖) in the Zhou bronze inscriptions but highly agrees closely with its feature in the

Book of Documents and the *Analects*. The only word relative to humans that *sheng* (聖) modifies in *Ten Wings* is the general word for person *ren* (人), which makes no distinction between races, classes and genders. The use of *sheng-ren* (聖人) in *Ten Wings* reveals the nature and role of a sage in the Confucian thoughts. It is not related to trivial things but is always concerned with Heaven and Earth and the life of all under Heaven. The *Ten Wings* presents the correspondence with the three major parties.

First of all, sages in the *Ten Wings* are supposed to imitate Heaven (and Earth) in the *Ten Wings*. Among the 40 cases in which *sheng* (聖) appears, a sage (*sheng-ren* 聖人) is depicted as imitating Heaven (and Earth) in at least 13 cases. In the five *Tuan-zhuan* of Yu, Guan, Yi, Xian and Heng hexagrams, *sheng-ren* (聖人) is regarded to have a certain virtue learned from Heaven (and Earth) and revealed in each of the above hexagrams. Among these meanings are: docile obedience employing movement, the spirit-like way, nourishing, and influencing the long continuance in its way of operation⁹⁶. In *Xi-ci* (繫辭), *sheng-ren* (聖人) is described about eight times as a value corresponding with Heaven and Earth from a more general and transcendental perspective. It focuses more on basic principles than some specific virtues. The ways of Heaven and Earth are summed up and

⁹⁶ See the texts of *Tuan-zhuan* of Yu, Guan, Yi, Xian and Heng hexagrams in light blue.

sages are advised to follow them submissively or to correspond with them properly. For example, it points out that the loftiness of sages was predicated on the pattern of Heaven, while their solidity was patterned after Earth⁹⁷. Heaven's responsibility is found in its power of creation, transformation, and revelation of good and bad fortunes. Sages are responsible for taking advantage of these factors, imitating them and making authoritative interpretations accordingly⁹⁸.

Second, sages act to take care of the welfare of all creations under Heaven, and in particular the people since they have an obligation to do so in accordance with the way of Heaven and Earth. In the verses of the *Ten Wings* related with *sheng* (聖), *Tian-xia* (天下, all under Heaven) has been mentioned 22 times, *min* 民 (the people) 8 times, *wan-wu* (萬物, all creations or all things) 6 times. In the *Ten Wings*, there are 13 examples of sages imitating Heaven (and Earth). I would now like to take the same 13 cases to illustrate how sages are illustrated to follow the way of Heaven and be responsible to the thriving of all creations especially the people in the world. Except for Xi-ci I 3), 13-16) and Xi-ci II 2), 10 out of the 13 cases state that the intention or influence of the sages is based on their imitating or following the way of Heaven (and Earth). As the object of their intention or influence, *min* 民 (the people) is mentioned four times, *tian-xia* 天下 (all under sky

⁹⁷ See the text of Xi-ci I 3) in light blue

⁹⁸ See the text of Xi-ci I 13) -16).

(Heaven)) four times, *xian* 賢 (men of talents and virtue) one time (marked in purple). What the sages are concerned with is not their personal interests, nor the benefits of their own families, but the life of all people and everything under Heaven.

In these four cases concerned with “all under Heaven *tian-xia* 天下”, the sages act in accordance with the Way of Heaven and bring the well being of all under Heaven. In the *Tuan-zhuan* of Guan sages contemplate the spirit-like way of Heaven and lay down their instructions in accordance with this spirit-like way of Heaven. In addition, sages also learn to be empathetic with the heart of men and to preserve it in their course and to observe how the way of Heaven works in the *Tuan-zhuan* of Xian and Heng hexagrams. What the sages do accordingly will lead to the willing submission of all all under Heaven, the harmony and peace for all under Heaven as well as the transformation and fulfillment of all under Heaven. Xi-ci I 12) not only points out the responsibility of sages to prepare things for practical use and make instruments for the benefit of all under Heaven, but also emphasizing the significance by paralleling it with the functions of Heaven and Earth, the four seasons, the sun and moon and the rich and the noble.

The people *min* 民 are mentioned four times in the thirteen cases related with the responsibility of sages *sheng-ren* (聖人). In these four cases, sages are depicted as as they taking care of the people by imitating the virtues of Heaven and Earth. In the *Tuan-zhuan* of Yu Hexagram, like the movement of Heaven and Earth, sages show the docile obedience in connection with their movement and hence make their punishments and penalties that

occur entirely just. Thus this which leads to the willing submission of the people to them. The *Tuan-zhuan* of Yi Hexagram directly points out the sages' responsibility to nourish the people just as Heaven and Earth are doing. In Xi-ci II, the people *min* 民 occurred twice. It parallels the significance of fully understanding the way of God and clearly ascertaining the experience of the people. By imitating or corresponding with Heaven and Earth, the sages will bring about justice, education and nourishment for the people and hence the willing submission of the people to their will.

The following are the original versions and the English translations by James Legge of the texts of the 13 cases related with the correspondence between sages *sheng-ren* (聖人) and Heaven and Earth (*tian-di* 天地). *Shen-ren* (聖人) is marked in red, Heaven and Earth in blue, the points of correspondence in light blue, the objects of the sages' concern in purple.

1 豫：彖傳 天地以順動，故日月不過，而四時不忒；聖人以順動，則刑罰清而民服。

Tuan-zhuan of Yu Hexagram: Heaven and earth show that docile obedience in connexion with movement, and hence the sun and moon make no error (in time), and the four seasons do not deviate (from their order). The sages show such docile obedience in connexion with

their movements, and hence their punishments and penalties are entirely just, and the people acknowledge it by their submission.

2 觀：彖傳 觀天之神道，而四時不忒，聖人以神道設教，而天下服矣

Tuan-zhuan of Guan Hexagram: When we contemplate the spirit-like way of Heaven, we see how the four seasons proceed without error. The sages, in accordance with (this) spirit-like way, laid down their instructions, and all under heaven yield submission to them.

3 頤：彖傳：天地養萬物，聖人養賢，以及萬民

Tuan-zhuan of Yi Hexagram: Heaven and earth nourish all things. The sages nourish men of talents and virtue, by them to reach to the myriads of the people.

4 咸：彖傳：天地感而萬物化生，聖人感人心而天下和平

Tuan-zhuan of Xian Hexagram: Heaven and earth exert their influences, and there ensue the transformation and production of all things. The sages influence the minds of men, and the result is harmony and peace all under the sky.

5 恆：彖傳 天地之道，恆久而不已也。利有攸往，終則有始也。日月得天，而能

久照，四時變化，而能久成，聖人久於其道，而天下化成。

Tuan-zhuan of Heng hexagram: The way of Heaven and Earth is to be long continued in their operation without stopping. (When it is said that) 'Movement in any direction whatever will be advantageous,' this implies that when (the moving power) is spent, it will begin again. The sun and moon, realising in themselves (the course of Heaven), can perpetuate their shining. The four seasons, by their changing and transforming, can perpetuate their production (of things). The sages persevere long in their course, and all under the sky are transformed and perfect.

6 繫辭上 3) 知崇禮卑，崇效天，卑法地。

Xi-ci I 3) Their (the sages') wisdom was high, and their rules of conduct were solid. That loftiness was after the pattern of heaven; that solidity, after the pattern of earth.

7 繫辭上 11) 明於天之道，而察於民之故，是與神物以前民用。聖人以此齊戒，以神明其德夫！

Xi-ci I 11) Therefore (those sages), fully understanding the way of Heaven, and having clearly ascertained the experience of the people, instituted (the employment of) these spirit-like things, as a provision for the use of the people. The sages went about the employment of them (moreover) by purifying their hearts and with reverent caution, thereby giving (more) spirituality and intelligence to their virtue.

8 繫辭 上 12) 法象莫大乎天地，變通莫大乎四時，縣象著明莫大乎日月，崇高莫大乎富貴；備物致用，立成器以為天下利，莫大乎聖人

Xi-ci 12) Therefore of all things that furnish models and visible figures there are none greater than heaven and earth; of things that change and extend an influence (on others) there are none greater than the four seasons; of things suspended (in the sky) with their figures displayed clear and bright, there are none greater than the sun and moon; of the honored and exalted there are none greater than he who is the rich and noble (one); in preparing things for practical use, and inventing and making instruments for the benefit of all under the sky, there are none greater than the sages

9-12 繫辭上 13-16) 是故，天生神物，聖人則之；天地變化，聖人效之；天垂象，見吉凶，聖人象之。河出圖，洛出書，聖人則之。

Xi-ci I 13-16) Therefore Heaven produced the spirit-like things, and the sages took advantage of them. (The operations of) heaven and earth are marked by (so many) changes and transformations; and the sages imitated them (by means of the Yi). Heaven hangs out its (brilliant) figures from which are seen good fortune and bad, and the sages made their emblematic interpretations accordingly. The He gave forth the map, and the Lo the writing, of (both of) which the sages took advantage.

13 繫辭下 2) 天地之大德曰生，聖人之大寶曰位

Xi-ci II 2) The great attribute of heaven and earth is the giving and maintaining life. What is most precious for the sage is to get the (highest) place - (in which he can be the human representative of heaven and earth).

The above analysis indicates that *sheng-ren* (聖人) in the *Ten Wings* has been consolidated into a specific term with specific philosophical meanings. Unlike the obscure language about *sheng-ren* (聖人) in the *Analects*, the *Ten Wings* defines their nature, responsibilities, abilities and effect in clear and intelligible language. In order to see the whole picture of the context of *sheng* (聖), I have made a chart with the 40 cases and analyzed the relations between sages, Heaven and Earth and all under Heaven from the perspectives of the one(s) that the sages imitate, and for whom they act, as well as what responsibilities they have, and by what means/ability/virtue they fulfill their responsibilities and what effect they have. Like the above 13 cases, I have marked different content with different colors.

The following is the table about the use of *Sheng* (聖) in the *Ten Wings*

		Original Text	Translation	The one(s) that sages correspond with	Point of Correspondence	The one for whom the sages act	Responsibility/contribution	Means/ability/virtue	Effect
1	Wen-yan of Qian Hexagram 乾卦 文言:	子曰：「同聲相應，同氣相求。水流濕，火就燥，雲從龍，風從虎，聖人作而萬物覩。……」	The Master said: 'Notes of the same key respond to one another; creatures of the same nature seek one another; water flows towards the place that is (low and) damp; fire rises up towards what is dry; clouds follow the dragon, and winds follow the tiger:(so) the sage makes his appearance, and all the creation look to him.''			All the creation	Makes his appearance		All the creation look to him
2 3	Wen-yan of Qian Hexagram 乾卦： 文言:	「亢」之為言也，知進而不知退，知存而不知亡，知得而不知喪。其唯聖人乎！知進退存亡而不失其正者，其唯聖人乎！	The force of that phrase--'exceeding the proper limits'--indicates the knowing to advance but not to retire; to maintain but not to let perish to get but not to lose. He only is the sage who knows to advance and to retire, to maintain and to let perish; and that without ever acting incorrectly. Yes, he only is the sage!					Knows to advance and to retire, to maintain and to let perish; and that without	

								ever actin g incor rectl y	
4	Tuan of Men g Hexa gram	蒙 以 養 正 , 聖 功 也。	(The method of dealing with) the young and ignorant is to nourish the correct (nature belonging to them); - this accomplishes the service of the sage.			The young and ignorant	to nourish the correct nature belong to the young and ignorant		
5	Tuan - zhua n of Yu 豫 ; 象传	天 地 以 順 動 , 故 日 月 不 過 , 而 四 時 不 忒 ; 聖 人 以 順 動 , 則 刑 罰 清 而 民 服。	Heaven and earth show that docile obedience in connexion with movement, and hence the sun and moon make no error (in time), and the four seasons do not deviate (from their order). The sages show such docile obedience in connexion with movements, and hence their punishments and penalties are entirely just, and the people	Heav le and Earth	Docile obed ience in conn exio n with mov emen t	The people	their punishments and penalties are entirely just		the peopl e ackno wledg e it by their submi ssion

			acknowledge it by their submission.						
6	Tuan of Guan Hexagram 观： 象傳	觀天之神道，而四時不忒，聖人以神道設教，而天下服矣。	When we contemplate the spirit-like way of Heaven, we see how the four seasons proceed without error. The sages, in accordance with (this) spirit-like way, laid down their instructions, and all under heaven yield submission to them.	Heaven	The All spirit-like way of Heaven			laid down their instructions	All under Heaven yield submission
7	Tuan of Yi Hexagram	天地養萬物，聖人養賢，以及萬民	Heaven and earth nourish all things. The sages nourish men of talents and virtue, by them to reach to the myriads of the people.	Heaven and Earth	Nourish talents and virtue, by them to reach to the myriads of the people.				Nourish men of talents and virtue, by them to reach to the myriads of

									the people
8	Tuan of Xian Hexagram	天地感而萬物化生，聖人感人心而天下和平，觀其所感，而天地萬物之情可見矣。	Heaven and earth exert their influences, and there ensue the transformation and production of all things. The sages influence the minds of men, and the result is harmony and peace all under the Heaven. If we look at (the method and issues) of those influences, the true character of heaven and earth and of all things can be seen.	Heaven and Earth	Influence	All under the Heaven	influence the minds of men,		harmony and peace all under the Heaven

9	Tuan of Heng Hexagram	<p>久於其道也，天地之道，恆久而不已也。利有攸往，終則有始也。日月得天，而能久照，四時變化，而能久成，聖人久於其道，而天下化成；觀其所恆，而天地萬物之情可見矣！</p>	<p>The way of heaven and earth is to be long continued in their operation without stopping. (When it is said that) 'Movement in any direction whatever will be advantageous,' this implies that when (the moving power) is spent, it will begin again. The sun and moon, realising in themselves (the course of Heaven), can perpetuate their shining. The four seasons, by their changing and transforming, can perpetuate their production (of things). The sages persevere long in their course, and all under the sky are transformed and perfect. When we look at what they continue doing long, the natural tendencies of heaven, earth, and all things can be seen.</p>	Heaven and Earth	Long continued	All under Heaven			All under Heaven are transformed and perfect
10 11	Tuan - zhuan Of Ding Hexagram	<p>聖人亨以享上帝，而大亨以養聖賢。</p>	<p>The sages cooked their offerings in order to present them to God, and made great feasts to nourish their wise and able (ministers).</p>		God; wise and able (ministers)	Cook and present to God and meanwhile make great feasts to nourish the wise and able			

12	Xi-ci I 繫 辭上 1)	<p>聖人設卦 觀象，繫 辭焉而明 吉凶，剛 柔相推而 生變化。</p>	<p>The sages set forth the diagrams, inspected the emblems contained in them, and appended their explanations; - in this way the good fortune and bad (indicated by them) were made clear. The strong and the weak (lines) displace each other, and produce the changes and transformations (in the figures).</p>				<p>Inspect the emblems contained in them; the good fortune and bad were made clear. The strong and the weak (lines) displace each other, and produce the changes and transformations (in the figures).</p>	<p>Set forth the diagrams, and appended their explanations.</p>	
13	\ \ 2)	<p>顯諸仁， 藏諸用， 鼓萬物而 不與聖人 同慢，盛 德大業至 矣哉。</p>	<p>It is manifested in the benevolence (of its operations), and (then again) it conceals and stores up its resources. It gives their stimulus to all things, without having the same anxieties that possess the sage. Complete is its abundant virtue and the greatness of its stores!</p>						

14	\ \	<p>子 曰 ； 「 易 其 至 矣 乎 ！ 」 ， 夫 易 ， 聖 人 所 以 崇 德 而 廣 業 也 。 知 崇 禮 卑 ， 崇 效 天 ， 卑 法 地 。 天 地 設 位 ， 而 易 行 乎 其 中 矣 ， 成 性 存 存 ， 道 義 之 門 。</p>	<p>The Master said: - 'Is not the Yi a perfect book?' It was by the Yi that the sages exalted their virtue, and enlarged their sphere of occupation. Their wisdom was high, and their rules of conduct were solid. That loftiness was after the pattern of heaven; that solidity, after the pattern of earth. Heaven and earth having their positions as assigned to them, the changes (of nature) take place between them. The nature (of man) having been completed, and being continually preserved, it is the gate of all good courses and righteousness.</p>	Heaven Loftiness and Earth	was after the patte rn of Heav en; solid ity (hum blene ss), after the patte rn of earth		Exalt their virtue and enlarge their sphere of occupation	Yi- the chan ges	The nature (of man) having been completed, and being continually preserved, it is the gate of all good courses and righteousness.
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15	\ \	聖人有以	The sage was able to				He	surv	
16	4)	見天下之	survey all the				considered	ey	
		蹟，而擬	complex phenomena				in his mind	all	
		諸其形	under the sky. He				how they	the	
		容，象其	then considered in his				could be	com	
		物宜，是	mind how they could				figured, and	plex	
		故謂之	be figured, and (by				(by means	phen	
		象。聖人	means of the				of the	ome	
		有以見天	diagrams)				diagrams)	na	
		下之動，	represented their				represented	unde	
		而觀其會	material forms and				their	r the	
		通，以行	their character.				material	sky;	
		其典禮。	Hence these				forms and		
			(diagrams) are				their	surv	
			denominated				character.	ey	
			Semblances (or					the	
			emblematic figures,				He	moti	
			the Hsiang). A (later)				contemplate	ve	
			sage was able to				d them in.	influ	
			survey the motive				their	ence	
			influences working				common	s	
			all under the sky. He				action and	wor	
			contemplated them				special	king	
			in. their common				nature, in	all	
			action and special				order to	unde	
			nature, in order to				bring out the	r the	
			bring out the standard				standard and	sky.	
			and proper tendency				proper		
			of each.						

							tendency of each.		
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17	\ \	<p>易有聖人之道四焉；以言者尚其辭，以動者尚其變，以制器者尚其象，以卜筮者尚其占。以君子將有為也，將有行也，問焉而以言，其受命也如響，无有遠近幽深，遂知來物。非天下之至精，其孰</p>	<p>In the Yi there are four things characteristic of the way of the sages. We should set the highest value on its explanations to guide us in speaking; on its changes for (the initiation of) our movements; on its emblematic figures for (definite action as in) the construction of implements; and on its prognostications for our practice of divination. Therefore, when a superior man is about to take action of a more private or of a public character, he asks (the Yi), making his inquiry in words. It receives his order, and the answer comes as the echo's response. Be the subject remote or near, mysterious or deep, he forthwith knows of what kind will be the coming result. (If the Yi) were not the most exquisite thing under heaven, would it be concerned in such an operation as this?</p>				<p>We should set the highest value on its explanations to guide us in speaking; on its changes for (the initiation of) our movements; on its emblematic figures for (definite action as in) the construction of implements; and on its prognostications for our practice of divination</p>		
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		能與於 此。							
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18	\ \	夫易，聖	The (operations			All	searched out	Yi-	they
19	7)	人之所以	forming the) Yi are			under	exhaustively	the	could
	8)	極深而研	the method by which			Heaven	what was	chan	penetr
		幾也。唯	the sages searched out				deep, and	ges	ate to
		深也，故	exhaustively what				investigated		the
		能通天下	was deep, and				the minutest		views
		之志。唯	investigated the				springs (of		of all
		幾也，故	minutest springs (of				things)		under
		能成天下	things). 'Those						the
		之務。唯	operations searched						sky;
		神也，故	out what was deep:' -						they
		不疾而	therefore they could						could
		速，不行	penetrate to the views						bring
		而至。子	of all under the sky.						to a
		曰：「易	'They made apparent						compl
		有聖人之	the minutest springs						etion
		道四焉」	of (things):' -						all
		者，此之	therefore they could						under
		謂也。	bring to a completion						taking
			all undertakings						s
			under the sky. 'Their						under
			action was spirit-like:'						the
			- therefore they could						sky.
			make speed without						they
			hurry, and reached						could
			their destination						make
			without travelling.						speed
			This is the import of						witho
			what the Master said,						ut
			that 'In the Yi there						hurry,
			are four things						and
			indicating the way of						reach
			the sages.'						ed
									their
									destin
									ation
									witho
									ut
									travel
									ling

20 21	\ \ 9) 10)	子 曰 ； 「 夫 易 ， 何 為 者 也 ？ 夫 易 開 物 成 務 ， 冒 天 下 之 道 ， 如 斯 而 已 者 也 。 是 故 ， 聖 人 以 通 天 下 之 志 ， 以 定 天 下 之 業 ， 以 斷 天 下 之 疑 。 」 是 故 ， 著 之 德 ， 圓 而 神 ； 卦 之 德 ， 方 以 知 ； 六 爻 之 義 ， 易 以 貢 。 聖	The Master said: - 'What is it that the Yi does? The Yi opens up (the knowledge of the issues of) things, accomplishes the undertakings (of men), and embraces under it (the way of) all things under the sky. This and nothing more is what the Yi does. Thereby the sages, through (divination by) it, would give their proper course to the aims of all under the sky, would give stability to their undertakings, and determine their doubts.' Therefore the virtue of the stalks is versatile and spirit- like; that of the diagrams is exact and wise; and the meaning given by the six lines is changeful to give (the proper information to men). The sages having, by their possession of these (three virtues), cleansed their minds, retired and laid them up in the secrecy (of their own consciousness). But their sympathies were with the people in regard both to their good fortune and evil.		All under Heaven ; The people	The sages would give their proper course to the aims of all under the sky (Heaven), give stability to their undertakings and determine their minds; The sages cleansed their minds, retired and laid them up in the secrecy (of their own consciousne ss, but their sympathies were with the people in regard both their good fortune and evil.	By Yi- the chan ges Yi open s up (the chara cter of) know ledge of the event s of their thing s, m had stored up (all experi ences of) the past. Who could be embrac able to accom plish (the h all way this? (Only our) thing ancie s nt sages, r the quick sky. in The virtu on	By their spirit- like abilit y they knew (the chara cter of) comin g event s, and their wisdo m had stored up (all experi ences of) the past. Who could be embrac able to accom plish (the h all way this? (Only our) thing ancie s nt sages, r the quick sky. in The virtu on
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		<p>人以此洗 心，退藏 於密，吉 凶與民同 患。神以 知來，知 以藏往， 其孰能與 此哉！古 之聰明叡 知神武而 不殺者 夫？</p>	<p>By their spirit-like ability they knew (the character of) coming events, and their wisdom had stored up (all experiences of) the past. Who could be able to accomplish all this? (Only our) ancient sages, quick in apprehension and clear in discernment, of far-reaching intelligence, and all-embracing knowledge, and with a majesty, going spirit-like to its objects; - it was only they who could do so.</p>					<p>e of the clear stalk in s is discer versant ment tile, of and far- spirit reachi -like; ng that intelli of gence the, and diagr all- ams embra is cing exact knowl and edge, wise; and with a the majes meanty, ing going give spirit- n bylike to the its six object lines; - it is was chan only geful they to who give could (the do so. prop er infor mati on to men)</p>	<p>and clear stalk in discer ment of and far- spirit reachi -like; ng intelli gence and all- embrac ing knowl edge, and with a majes ty, going spirit- like to its object s; - it was only they who could do so.</p>
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22	\ \ 11)	是以，明於天之道，而察於民之故，是興神物以前民用。聖人以此齊戒，以神明其德夫！	Therefore (those sages), fully understanding the way of Heaven, and having clearly ascertained the experience of the people, instituted (the employment of) these spirit-like things, as a provision for the use of the people. The sages went about the employment of them (moreover) by purifying their hearts and with reverent caution, thereby giving (more) spirituality and intelligence to their virtue.				fully understanding the way of Heaven, and having clearly ascertained the experience of the people, instituted (the employment of) these spirit-like things, as a provision for the use of the people.	The employment of them by purifying their hearts and with reverent caution	Give more spirituality and intelligence to their virtue
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23	\ \ 12)	<p>是故，法象莫大乎天地，變通莫大乎四時，縣象著明莫大乎日月，崇高莫大乎富貴；備物致用，立成器以為天下利，莫大乎聖人；探賾索隱，鈎深致遠，以定天下之吉凶，成天下之亹亹者，莫大乎蓍龜。</p>	<p>Therefore of all things that furnish models and visible figures there are none greater than heaven and earth; of things that change and extend an influence (on others) there are none greater than the four seasons; of things suspended (in the sky) with their figures displayed clear and bright, there are none greater than the sun and moon; of the honoured and exalted there are none greater than he who is (one); in preparing things for practical use, and inventing and making instruments for the benefit of all under the sky, there are none greater than the sages; to explore what is complex, search out what is hidden, to hook up what lies deep, and reach to what is distant, thereby determining (the issues) for good or ill of all events under the sky, and making all men under heaven full of strenuous endeavours, there are no (agencies) greater</p>	Heav Earth	furni sh mod els and visib le figur es	The benefit of all under the sky; All under the sky	determining (the issues) for good or ill of all events under the sky, and making all men under heaven full of strenuous endeavours	prep aring thing s for pract ical use, and inve nting and maki ng instr ume nts
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			than those of the stalks and the tortoise-shell.						
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24- 27	\ \	<p>是故，天 生神物， 13) 聖人則 之；天地 變化，聖 人效之； 16) 天垂象， 見吉凶， 聖人象 之。河出 圖，洛出 書，聖人 則之。</p>	<p>Therefore Heaven produced the spirit- like things, and the sages took advantage of them. (The operations of heaven and earth are marked by (so many) changes and transformations; and the sages imitated them (by means of the Yi). Heaven hangs out its (brilliant) figures from which are seen good fortune and bad, and the sages made their emblematic interpretations accordingly. The He gave forth the map, and the Lo the writing, of (both of) which the sages took advantage.</p>	Heav en and Earth	<p>Produce — take advantage ; changes and trans- formation s- imitate; Hang out its brilliant figures from which are seen good fortune and bad-- made the emblematic interpretations accordingly</p>				
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28	\ \	子 曰 ：	The Master said: -				made their	
29	17)	「 書 不 盡	'The written				emblematic	
	18)	言 ， 言 不	characters are not the				symbols to	
		盡 意 。 然	full exponent of				set forth	
		則 聖 人 之	speech, and speech is				fully their	
		意 ， 其 不	not the full expression				ideas;	
		可 見	of ideas; - is it				appointed	
		乎 。	impossible then to				(all) the	
		子 曰 ：	discover the ideas of				diagrams to	
		「 聖	the sages?' The				show fully	
		人 立 象 以	Master said: - 'The				the truth and	
		盡 意 ， 設	sages made their				falsehood	
		卦 以 盡 情	emblematic symbols				(of things);	
		偽 ， 繫 辭	to set forth fully their				appended	
		以 盡 其	ideas; appointed (all)				their	
		言 ， 變 而	the diagrams to show				explanations	
		通 之 以 盡	fully the truth and				to give the	
		利 ， 鼓 之	falsehood (of things);				full	
		舞 之 以 盡	appended their				expression	
		神 。	explanations to give				of their	
			the full expression of				words; and	
			changed (the various				changed (the	
			lines) and made				various	
			general the method of				lines) and	
			doing so, to exhibit				made	
			fully what was				general the	
			advantageous. They				method of	
			(thus) stimulated (the				doing so, to	
			people) as by drums				exhibit fully	
			and dances, thereby				what was	
			completely				advantageou	
			developing the spirit-				s. They	
			like (character of the				(thus)	
			Yi).'				stimulated	
							(the people)	
							as by drums	
							and dances,	
							thereby	
							completely	
							developing	
							the spirit-	
							like	
							(character of	
							the Yi)	

30	／／	是故，夫	Hence, to speak of the							
31		象， 聖人	emblematic figures: -							
	19)	有以見天	(The sage) was able to							
	20)	下之蹟，	survey all the							
		而擬諸其	complex phenomena							
		形容，象	under the sky. He							
		其物宜，	then considered in his							
		是故謂之	mind how they could							
		象。 聖人	be figured, and (by							
		有以見天	means of the							
		下之動，	diagrams)							
		而觀其會	represented their							
		通，以行	material forms and							
		其典禮，	their character. Hence							
		繫辭焉，	those (diagrams) are							
		以斷其吉	denominated							
		凶，是故	Semblances. A (later)							
		謂之爻。	sage was able to							
			survey the motive							
			influences working							
			all under the sky. He							
			contemplated them in							
			their common action							
			and special nature, in							
			order to bring out the							
			standard and proper							
			tendency of each. He							
			then appended his							
			explanation (to each							
			line), to determine the							
			good or evil indicated							
			by it. Hence those							
			(lines with their							
			explanations) are							
			denominated							
			Imitations (the Yao).							

32	Xi-ci II 繫 辭下 1)	爻象動乎 內，吉凶 見乎外， 功業見乎 變，聖人 之情見乎 辭。	The movements of the lines and figures take place (at the hand of the operator), and are unseen; the good fortune or ill is seen openly and is beyond. The work to be done appears by the changes; the sympathies of the sages are seen in their explanations						
33	\ \	天地之大 德曰生， 聖人之大 寶曰位。 何以守位 曰仁，何 以聚人曰 財。理財 正辭，禁 民為非曰 義。	The great attribute of heaven and earth is en the giving and maintaining life. What is most precious for the sage is to get the (highest) place - (in which he can be the human representative of heaven and earth). What will guard this position for him? Men. How shall he collect a large population round him? By the power of his wealth. The right administration of that wealth, correct instructions to the people, and prohibitions against wrong-doing; - these constitute his righteousness.	Heav en and Earth	Givi ng and main tain g life-- getti ng the high est posit ion		get (highest) place	the	The (hi ghest) place , men , wealt h , right eous ness

34	\ \ 3)	上古穴居而野處，後世聖人易之以宮室，上棟下宇，以待風雨，蓋取諸大壯。	In the highest antiquity they made their homes (in winter) in caves, and (in summer) dwelt in the open country. In subsequent ages, for these the sages substituted houses, with the ridge-beam above and the projecting roof below, as a provision against wind and rain. The idea of this was taken, probably, from Da Zhuang (the thirty-fourth hexagram).					
35	\ \ 4)	古之葬者，厚衣之以薪，葬之中野，不封不樹，喪期無數。後世聖人易之以棺槨，蓋取諸大過。	When the ancients buried their dead, they covered the body thickly with pieces of wood, having laid it in the open country. They raised no mound over it, nor planted trees around; nor had they any fixed period for mourning. In subsequent ages the sages substituted for these practices the inner and outer coffins. The idea of this was taken, probably, from Da Guo (the twenty-eighth hexagram).					

36	\ \ 5)	上古結繩而治，後世聖人易之以書契，百官以治，萬民以察，蓋取諸夬。	In the highest antiquity, government was carried on successfully by the use of knotted cords (to preserve the memory of things). In subsequent ages the sages substituted for these written characters and bonds. By means of these (the doings of) all the officers could be regulated, and (the affairs of) all the people accurately examined. The idea of this was taken, probably, from Guai (the forty-third hexagram).							
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37 \ \	6)	<p>能說諸心，能研諸侯之慮，定天下之吉凶，成天下之亹亹者，是故，變化云為，吉事有祥，象事知器，占事知來。天地設位，聖人成能。人謀鬼謀，百姓與能。</p>	<p>(The sages, who are thus represented, and who made the Yi,) were able to rejoice in heart (in the absolute truth of things), and were able (also) to weigh carefully all matters that could occasion anxiety; (thus) they fixed the good and bad fortune (of all things) under the sky, and could accomplish the things requiring strenuous efforts. Therefore amid the changes and transformations (taking place in heaven and earth), and the words and deeds of men, events that are to be fortunate have their happy omens. (The sages) knew the definite principles underlying the prognostications of the former class, and the future of those of the latter, (now to be) ascertained by divination. The places of heaven and earth (in the diagrams) having been determined, the sages were able (by means of the Yi) to carry out and complete their ability. (In this way even) the common</p>	<p>Heaven and Earth</p>	<p>To determine the place --to complete and carry out their ability</p>	<p>the common people</p>	<p>carry out and complete their ability</p>	<p>able to rejoice in heart (in the absolute truth of things), to weigh carefully, and all matters that could occasion anxiety; to fix the good and bad fortune (of all things) under the sky, to accomplish</p>	<p>There fore amid the changes and transformations (taking place in heaven and earth), and the words and deeds of men, events that are to be fortunate have their happy omens. (The sages) knew the definite principles underlying</p>
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			<p>people were able to share with them in (deciding about) the counsels of men and the counsels of spiritual beings.</p>					<p>sh the thing s requir ring stren uous effort s</p>	<p>the prognostications of the former class, and the future of those of the latter, (now to be) ascertained by divination</p>
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38 \ \ 7)	昔者聖人 之 作 《 易 》 也，幽贊 於神明而 生蓍，參 天兩地而 倚數，觀 變於陰陽 而立卦， 發揮於剛 柔而生爻， 和順而 於道德而 理於義， 窮理盡性 以至於 命。	Anciently, when the sages made the Yi, in order to give mysterious assistance to the spiritual Intelligences, they produced (the rules for the use of) the divining plant. The number 3 was assigned to heaven, 2 to earth, and from these came the (other) numbers. They contemplated the changes in the divided and undivided lines (by the process of manipulating the stalks), and formed the trigrams; from the movements that took place in the strong and weak lines, they produced (their teaching about) the separate lines. There ensued a harmonious conformity to the course (of duty) and to virtue, with a discrimination of what was right (in each particular case). They (thus) made an exhaustive discrimination of what was right, and effected the complete development of (every) nature, till they arrived (in the Yi) at what was	the spirit ual Intelli gence	give myst erious assis tance to the spirit ual Intelli gences,		they produced (the rules for the use of) the divining plant. The number 3 was assigned to heaven, 2 to earth, and from these came the (other) numbers. They contemplate d the changes in the divided and undivided lines (by the process of manipulating the stalks), and formed the trigrams; from the movements that took place in the strong and weak lines, they produced (their teaching about) the separate lines. There ensued a harmonious conformity	They (thus) made an exhaustive discrimination of what was right, and effected the complete development of (every) nature , till they arrived (in the Yi) at what was appointed for it (by Heaven).
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			appointed for it (by Heaven).				to the course (of duty) and to virtue, with a discrimination of what was right (in each particular case). They (thus) made an exhaustive discrimination of what was right, and effected the complete development of (every) nature, till they arrived (in the Yi) at what was appointed for it (by Heaven).		
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39	Shuo-gua 說卦 1)	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，立 人之道曰 仁與義。 兼三才而 兩之，故 《易》六 畫而成 卦。分陰 分陽，迭 用柔剛， 故《易》 六位而成 章。	Anciently, when the sages made the Yi, it was with the design that (its figures) should be in conformity with the principles underlying the natures (of men and things), and the ordinances (for them) appointed (by Heaven). With this view they exhibited (in them) the way of heaven, calling (the lines) yin and yang; the way of earth, calling (them) the weak (or soft) and the strong (or hard); and the way of men, under the names of benevolence and righteousness. Each (trigram) embraced (those) three Powers; and, being repeated, its full form consisted of six lines. A distinction was made of (the places assigned) to the yin and yang lines, which were variously occupied, now by the strong and now by the weak forms, and thus the figure (of each hexagram) was completed.				be in conformity with the principles underlying the natures (of men and things), and the ordinances (for them) appointed (by Heaven). With this view they exhibited (in them) the way of heaven, calling (the lines) yin and yang; the way of earth, calling (them) the weak (or soft) and the strong (or hard); and the way of men, under the names of benevolence and righteousnes s.		
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40	\ \	聖人南面 而聽天下，嚮明而治，蓋取諸此也。	The sages turn their faces to the south when they give audience to all under the sky, administering government towards the region of brightness:--the idea in this procedure was taken from this.				turn their faces to the south when they give audience to all under the sky, administering government towards the region of brightness:		
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Table 4. My Fourth Table: *Sheng* (聖) in the *Ten Wings*

3.2.3 The Book of Rites

In the *Book of Rites Li-ji* (禮記), *sheng* (聖) occurred a total of 75 times. Six of them are cited from more ancient books like *the Book of Poetry* and the *Book of Documents*. 69 references to *sheng* (聖) are found in *Liji* (禮記), 57 of these used *sheng* (聖) as adjectives to mean “sagacious” and 12 reference to *sheng* (聖) were used as nouns to mean sages, sagacity or sagehood. None of them was used as a verb. None of them was a verb to mean “listening to/hear” or a noun to mean “message, news” or “court” as we found in the texts of the Shang oracle bones.

Among the 57 adjective *sheng* (聖), there are 56 *sheng* (聖) used as attributive adjectives and only 1 as predictive adjective. In both of these contexts, *sheng* (聖) means

to be sagacious. *Sheng-ren* (聖人) occurred 43 times, which accounts for the largest proportion. *Sheng-wang* (聖王) appeared 10 times and ranked second. *Sheng-zhe* (聖者) occurred twice and *sheng-di* (聖帝) once. In the above phrases, *sheng* (聖) was used as an attributive adjective to modify the nouns such as “person (*ren* 人)”, “king (*wang* 王)”, “one (*zhe* 者)”, “emperor (*di* 帝)”. “Person (*ren* 人)” and “one (*zhe* 者)” are two general words that do not have any reference for any particular class, gender and religion. “King (*wang* 王)” and “emperor (*di* 帝)” simply a person’s royal status. The only one predictive adjective *sheng* (聖) occurred together with other predictive adjectives that have similar meanings, that is, *cong-ming-sheng-zhi* (聰明聖知).

Among the 12 uses of *sheng* (聖) as a noun, 6 *sheng* (聖) stood alone while 6 others were modified with adjectives indicating the living time of a sage or the degree of a sage’s sagacity. The latter includes “former sages *xian-sheng* (先聖)” 3 times, “latter sages *hou-sheng* (後聖)” 1 time, “great sages *da-sheng* (大聖)” 1 time and *zhi-sheng* (至聖) 1 time. In these expressions, *sheng* (聖) means sage or sages, a person who has sagacious qualities.

The other uses of *sheng* (聖) as a noun stood alone and usually referred to sagacity or sagehood in the context. They define sagacity or sagehood from various perspectives.

<i>Sheng</i> 聖 in total		75 (6+69)	Meanging of <i>sheng</i> 聖	Meaning of the phrase with <i>sheng</i> 聖
<i>sheng</i> 聖 Quoted from more ancient books	n	6	Sagacity / sagehood	
<i>sheng-ren</i> 聖人	Attributive adj	43	sagacious	A sagacious sage (s) or sage(s)
<i>sheng-wang</i> 聖王	///	10	///	A sagacious king (s)
<i>sheng-zhe</i> 聖者	///	2	///	The sagacious/ the sagacious one
<i>sheng-di</i> 聖帝	///	1	///	A sagacious emperor(s)
<i>cong-ming-sheng-zhi</i> 聰明聖知	Predictive adj	1	///	quick in apprehension, clear in discernment, of far-reaching intelligence, and all-embracing knowledge
<i>xian-sheng</i> 先聖	n	3	sages	The former sages
<i>hou-sheng</i> 後聖	///	1	///	The later sages
<i>zhi-sheng</i> 至聖	///	1	///	The greatest sages

<i>Sheng</i> 聖 in total		75 (6+69)	Meanging of <i>sheng</i> 聖	Meaning of the phrase with <i>sheng</i> 聖
<i>da-sheng</i> 大聖	///	1	///	great sages
<i>Sheng</i> 聖	///	6	sagehood/sagacity	

Table 5. My Fifth Table: *Sheng* (聖) in the *Book of Rites*

On the whole in the *Book of the Rites* we can see that there is no *sheng* (聖) to modify a particular person or a particular king. As in the *Analects* and the *Ten Wings Shi-yi* (十翼), *sheng* (聖) is carefully chosen to express abstract ideas rather than to simply praise an ancestor or a passed king/queen. The attributive adjective *sheng* (聖) represents the largest of usage percentage, among which *sheng-ren* (聖人) occurred 43 times as the most frequently mentioned concept. *Sheng-wang* (聖王) appeared 10 times and ranks second, but it occurred less frequently than *sheng-ren* (聖人). *Ren* (人) means “person” or “human being”, without any indication for any particular class or gender. Therefore *Sheng-ren* (聖人) shows no preference for any particular class and gender. There are eight additional

different expressions that have similar meanings with *sheng-ren* (聖人) or *sheng-wang* (聖王). Seven expressions do not indicate any class or gender but emphasize the sagacious quality of the person that “*sheng* (聖)” refers to, such as *sheng-zhe* (聖者), *xian-sheng* (先聖), *hou-sheng* (後聖), *zhi-sheng* (至聖) *dashing* (大聖). Only 1 expression *sheng-di* (聖帝, sagacious emperor) emphasizes its social status like *sheng-wang* (聖王, sagacious king). Thus in total among the 69 expressions related with *sheng* (聖), 51 refers a sagacious person without any indication of the gender and social status while 11 clearly points out its royal status as a sagacious king or emperor. In the rest 7 expressions of *sheng* (聖), 6 ones are nouns referring sagehood or sagacity and only 1 is used as a predictive adjective to mean “sagacious”. Therefore, sages and sagacity/sagehood are the major concerns when the character *sheng* (聖) occurs in in the *Book of Rites*.

In the *Book of Rites*, the character *sheng* (聖) occurred in various forms and parts of speech. The term sage *sheng-ren* (聖人) occurred 43 times, which respects the largest percentage among all the phrases about *sheng* (聖). In the following, I would like to

describe and analyze what information the *Book of Rites* conveys via the term sage *sheng-ren* (聖人).

As the most frequently occurring concept about *sheng* (聖) in the *Book of Rites*, the term sages *sheng-ren* (聖人) involves various aspects of sages seen mainly from the perspective of rites and rituals. These aspects consist of what defines sages, what is the position of sages in the world, what responsibilities sages have, how sages realize their responsibilities, what the relation between Heaven and sages is, and what the relation between sages and all under Heaven is especially the people. Like the other Confucian texts we have already discussed, the texts of the *Book of Rites* demonstrate that the main concerns about sages *sheng-ren* (聖人) are the roles of sages and their relations with Heaven and all under Heaven especially the people from the perspective of rites and rituals. Nearly all the texts with sages *sheng-ren* (聖人) relate to the above themes.

There are six places in the *Book of Rites* indicating the defining features of sages *sheng-ren* (聖人) in terms of virtue, sincerity and wisdom. All of these features are not necessarily related to the throne but rather, are frequently with the Way of Heaven. In the chapters “Li-qi (禮器)” and “Zhong-yong (中庸)”, sages are interpreted from the perspective of virtue *de* 德. “Li-qi 禮器” parallels the virtue of sages with the Way of Heaven. It says that the Way of Heaven supplies the most perfect teachings while sages

are those with the highest degree of virtue⁹⁹. One verse of “Zhong-yong (中庸)” emphasizes virtue as the defining feature of a sage by paralleling the title of being a sage with two other earthly precious titles, that is, being a king (Son of Heaven) and a rich person. The same person Shun 舜 was regarded as a sage in the sense of virtue, a king in the sense of holding an honorable position and a rich man in the sense of owing all that exist within the four seas¹⁰⁰. Another verse of “Zhong-yong (中庸)” associates a sage with sincerity by contrasting the Way of Heaven with the way of human beings. It notes that being sincere is the Way of Heaven while becoming sincere is the way of human beings. Sages are those who are naturally sincere in the relationship with the Way of Heaven without any effort and intellectual exercise¹⁰¹. Three verses also suggest wisdom or

⁹⁹ James Leggs, *The Book of Rites* (Beijing, Washington: Intellectual Press, 2013), 113. 禮器：28: 天道至教，聖人至德。 Translation: Li-qi: 28: The courses of the heavenly (bodies) supply the most perfect lessons, and the sages possessed the highest degree of virtue.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, 258. 中庸 17: 子曰：「舜其大孝也與！德為聖人，尊為天子，富有四海之內。」 Zhong-yong 17: The Master said, "How greatly filial was Shun! His virtue was that of a sage; his dignity was the throne."

¹⁰¹ Ibid, 261, 263. 中庸 22：誠者，天之道也；誠之者，人之道也。誠者不勉而中，不思而得，從容中道，聖人也。誠之者，擇善而固執之者也。 Zhong-yong 22: Sincerity is the way of Heaven. The attainment of sincerity is the way of men. He who possesses sincerity is he who, without an effort, hits what is right, and apprehends, without the exercise of thought; -he is the sage who naturally and easily embodies the right way. He who attains to sincerity is he who chooses what is good, and firmly holds it fast.

中庸 30：故君子之道本諸身，徵諸庶民，考諸三王而不繆，建諸天地而不悖，質諸鬼神而無疑，百世以俟聖人而不惑。質諸鬼神而無疑，知天也；百世以俟聖人而不惑，知人也。 Zhong-yong 30: Therefore the institutions of the Ruler are rooted in his own character and conduct, and sufficient attestation of them is given by the masses of the people. He examines them by comparison with those of the three kings, and finds them without mistake. He sets them up before Heaven and Earth, and finds nothing in them contrary to their mode of operation. He presents himself with them before spiritual beings, and no doubts about them arise. He is prepared to wait for the rise of a sage a hundred ages after, and has no misgivings. His presenting himself with his institutions before spiritual beings, without any doubts arising

knowledge (*zhi* 知) as characterizing sages. Two verses are drawn from “Zhong-yong (中庸)” and one verse from “zhong-ni Yan-ju (仲尼燕居)”. The two verses in “Zhong-yong (中庸)” reveal the two sides of wisdom or knowledge that make a sage by elaborating on the way of the superior man, that is: knowing both the Heaven and the human. In “zhong-ni Yan-ju (仲尼燕居)”, Confucius taught his students the key points of the rites and asserted that the person who knew them could be seen as a sage even if he served in the fields¹⁰².

Most of the remaining texts that deal with sages *sheng-ren* (聖人) in the *Book of Rites* are related to the responsibilities of sages. They set out the responsibilities of sages, the methods to realize them, and the ultimate basis and intention for the acts of sages. This process dealt with the relations between sages and Heaven and all under Heaven especially the people. Many places in *the Book of Rites* show that sages performed parts in the making

about them, shows that he knows Heaven. His being prepared, without any misgivings, to wait for the rise of a sage a hundred ages after, shows that he knows men.

¹⁰² Ibid, 245. 仲尼燕居 5: 子曰：「慎聽之！女三人者，吾語女：禮猶有九焉，大饗有四焉。苟知此矣，雖在畎畝之中事之，聖人已。」 Zhong-ni Yan-ju 5: The Master said, 'Listen attentively, you three, while I discourse to you. Regarding the ceremonial rules, there are still nine things (to be described), and four of them belong to the Grand festive entertainments. When you know these, though your lot may lie among the channeled fields, if you carry them into practice, you will become wise as *sages*.'

of the rites¹⁰³ and music¹⁰⁴, embodied the rites¹⁰⁵, delighted in the music¹⁰⁶ and taught them to the people¹⁰⁷. Although unlike the the Judaic-Christian tradition that Unlike God himself revealed laws to Moses, the *Book of Rites* declared the divine origin of the rites and music by asserting that the former sage-kings had formulated them in accordance with the Way of Heaven and the affection of human beings¹⁰⁸. It seems that there are two roots

¹⁰³Ibid, 15. 曲禮上 9: 是故聖人作，為禮以教人。使人以有禮，知自別於禽獸。Qu-li I 9: Therefore, when the sages arose, they framed the rules of propriety in order to teach men, and cause them, by their possession of them, to make a distinction between themselves and brutes.

¹⁰⁴Ibid, 174. 樂記 17: 故聖人作樂以應天，制禮以配地。禮樂明備，天地官矣。Yue-ji 17: Hence the sages made music in response to heaven, and framed ceremonies in correspondence with earth. In the wisdom and-completeness of their ceremonies and music we see the directing power of heaven and earth. (Trans. James Leggs)

¹⁰⁵Ibid, 31. 檀弓上 79: 子思之母死於衛，柳若謂子思曰：「子，聖人之後也，四方於子乎觀禮，子蓋慎諸。」Tan-gong I 79: When Zi-si's mother died in Wei, Liu Ruo said to him, 'You, Sir, are the descendant of a sage. From all quarters they look to you for an example in ceremonies; let me advise you to be careful in the matter.

檀弓上 97: 孔子之喪，有自燕來觀者，舍於子夏氏。子夏曰：「聖人之葬人與？人之葬聖人也，子何觀焉？昔者夫子言之曰：『吾見封之若堂者矣，見若坊者矣，見若覆夏屋者矣，見若斧者矣。』從若斧者焉。馬鬣封之謂也。今一日而三斬板，而已封，尚行夫子之志乎哉！Tan-gong I: At the mourning for Confucius, there came a man from Yan to see (what was done), and lodged at Zi-xia's. Zi-xia said to him, 'If it had been for the sage's conducting a burial, (there would have been something worthy to see); but what is there to see in our burying of the sage? Formerly the Master made some remarks to me, saying, "I have seen some mounds made like a raised hall; others like a dyke on a river's bank; others like the roof of a large house; and others in the shape of an axe-head." We have followed the axe-shape, making what is called the horse-mane mound. In one day we thrice shifted the frame-boards, and completed the mound. I hope we have carried out the wish of the Master.'

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, 176. 樂記 26: 是故先王有大事，必有禮以哀之；有大福，必有禮以樂之。哀樂之分，皆以禮終。樂也者，聖人之所樂也，而可以善民心，其感人深，其移風易俗，故先王著其教焉。

Yue-ji 26: Hence the former kings, on occasions of great sorrow, had their rules according to which they expressed their grief; and on occasions of great happiness, they had their rules by which they expressed their pleasure. The manifestations, whether of grief or joy, were all bounded by the limits of these rules. In music the sages found pleasure, and (saw that) it could be used to make the hearts of the people good. Because of the deep influence which it exerts on a man, and the change which it produces in manners and customs, the ancient kings appointed it as one of the subjects of instruction.

¹⁰⁷ See note 1: Liqi 288, note 5: Qu-li I 9, and note 6: Yue-ji 17.

¹⁰⁸ James Leggs,100, 104-105, 174. 禮運 3 孔子曰：「夫禮，先王以承天之道，以治人之情.....是故夫禮，必本於天，殲於地，列於鬼神，達於喪祭、射御、冠昏、朝聘。」Li-yun 3: "Confucius said, 'It was by those rules that the ancient kings sought to represent the ways of Heaven, and to regulate the feelings

from which the rites and music came: a divine one and a human one. However, Heaven is believed to be the ultimate origin of the rites and music since Heaven conferred the nature to human beings¹⁰⁹. Thus the rites and music were not arbitrarily made by the sages. The rites have power to decide the life or death of those who observe them or lose them¹¹⁰ while the sacred music has power to transform the spiritual state of the people¹¹¹. The ultimate origin or dual origins of the rites and music also indicate that they are not the private property of sages and not simply produced for the interests of a certain person or a certain group of people. It concerns the life of all the people under Heaven. Therefore, the sages should not only observe the rites and delight in the music themselves but should take

of men.... Therefore those rules are rooted in heaven, have their correspondencies in earth, and are applicable to spiritual beings. They extend to funeral rites, sacrifices, archery, chariot-driving, capping, marriage, audiences, and friendly missions. Thus, the sages made known these rules, and it became possible for the kingdom, with its states and clans, to reach its correct condition.'

禮運 21: 故聖人作則，必以天地為本，以陰陽為端……Liyun 21: Thus it was that when the sages would make rules (for men), they felt it necessary to find the origin (of all things) in heaven and earth; to make

禮運 23: 故禮義也者，……人之大端也，所以達天道順人情之大寶也。 Thus propriety and righteousness are the great elements for man's (character)... They supply the channels by which we can apprehend the ways of Heaven and act as the feelings of men require.

樂記 17: 故聖人作樂以應天，制禮以配地。禮樂明備，天地官矣。 Yueji 17: Hence the sages made music in response to heaven, and framed ceremonies in correspondence with earth. In the wisdom and-completeness of their ceremonies and music we see the directing power of heaven and earth.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, 256. 中庸 1: 天命之謂性，率性之謂道，修道之謂教。 Zhong-yong 1: What Heaven has conferred is called The Nature; an accordance with this nature is called The Path of duty.

¹¹⁰ Ibid, 100, see Li-yun 3, note 10.

¹¹¹ Ibid, 176. Yueji 26: 樂也者，聖人之所樂也，而可以善民心，其感人深，其移風易俗，故先王著其教焉。 Yue-i 26: In music the sages found pleasure, and (saw that) it could be used to make the hearts of the people good. Because of the deep influence which it exerts on a man, and the change which it produces in manners and customs, the ancient kings appointed it as one of the subjects of instruction.

the responsibility of teaching them to the people. In this way, the incorrect practice of the people will be rectified and their bad customs will be changed ¹¹².

About nine verses with the term *sheng-ren* (聖人) in the *Book of Rites* discuss the rules or reasons that sages rely on to make concrete rites and music. “Li-qi (禮器)” explains why the principle of proper proportion is the rule for making ritual vessels¹¹³. “Yue-ji 樂記” gives the social conditions and reasons for sages making the major rites and the Music. Besides, it defines the Music as the virtuous sounds and explains how to make these sounds¹¹⁴. “Ji-yi (祭義)” describes why and how sages made temples and made

¹¹²Ibid 100. Li-yun 禮運 3: 故聖人以禮示之，故天下國家可得而正也。Li-yun 3: Thus the sages made known these rules, and it became possible for the kingdom, with its states and clans, to reach its correct condition

¹¹³ Ibid 110. 禮器 16: 古之聖人，內之為尊，外之為樂，少之為貴，多之為美。是故先生之制禮也，不可多也，不可寡也，唯其稱也。 Li-qi 16 : The ancient sages (thus) gave honour to what was internal, and sought pleasure in what was external; found a mark of distinction in paucity, and one of what was admirable in multitude; and therefore in the ceremonial usages instituted by the ancient kings we should look neither for multitude nor for paucity, but for the due relative proportion.

¹¹⁴ Ibid, 180. 樂記 42: 文侯曰：「敢問何如？」子夏對曰：「夫古者，天地順而四時當，民有德而五穀昌，疾疢不作而無妖祥，此之謂大當。然後聖人作為父子君臣，以為紀綱。紀綱既正，天下大定。天下大定，然後正六律，和五聲，弦歌詩頌，此之謂德音；德音之謂樂。」……然後，聖人作為鞀、鼓、柷、敔、塤、箎，此六者德音之音也。《詩》云：『莫其德音，其德克明。克明克類，克長克君，王此大邦；克順克俾，俾於文王，其德靡悔。既受帝祉，施於孫子。』此之謂也。今君之所好者，其溺音乎？」Zi-xia replied, 'In antiquity, Heaven and Earth acted according to their several natures, and the four seasons were what they ought to be. The people were virtuous, and all the cereals produced abundantly. There were no fevers or other diseases, and no apparitions or other prodigies. This was what we call "the period of great order." After this arose the sages, and set forth the duties between father and son, and between ruler and subject, for the guidance of society. When these guiding rules were thus correctly adjusted, all under heaven, there was a great tranquillity; after which they framed with exactness the six accords (upper and lower), and gave harmony to the five notes (of the scale), and the singing to the lutes of the odes and praise-songs; constituting what we call "the virtuous airs." Such virtuous airs constituted

a distinction between nearer and more distant kinship in order to honor and love family members with proper rites¹¹⁵. At the same time, it points out the ultimate effect of these ceremonies is to teach people how to love one another and how people of both high and low social status cultivate good feelings between them¹¹⁶ “Fang-ji (坊記)” shows that sages recognized the different feelings of the wealthy and the poor when creating the rites so that disorder would increasingly disappear in society¹¹⁷.

what we call "Music" the sages made hand-drums and drums, the stopper and the starter, the earthen whistle and the bamboo flute - the six instruments which produced the sounds of their virtuous airs.

；為人君者謹其所好惡而已矣。君好之，則臣為之。上行之，則民從之。《詩》云：『誘民孔易』，此之謂也。」然後，聖人作為鞀、鼓、柷、敔、塤、箎，此六者德音之音也。然後鐘磬竽瑟以和之，干戚旄狄以舞之，此所以祭先王之廟也，所以獻酬醕酢也，所以官序貴賤各得其宜也，所以示後世有尊卑長幼之序也

¹¹⁵ Ibid, 223. 祭義 20: 聖人以是為未足也，筑為宮室，謂為宗祧，以別親疏遠邇，教民復古復始，不忘其所由生也。眾之服自此，故聽且速也。二端既立，報以二禮。建設朝事，燔燎膾蕭，見以蕭光，以報氣也。此教眾反始也。薦黍稷，羞肝肺首心，見間以俠觶，加以郁鬯，以報魄也。教民相愛，上下用情，禮之至也。 Ji-yi 20: The sages did not consider these (names) to be sufficient, and therefore, they built temples with their (different) apartments, and framed their rules for ancestors who were always to be honoured, and those whose tablets should be removed;--thus making a distinction for nearer and more distant kinship, and for ancestors the remote and the recent, and teaching the people to go back to their oldest fathers, and retrace their beginnings, not forgetting those to whom they owed their being.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 223. 祭義 20: 教民相愛，上下用情，禮之至也。 Ji-yi 20: This served as a tribute to the animal soul, and taught the people to love one another, and high and low to cultivate good feeling between them - such was the effect of those ceremonies.

¹¹⁷ Ibid, 249. 坊記 2: 子云：「小人貧斯約，富斯驕；約斯盜，驕斯亂。」禮者，因人之情而為之節文，以為民坊者也。故聖人之制富貴也使民富不足以驕，貧不至於約，貴不慊於上，故亂益亡。

The Master said, 'The small man, when poor, feels the pinch of his straitened circumstances; and when rich, is liable to become proud. Under the pinch of that poverty he may proceed to steal; and when proud, he may proceed to deeds of disorder. The rules of propriety recognise these feelings of men, and lay down definite regulations for them, to serve as dykes for the people. Hence the sages dealt with riches and honours, so that riches should not have power to make men proud; that poverty should not induce that feeling of being pinched; and that men in positions of honour should not be intractable to those above them. In this way the causes of disorder would more and more disappear.'

Many places in *the Book of Rites* indicate the social and cosmic positions of sages especially the six verses in “Li-yun 禮運”, “Da-zhuan 大傳” and “Zhong-yong 中庸”. Both “Li-yun 禮運” and “Da-zhuan 大傳” clearly declare that the sages social position should be that of kings governing all under Heaven. The verse of “Li-yun 禮運” emphasizes the importance of four main fields of rites and rituals that fall under the safe and genuine supervision of sages¹¹⁸ while the verse of “Da-zhuan 大傳” stresses the importance of sages’ hearing opinions of ministers in five key fields regarding the life of all under Heaven¹¹⁹. Following the words of “Zhong-yong (中庸)”, “Li-yun (禮運)” announces sages form a trinity with Heaven and Earth, and stands side by side with

¹¹⁸ Ibid, 103. 禮運 13: 故政者君之所以藏身也。是故夫政必本於天，穀以降命。命降于社之謂穀地，降于祖廟之謂仁義，降於山川之謂興作，降於五祀之謂制度。此聖人所以藏身之固也。 Li-yun 13: In this way government is the means by which the ruler keeps and protects his person, and therefore it must have a fundamental connection with Heaven. This uses a variety of ways in sending down the intimations of Its will. As learned from the altars of the land, these are (receptivity and docility) imparted to the earth. As learned from the ancestral temple, they are benevolence and righteousness. As learned from the altars of the hills and streams, they are movement and activity. As learned from the five sacrifices of the house, they are the statutes (of their various spirits). It is in this way that the sage rulers made provision for the safe keeping of their persons.

¹¹⁹ Ibid, 158. 大傳 4: 聖人南面而聽天下，所且先者五，民不與焉。一曰治親，二曰報功，三曰舉賢，四曰使能，五曰存愛。五者一得於天下，民無不足、無不贍者。五者，一物紕繆，民莫得其死。聖人南面而治天下，必自人道始矣。 Da-zhuan 4: When a sage sovereign stood with his face to the south, and all the affairs of the kingdom came before him, there were five things which for the time claimed his first care, and the people were not reckoned among them. The first was the regulating what was due to his kindred (as above) the second, the reward of merit; the third, the promotion of worth; the fourth, the employment of ability; and the fifth, the maintenance of a loving vigilance. When these five things were all fully realised, the people had all their necessities satisfied, all that they wanted supplied. If one of them were defective, the people could not complete their lives in comfort. It was necessary for a sage on the throne of government to begin with the (above) procedure of human duty.

spiritual forms in order to achieve the right ordering of the government¹²⁰. A verse of “Zhong-yong (中庸)” even praises the way of sages overflowing like water, nourishing all things and raising up to the height of Heaven¹²¹. More the same “Zhong-yong (中庸)” warns people that the way of a superior man is so easy to know and to follow that even common men and women can participate, however, it is so hard to understand and reach that even sages can not accomplish perfectly¹²².

In the end, *sheng* (聖) occurred frequently in *the Book of Rites* in various forms and parts of speech. The phrase *sheng-ren* (聖人) is the most common of all the words and phrases with the character *sheng* (聖). In most cases *sheng* (聖) appears as an attributive adjective

¹²⁰ Ibid, 103. 禮運 14: 故聖人參於天地，并於鬼神，以治政也。處其所存，禮之序也；玩其所樂，民之治也。故天生時而地生財，人其父生而師教之：四者，君以正用之，故君者立於無過之地也。

Li-yun14: Hence the sage forms a ternion with Heaven and Earth, and stands side by side with spiritual beings, in order to the right ordering of government. Taking his place on the ground of the principles inherent in them, he devised ceremonies in their order; calling them to the happy exercise of that in which they find pleasure, he secured the success of the government of the people. Heaven produces the seasons. Earth produces all the sources of wealth. Man is begotten by his father, and instructed by his teacher. The ruler correctly uses these four agencies, and therefore he stands in the place where there is no error.

¹²¹ Ibid, 262-263. 中庸: 大哉，聖人之道！洋洋乎發育萬物，峻極于天。Zhong-yong 28: How great is the path proper to the Sage! Like overflowing water, it sends forth and nourishes all things, and rises up to the height of heaven.

¹²² Ibid, 中庸 12: 君子之道費而隱。夫婦之愚，可以與知焉，及其至也，雖聖人亦有所不知焉；夫婦之不肖，可以能行焉，及其至也，雖聖人亦有所不能焉。Zhong-yong 12: The way which the superior man pursues, reaches wide and far, and yet is secret. Common men and women, however ignorant, may intermeddle with the knowledge of it; yet in its utmost reaches, there is that which even the sage does not know. Common men and women, however much below the ordinary standard of character, can carry it into practice; yet in its utmost reaches, there is that which even the sage is not able to carry into practice.

meaning to be sagacious in phrases like *sheng-ren* (聖人), *sheng-zhe* (聖者), *sheng-wang* (聖王), *sheng-di* (聖帝). Only in a few cases is it used as a noun to mean sages attributed with adjectives of time or degree such as *qian-sheng* (前聖), *hou-sheng* (後聖), *zhi-sheng* (至聖), *da-sheng* (大聖). In a few cases it stands alone to mean sagehood or sagacity. The *Book of Rites* provides very rich contexts to reveal the characteristics of sages. It defines sages from the perspectives of virtues, sincerity and wisdom or knowledge. It puts sages in a position to nourish all things under Heaven especially the people together with Heaven and earth by making, embodying and teaching the Rites and the Music for the people under Heaven. Sages have a necessary and strong correspondence with Heaven that manifests itself in the divine origin of the Rites and the Music as well as in the sacrifices through which the sages imitates Heaven and repay to Heaven. And at the same time, the sages have a close and strong relationship with the people in whose interest they work.

CHAPTER IV THE ULTIMATE, SELF AND “OTHERS”

IN PRE-QIN CONFUCIANISM

On the basis of the etymological and textual analysis of the last two chapters, this chapter will explore the nature and roles of the Ultimate, self and “others” in pre-Qin Confucianism as well as their connections. The investigation of the Ultimate, self and “others” is crucial to the study of Confucian sagehood since the making of a Confucian sage is essentially the cultivation of selfhood. In Confucianism, like in many other traditions, the defining of selfhood cannot be separated from the Ultimate and “others” although their nature, roles and relations may possess different characteristics. There have been many different and even opposite opinions about this topic. The scholarly disputes that have mainly involve the notion of transcendence, immanence, selfhood and the otherness in Confucianism. Some scholars regard Confucianism as a tradition totally different from the western Judeo-Christian tradition. They either deny the existence of transcendence and selfhood in Confucianism or only emphasize its relations with the immanent and the worldly forms of creation. In those aspects some scholars find Confucianism in common with Judeo-Christian traditions, although they may vary in the forms of manifestation. In this chapter, I would like to describe and analyze the universal characters that pre-Qin Confucianism shares with other traditions and the particular character that it possesses in terms of the Ultimate, self and “others”.

4.1 The Ultimate in the Transcendent and in the Immanent Forms

The philosophical category “ultimate” is not indigenous to the Chinese tradition except in the philosophical schools of thought influenced by western philosophy in the modern era in Chinese history. And there are conflicting ideas whether Confucianism is atheism, monotheism, polytheism or pantheism. However, if we exam the definitions of the Ultimate, we will see the pre-Qin Confucian tradition is actually not ignorant of, nor does it lack, the idea of the Ultimate Reality although such a term was not formulated.

In his article “Ultimate Realities: Judaism: God as a Many-sided Ultimate Reality in Traditional Judaism”¹²³, Anthony J. Saldarini has a very good summary of the definitions of the Ultimate. He pointed out that transcendence is its essential feature. Transcendence can be applied in many senses, such as the first or last realities in a temporal sequence, or the first or original reason in a causation sequence, or the one that the whole physical reality is grounded upon in a spatial sense. If I understand the issue correctly, the Ultimate is the first one that brings cosmic order to the world and moral order to human society; the Ultimate is the ultimate standard to judge and correct the cosmic and moral orders in the world; the Ultimate is the superlative excellence which is the ideal for the world to turn back/upward to; the Ultimate is the Way that no one can violate without being punished or destroyed in the long run. By exploring the texts about *Di* (帝) and *Tian* (天) in pre-Qin history, I believe we can see that the concepts of *Di* (帝) and *Tian* (天) experienced an

¹²³ Anthony J. Saldarini, “Ultimate Realities: Judaism: God as a Many-sided Ultimate Reality in Traditional Judaism,” *Ultimate Realities: A Volume in the Comparative Religious Ideas*, ed. Robert C. Neville (Suny Press, Albany, 2001), 38-39

evolution so as to qualify for the attribution of these characteristics. I will briefly describe the process of this evolution, but focus on its transformation from the Shang, Zhou dynasties to the periods of the Spring-Autumn and the Warring States, which I believe laid the foundation of the Chinese understanding of the Ultimate *Tian* (天) and *Di* (帝).

There are three types of questions that must be explored in relation to the Confucian Ultimate. First, What do *Tian* (天)/*Di* (帝) in pre-Qin tradition refer to? Second, is the Ultimate in pre-Qin Confucian tradition transcendent or immanent? Third, what, or who embodies the Ultimate and what are the authorities standing for the Ultimate in pre-Qin Confucian tradition?

4.1.1 The Evolutionary Process of *Di* / *Tian* as the Transcendent Ultimate

The Ultimate in Confucian tradition also has many names. *Di* (帝) and *Tian* (天) are the most common ones. As noticed by many scholars, *Di* 帝 and *Tian* 天 experienced a process of evolution that leads them to refer to the same transcendent Ultimate in Chinese tradition.

4.1.1.1 In Shang Dynasty: *Di* (帝) alone as the Transcendent Ultimate

Both *Di* (帝) and *Tian* (天) had already been found in the oracle bone inscriptions of the Shang dynasty. These earliest written texts provide convincing proof that the transcendent Ultimate in Chinese tradition started to be thought of at least as early as in the

Shang Dynasty. During these periods, only *Di* (帝) was used to refer to the Ultimate Reality while *Tian* (天) was usually used as a physical or spatial concept.

There are more than two hundred representations of *Di* (帝) in various graphic forms found in the oracle bone inscriptions and bronze inscriptions of the Shang Dynasty. Wang Hui found 16 forms in total and classified them into four types¹²⁴. Zhong Bosheng pointed out *Di* 帝 had three kinds of meanings: 1) a noun, a solution for Shang-Di (上帝, literally means the Lord Above) 2) a noun, referring to a passed king, and 3) a noun, or a verb, referring to a certain kind of sacrifice¹²⁵. The controversy about the word *Di* (帝) focuses on its original meaning. The different interpretations reflect the scholarly understandings of the traits of *Di* (帝) as the Ultimate. They reveal *Di* (帝) originally referred to the transcendent Ultimate as the source of creation and the Divine King that determine the changes of nature and the destiny of human lives. In addition, their study on the oracle bone and bronze inscriptions help us to clarify the relations between *Di* (帝) and *zu* (祖), *Di* as the title of the Divine King and human king.

Shuowen, the very traditional interpretation, explains it is a title for kingship, a logographic character that consists of two parts: the upper part 亠 and the lower part 束.

¹²⁴ See note 39, Yu Shengwu, 1080-1081.

¹²⁵ Ibid, 1083-1084.

The upper part “上” indicates its meaning, referring to the above or the up while the lower part 束 suggests its pronunciation, which shares the same vowel with *Di* (帝)¹²⁶.

帝，諦也。王天下之號也。从上，束聲。古文諸字上皆从一，篆文皆从二。二，古文上字。----《說文·上部》

Di, a burnt-offering. A title for a king. Its radical follows 上 while its vowel is the same with 束(*ci*). The ancient character 上 follows “一” while its form of seal script follows “二”. “二” is the character “upon (上)”.

It is very important that *Shuowen* reveals the role of *Di* (帝) as a king, but does not point out whether it refers to the divine King or the earthly king, a king of the past or the living king. It also uses (諦), a type of sacrifice, to interpret *Di* (帝). It suggests the title for kingship is derived from the type of sacrifice for the one who enjoys the sacrifice, which may give later scholars inspiration to associate the form and meaning of *Di* (帝) with the way of sacrifice for *Di* (帝). Since the Southern Song, especially in the modern period as

¹²⁶ See note 41, Xu Shen, 2.

more oracle bones and bronze vessels have been unearthed, an increasing number of challenges have risen against this traditional interpretation.

Since *Shuowen*, three major types of new interpretations have appeared to explain its structure and meanings. They all believe it is a pictographic rather than logographic character. They differ on the original meaning of *Di* (帝) but all agree that the primary meaning refers to *Di* (帝) as the Ultimate in the sense of being the origin of creation and the sovereign of all being created.

One interpretation is rooted in the image of *Di* (帝) as the source of creation. It believes the forms of *Di* 帝 imitate the image of the reproductive organ of flowers¹²⁷ , which symbolizes the fertility of lives. This idea can be traced back to Zheng Qiao of the Southern Song dynasty. It is inherited and developed by Wu Dacheng of Qing Dynasty and then by such the modern scholars as Wang Xiang, Wang Guowei and Guo Moruo. Wu Dacheng concludes that the triangle ∇ is the very core of various forms of *Di* 帝 ((𡗗 采, 𡗗), which symbolizes the reproductive organ of flowers and indicating the beginning of life. He uses the triangle ∇ to take the place of in *Shuowen* and gives it a naturalistic image and meaning. Some modern scholars like Wang Xiang, Wang Guowei and Guo Moruo accept Wu's interpretation and even further assume that *Di* (帝) not only derives from the

¹²⁷ Zheng Qiao, *Liushu Lue* (Taipei: Yiwen Yinshuguan, 1978), 8.

image of the reproductive organ of flowers but also from the female genital organ. This type of interpretation conforms directly with the statues of *Di* (帝) as the ultimate creator responsible for the creation and reproduction of all life found in *the Book of Rites* and in the interpretations and commentaries of *The Book of Changes* by Wang Bi (226-249) and Kong Yingda. “Jiaotesheng” of *the Book of Rites* described the ritual of Jiao Sacrifice, the most most important sacrifice dedicated to the Creator of all. In that article, *Tian* (天) and *Di* (帝) were used to refer to the same ultimate reality as the Creator¹²⁸. In the interpretations on the second line of Hexagram Yi, Wang Bi also confirmed the position of *Di* 帝 as the Lord of creation and the origin of all rising and adding in the world¹²⁹.

However, this interpretation has problems that are hard to resolve. First of all, the flower or feminine reproductive organ worship cannot explain why *Di* 帝 is usually a masculine image and why there are no rituals related with any reproductive organ worship. Second, the character for a male ancestor *zu* (祖) derives its form from the image of human male genital organs while the character for the female ancestor *bi* (妣) is derived from the

¹²⁸ “Jiaotesheng” : “All things originate from *Tian* (天); man originates from his (great) ancestor. This is the reason why the ancestor was associated with *Di* 帝(at this sacrifice).” The Chinese text is: “萬物本乎天，人本乎祖，此所以配上帝也。”

¹²⁹ Li Xueqin, *Shisanjing Zhushu: Zhouyi Zhengyi* (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju) 1999, 177-178. The Chinese text is: “帝者生物之主，興益之宗，出震而齊巽者也。” That means: *Di* (帝) is the Lord of giving birth (or life) to things and the origin for making them thrive who rises from the east called Zhen and brings balance to the south-east called Xun.

image of a feminine pregnant figures. These images reflect the reproductive organ worship and symbolize the male and the female origin of a tribe or a nation. If the character *Di* (帝) derives its form from the flower or feminine reproductive organ, it would possess the same nature and status with *zu* (祖) and *bi* (妣). However, the texts of the oracle bone explicitly show that *Di* (帝) is different from *zu* (祖) and *bi* (妣) in nature and status. As Guo Jingyun points out, no oracle bone texts indicate that *zu* 祖 and *bi* 妣 share the same bone and blood relationship with *Di* (帝)¹³⁰. Many scholars have already noticed that only in the very late oracle bone inscriptions in Shang dynasty *Di* 帝 was used to entitle a passed king¹³¹. Even though, no oracle bone inscriptions show that kings were regarded as the sons of *Di* (*Dizi* 帝子). It is not until the Zhou Dynasty that kings called themselves the Son of *Tian* (*Tianzi* 天子)¹³². There are only a few inscriptions saying that some former kings were honorable guests accompanying *Di* (帝) while some others were not¹³³. The sacrifice was offered to *Di* (帝) while the passed king accompanying *Di* {帝 was allowed

¹³⁰ Guo Jingyun, “The Belief of God of Shang Dynasty and the New Interpretation on the Graphic Form of *Di* 帝” [殷商的上帝信仰与“帝”字字形新解] *Nanfang Wenwu*, 2010 (2), 63-67.

¹³¹ See note 39, Yu Shengwu, 1085.

¹³² Song Zhenhao, *Xiashang Shehui Shenghuoshi* (Beijing: Zhongguo Shehui Kexue Chubanshe)1994, 762.

¹³³ Guo Moruo, *Jiaguwen Heji* (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1977-82), 1402.

to enjoy the sacrifice together with *Di* (帝). Therefore, it is clear that human *di* (帝) did not possess equal status with the divine King *Di* 帝.

The second type of interpretation is related with the rituals of sacrifice specifically for the Divine Sovereign who determined the changes of all natural phenomena and the destiny of human life as we can see clearly from the Shang oracle bones. The texts on the oracle bones of early Shang dynasty clearly show that *Di* 帝 originally referred to the divine King rather than the earthly king, the King who dwells in Heaven above rather than on earth. That divine King has absolute power to determine all the natural and social issues unsurpassed by any ancestors, even the later ancestors entitled with *Di* 帝. *The Book of Rites* mentioned six times a sacrifice related with burning wood *fanchai* 燔柴 or *chai* 柴

¹³⁴. Five out of six were dedicated to *Tian* 天 or *Di* 帝, which were used to refer to the same

¹³⁴ The burnt-offering sacrifice related with burning woods *fanchai* 燔柴 or *chai* 柴 appeared in “Wangzhi”, “Yueling”, “Liqi”, “Jiaotesheng”, “Dazhuan” and “Jifa” in the following context. 1. 歲二月，東巡守至于岱宗，柴而望祀山川--王制. In the second month of the year, he visited those on the East, going to the honoured mountain of Tai. There he burnt a (great) pile of wood, and announced his arrival to Heaven; and with looks directed to them, sacrificed to the hills and rivers. 2. 乃命四監收秩薪柴，以共郊廟及百祀之薪燎。 - - 月令 Orders are given to the four Inspectors to collect and arrange the faggots to supply the wood and torches for the suburban sacrifices, those in the ancestral temple, and all others. - - Yueling 3. 燔柴於奧，夫奧者，老婦之祭也，盛於盆，尊於瓶。 - - 禮器 Now that sacrifice is paid to an old wife. The materials for it might be contained in a tub, and the vase is the (common) wine-jar.’ - - Liqi

4. 天子適四方，先柴。郊之祭也，迎長日之至也，大報天而主日也。 - - 郊特生 The son of *Tian* 天, in his tours (of Inspection) to the four quarters (of the kingdom), as the first thing (on his arrival at each)

Ultimate reality. It showed that burning a pile of wood was the main feature of this sacrifice.

The second type of interpretation regards the lower part of the character *Di* 帝 not merely as a vocal component but as a graphic part imitating the form of firewood for sacrifice. Yan Yiping points out the following five forms of sacrifice belong to the same

type made by burning firewood bound in different forms: 𤇑, 𤇒, 𤇓, 𤇔, 𤇕.

𤇕 is the sacrifice made for Heaven by burning the firewood plugged with a frame. That

is to say, while the character *Di* 帝 is a specific sacrifice for the Ultimate Reality *Di* 帝 it

is also used to refer to the Ultimate Reality *Di* 帝. Wang Hui found 16 variants of *Di* 帝

from the oracle bone inscription. By analyzing their graphic forms, he concluded all

variants of *Di* 帝 can be seen as the combination of two part: a straight line 一 (it is the

simplified form of rectangle 口) and the 𤇑 or 𤇒. The upper part imitates and then

reared the pile of wood (and set fire to it). At the (Great) border sacrifice, he welcomed the arrival of the longest day. It was a great act of thanksgiving to Heaven, and the sun was the chief object considered in it'. Jiaotesheng 5. 牧之野，武王之大事也。既事而退，柴於上帝，祈於社，設奠於牧室。 - - 大傳 The field of Mu-ye was the great achievement of king Wu. When he withdrew after the victory, he reared a burning pile to God; prayed at the altar of the earth; and set forth his offerings in the house of Mu. - - Dazhuan 6. 燔柴於泰壇，祭天也。 - - 祭法 With a blazing pile of wood on the Grand altar they sacrificed to Heaven。 - - Jifa

symbolizes the sky where the divine King dwells. The lower part is the image of a firewood sacrifice offered to the Ultimate *Di* 帝.

The second type of interpretation is more convincing in various aspects. In the sense of meaning, it is coherent with *Shuowen*'s interpretation of the upper part and its reference to the the *Di* 帝 sacrifice. Both of them have clearly pointed to the status of *Di* 帝 and the relation between sacrifice and *Di* (帝). The forms of the character *Di* (帝) in the unearthed oracle bones and bronze vessels are also coherent with the written record about the forms of firewood sacrifice for *Di* (帝). The texts on the oracle bones of early Shang dynasty clearly show that *Di* (帝) originally referred to the divine King rather than the earthly king, the King who dwells in Heaven above rather than on earth. That divine King has absolute power to determine all the natural and social issues unsurpassed by any ancestors, even the later ancestors entitled with *Di* (帝). Therefore, in terms of position, *Di* (帝) dwells on the top or in the highest. In terms of status, *Di* (帝) is regarded as the Divine King of all who could order to have rain¹³⁵, cause the solar and lunar eclipse¹³⁶, bring about hardship, disaster¹³⁷, disease¹³⁸, allow the buildings cities, bless the government¹³⁹, or minds success

¹³⁵ See note 132, Guo Moruo, 900, 5658, 10976, 12852, 14129, 14132-14154, 14160, 14295.

¹³⁶ Ibid, 2173.

¹³⁷ Ibid, 10167-10175.

¹³⁸ Ibid, 14222.

¹³⁹ Ibid, 94, 6497, 6498, 7075, 7407, 14193-14207, 24978, 26090.

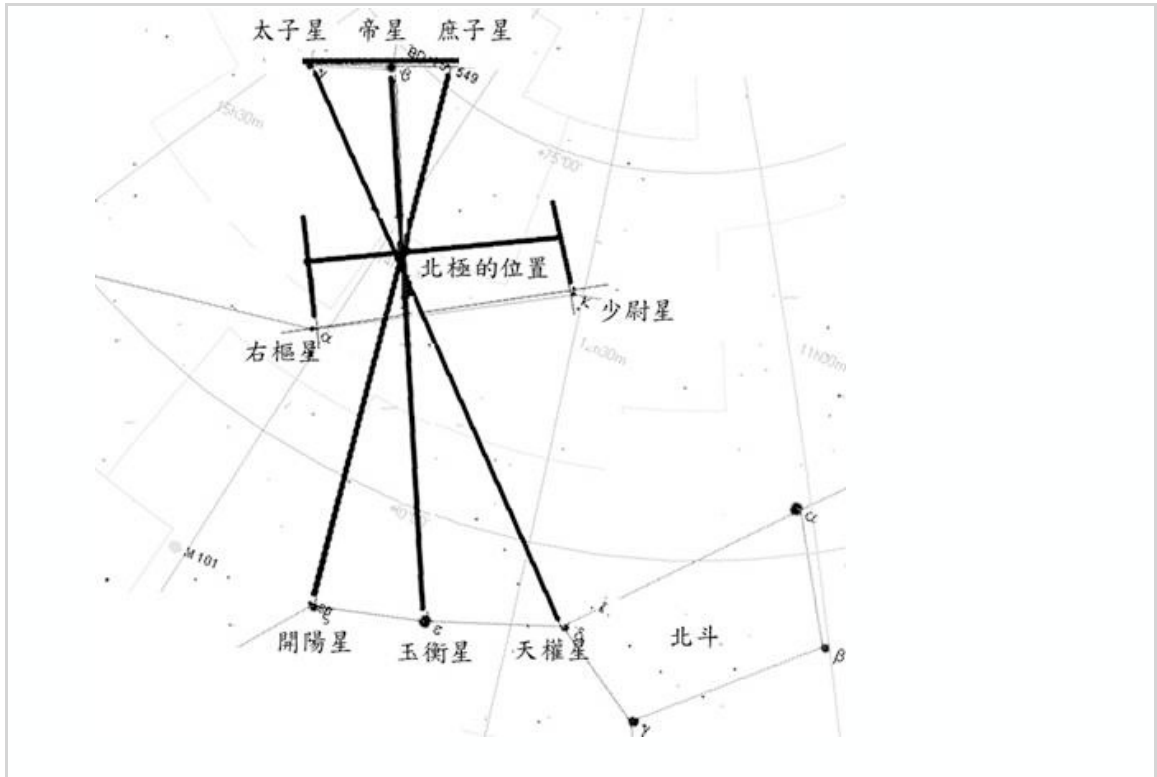
in military action¹⁴⁰. Even the spiritual beings in charge of weather also obey the order of *Di* (帝)¹⁴¹. The rituals of sacrifice for *Di* (帝) and all others including the former earthly kings were different in essence. The worthy kings only received the honor to be present with *Di* (帝) who is the only transcendent Ultimate to be worshipped.

Guo Jingyun put forward a third kind of interpretation that differs from the second kind in its understanding of the lower part of *Di* (帝). She believes the lower part is not the form of firewood for sacrifice, but the image of a group of stars standing for *Di* (帝) and His court in the sky¹⁴². Her assumption reflects the worship of celestial deities in Chinese tradition. Furthermore, she precisely locates the position of *Di* (帝) in relation to the Pole Star. Although the image of the group of stars does look like the form of *Di* (帝) on the oracle bones, there was no sufficient textual evidence to prove this interpretation.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid, 6270-6273, 6473, 6474, 6542, 6543, 6664, 6736, 6737, 7440, 14190, 14191, 14671, 21073.

¹⁴¹ Ibid, 14127, 14128, 14130, 672, 14225, 14226, 14195, 34150.

¹⁴² See note 129, Guo Jingyun, 63-67.



Placeholder for the Sixth Illustration Made by Guo Jingyun.

The interpretations above all regard *Di* (帝) as the Ultimate, although they might differ from each other in the understandings of the structure of the character. The oracle bone inscriptions in Shang dynasty illustrate that *Di* (帝) is the Ultimate that is the origin of all life and the King in Heaven who had absolute power to control all the natural phenomenon and all social changes. *Di* (帝) is the sole One who was worshiped. The status

of the ancestors or the passed kings who were even received the title of *Di* (帝) was completely different in essence.

The oracle bone and bronze inscriptions show that unlike *Di* (帝), *Tian* (天) was not used to mean the Ultimate Reality during the Shang Dynasty although it already had the meaning of being the top, big or highest. *Shuowen* interprets it as the combination of “one (一)” and “big (大)”, which means the highest, the ultimate that no one can surpass.

Many modern scholars found from the oracle bone inscriptions of *Tian* (天) did have a close relation with the character “big (大)”. In many cases, *Tian* (天) has the same meaning

with big (大). Some scholars such as Wang Xiang, Yu Shengwu, Yan Yiping and Chen

Weizhen noticed the upper part “one (一)” that differentiates it from the character

“big(大)”. Wang Xiang believes the straight line“一” was simplified from a circle which



represented the image from the sky. His assumption is based on his comparison of the

graphic transformation of the character “tian (天)” on the bronze vessels from  to

¹⁴³. Yu Shengwu explored the semantic and graphic transformation of *Tian* (天) in

the oracle bone inscriptions. He found that in the early period of the Shang Dynasty, a few

¹⁴³ See note 39, Yu Shengwu, 210.

tian (天) appeared in the oracle bone inscriptions while in the later period the characters *tian* (天) occurred more frequently. He found that in the early period *tian* (天) did not refer to the sky but a person's forehead. The semantic proof is the phrase “fu ji zhen tian (弗疾朕天)”, which can not make sense unless *tian* (天) is interpreted as a forehead. The graphic form of *tian* (天) in the phrase above is , which looks very similar to the graphic form of *tian* (天)  in a bronze inscription of the Shang dynasty. Yu Shengwu argued that the upper part in a white or black circle was another character ding 丁 which means “top” in the Shang oracle bone inscriptions. This meaning is also coherent with the image of the head of a person. Therefore, the top of a person's head is the forehead. Thus he concludes that in the later period *tian* (天) derives its meaning of the sky from the likeness in the sense of being the top or the highest¹⁴⁴. Yan Yiping noticed the simplified upper part of *Tian* 天 in the later Shang oracle bone had a form with *Di* (帝), which had the character 上 meaning “the above, the high” in the oracle bone inscriptions.

Although *tian* (天) mainly indicated a physical or spatial place rather than the Ultimate Reality in the Shang dynasty, its graphic form and semantic meaning already had

¹⁴⁴ See note 39, Yu Shengwu, 212.

similarities with *Di* (帝) in the later period of the Shang Dynasty. It is in the following Zhou dynasty that *Tian* (天) and *Di* (帝) were used as different names or titles to refer to the same Ultimate. This usage laid the common foundation for the transcendent Ultimate in Confucian tradition.

4.1.1.2 Zhou Dynasty: The Development of *Di* (帝) and *Tian* (天) as the Transcendent Ultimate

The Zhou dynasty was a period of great transformation that laid the foundation for later Chinese culture. In the Zhou dynasty the characteristics of the transcendent Ultimate in Chinese culture were formed and highlighted through the unprecedented system of the Rite and the Music made by the Duke of Zhou. The ancient written sources such as the oracle bone inscriptions and the bronze inscriptions, as well as *the Book of Changes*, *the Book of Documents* and the *Poetry* show that in the early Zhou dynasty, *Di* (帝) and *Tian* (天), began to be used to refer to the same transcendent Ultimate. Meanwhile, the subjectivity of human beings was emphasized from the perspective of virtue rather than kinship.



In the Zhou dynasty, the connotation and extension of *Tian* (天) came to be enriched. Wang Guowei (1877-1927) is the earliest modern scholar to give a systematic interpretation on *Tian* (天) and to reveal the relations of its multiple meanings. In his article

“On the Learnings of Confucius” , he points out that *Tian* (天) has two dimensions relative to its meaning. One is the physical sky above us. This *Tian* (天) is a spatial concept that has form and color. The other is the metaphysical Being without any physical form , that is the personal Divinity that dominates the world, the law of nature and the origin of the universe, and the Ultimate One from whom human beings receive their destiny¹⁴⁵. In addition, he also illustrated the relationship between *Tian* (天) and Confucius’s humanity *ren* (仁) . Therefore Wang actually pointed out five types of meanings of *Tian* (天). Later, Feng Youlan (1895-1990) gave a clear summary of the five types of *Tian* (天) which were very similar to Wang’s ideas about *Tian* (天)¹⁴⁶. In this article, Wang Guowei also pointed out Confucius’ connection with all of these meanings of *Tian* 天. He held that the first three types of meanings had already existed before Confucius while Confucius made his creative contribution regarding the last two kinds of meanings of *Tian* (天). These deal with destiny and morality, although they were also rooted in the existing ideas before Confucius¹⁴⁷.

¹⁴⁵ Wang Guowei, *Wang Guowei Ruxue Lunji* (Chengdu: Sichuan Daxue Chubanshe, 2010), 32-39

¹⁴⁶ Feng Youlan, *Zhongguo Zhexue Shi* (Taipei: Taiwan Shangwu Yinshuguan, 1996), 55.

¹⁴⁷ See note 144, Wang Guowei, 41.

In another short article “on *Tian*” Wang Guowei analyzed the various forms and meanings of *Tian* 天 found in the inscriptions on oracle bones, bronze vessels and classic texts. He believed that the three forms  found on oracle bones and bronze vessels were simply referring to different ways of character formation. The first two were created according to pictographic word-formation while the third one was based on ideogrammatic word-formation. As to the later seal character *tian* , it was made according to the principle of combined ideogrammatic word-formation. He insisted that its original meaning was the top of a person’s head, which not only matched with its graphic forms but also conformed to the interpretation in *Shuowen*¹⁴⁸ and its use in the “Hexagram *Kui*” of *Book of Changes*¹⁴⁹.

Wang Guowei’s research is quite convincing. However, it is still necessary to point out the logic of *Tian*’s graphic and semantic transformation. Although Wang did not state the issue clearly, his study explicitly indicates that the five basic meanings of *Tian* 天 are derived from its original meaning as the top of a person’s head. As far as the various forms of *tian* (天) were found in the oracle bone inscriptions, it was used to refer to the top of a person’s head *dian* (顛), big or great *da* (大). No form was found to specifically show it

¹⁴⁸ *Shuowen* interpretes *Tian* 天 as the top or the ultimate that nothing else could surpass it.

¹⁴⁹ *Tian* 天 appeared in the comments on the third line of the 38th Hexagram *Kui*. Ma Rong interpreted it as a legal punishment to shave a person’s top of head.

referred to the sky or a divine being. However, according to the study of Zheng Jixiong on Shang astronomy and the calendar, the people of Shang already had rich ideas about *Tian* 天. This was especially true about its circulatory character in the sense of time and its opposite to earth even though they might do not use the character *Tian* 天 to explain all this¹⁵⁰. Fu Sinian argued that *shang* (上) as used in the oracle bone inscriptions was an attempt to modify the Ultimate Divine *Di* 帝 or refer to *Di* 帝¹⁵¹. Therefore it makes sense to argue that from the original meaning “the top of a person’s head” other meanings of *tian* (天) were gradually developed from the late Shang dynasty. Originally it refers to the highest part of a person, then the highest space above a person. Later in the Zhou dynasty *Tian* (天) began to refer to the One who dwells in the highest space above a person. Thus in the Zhou dynasty *Tian* (天) completed the process of graphic and semantic transformation and eventually became another name for “*Di* 帝”.

In the Zhou dynasty, *Tian* (天) achieved the transcendental trait of *Di* (帝) and even developed further than *Di* (帝) during Shang dynasty. First, *Tian* 天 as the Ultimate

¹⁵⁰ Zheng Jixiong, “Shi *Tian*” [on “*Tian* ”天], *zhongguo Wenzhe Yanjiu Jikan*, 63-93.

¹⁵¹ Fu Sinian, *Fu Sinian Quanjì*, Vol.III (Taibei: Taiwan University,1952), 90.

Divine *was* more frequently used than *Di* (帝) as evidenced in the classical texts and the bronze inscriptions of Zhou dynasty. According to H. G. Creel, *Tian* 天 in the sense of the Ultimate Divine was used 104 times while *Di* 帝 is found 43 times in the *Book of Poetry*. In the 12 “Zhou Announcements” of *the Book of Documents*, *Tian* 天 was used 116 times while *Di* 帝, 55 times. In the *Book of Changes* *Tian* 天 appeared 8 times while *Di* 帝 is found 5 times. In the bronze inscriptions *Tian* 天 is repeated 17 times while *Di* 帝 makes an appearance 4 times¹⁵².

Second, besides inheriting the characteristics of *Di* (帝) as the Creator of all and the King above who determine the natural phenomena and social affairs, *Tian* 天 / *Di* (帝) became more universal and decisive in the transition of royal power during the period of Zhou dynasty. *Tian* (天) / *Di* (帝) selected the king on earth without being limited to the royal family as was the case in the Shang dynasty as we read in the texts about that dynasty. *Tian* (天) / *Di* (帝) could bestow the divine mandate on a person, take it back to and grant it to another person according to the changes of their virtue as well as the will of the people.

¹⁵² Fu Peirong, *Rudao Tianlun Fawei* 「儒道天論發微」 (Taipei: Lianjing Chuban Shiye Gongsi, 2010), 19.

Thus the authority to determine the kingship shifted from above to the below, from the outer transcendent power to the people and eventually to a person's inner virtue.

The twelve "Zhou Announcements" repeatedly illustrated these points with historical figures or events. "Taishi" claimed *Tian* (天) knew the world via the people and responded to the world by following the will of the people.

天矜于民，民之所欲，天必從之。爾尚弼予一人，永清四海，時哉弗可失！--泰誓上

Tian (天) compassionates the people. What the people desire, *Tian* 天 will be found to give effect to. Do you aid me, the One man, to cleanse for ever (all within) the four seas. Now is the time! It should not be lost.' ——Taishi I

雖有周親，不如仁人。天視自我民視，天聽自我民聽。百姓有過，在予一人，今朕必往。---泰誓中

Though he has his nearest relatives with him, they are not like my virtuous men. Heaven sees as my people see; Heaven hears as my people hear. ---Taishi II

Then it further pointed out that the mandate of *Tian* 天 only lied in the virtue of a person while the will of the people only existed in the benefits they cherished.

“皇天無親，惟德是輔。民心無常，惟惠之懷。--周書

Great *Tian* 天 has no partial affections; it helps only the virtuous. The people's hearts have no unchanging attachment; they cherish only the kind. Acts of goodness are different, but they contribute in common to good order. ---Zhoushu

Therefore, the final power to determine the crown shifted from the Ultimate to the people since the Ultimate watched from the perspective of the people and followed the will of the people. It is reasonable for Fu Sinian to identify this period as “the dawn of humanism”¹⁵³.

4.1.1.3. Confucius and his followers: to Inherit *Di* (帝)/*Tian* (天) as the Transcendent Ultimate

論語 20:1: 尧曰：“咨！尔舜！天之历数在尔躬。允执其中。四海困穷，天禄永终。”舜亦以命禹。曰：“予小子履，敢用玄牡，敢昭告于皇皇后帝：有罪不敢赦。帝臣不蔽，简在帝心。朕躬有罪，无以万方；万方有罪，罪在朕躬。”周有大赉，善人是富。“虽有周亲，不如仁人。百姓有过，在予一人。”¹⁵⁴

¹⁵³ See note 150, Fu Sinian, 1953 : Vol.III , 91—92.

¹⁵⁴ Confucius, *The Analects*, 20:1.

The Analects 20:1: Yao said, "Oh! you, Shun, the order of succession determined by *Tian* (天) now rests in your person. Sincerely hold fast the due Mean. If there shall be distress and want within the four seas, the Heavenly revenue will come to a perpetual end." Shun also used the same language in giving charge to You. Tang said, "I, the child Lu, presume to use a dark-colored ox, and presume to announce to Thee, O most great and sovereign *Di* (帝), that the sins I dare not pardon, and thy ministers, O *Di* (帝), I do not keep in obscurity. The examination of them is by thy mind, O *Di* (帝). If, in my person, I commit offenses, they are not to be attributed to you, the people of the myriad regions. If you in the myriad regions commit offenses, these offenses must rest on my person." Zhou conferred great gifts, and the good were enriched. "Although he has his near relatives, they are not equal to my virtuous men. If the people transgress, all the transgression rest upon me, the One man."¹⁵⁵

Many scholars have argued that Confucius just believed in *Tian* (天) as a natural and physical reality rather than as the personal and transcendental Ultimate Divine. These scholars have emphasized the natural tendency of Confucius' comments on *Tian* 天 and have emphasized his appeal or praying to *Tian* 天 simply as being exclamations under

¹⁵⁵ James Legge, 350-351.

urgent or dangerous circumstances. Accordingly, they took his serious thoughts about the divine mandate to be simply human moral choices without any divine transcendental basis. However, if we carefully read *the Analects*, the *Ten Wings* and the *Commentary of the Rites*, we find that Confucius and his followers not only inherited the ideas of *Tian* (天)/*Di* (帝) as the transcendent Ultimate, but also made their special contribution to *Tian* (天)/*Di* (帝) as the Ultimate Reality regarding the moral order on earth.

Confucius cited the words above to express his spiritual connection with the tradition handed down from the ancient sages. The first section was taken from “Consults of Great Yu”, the second from the “Speech of Tang” and the third from “Great Declaration” by King Wu. These words revealed the most valuable ideas at the critical moments of royal power or Heaven-determined order succession. It is hard to determine if these statements were the exact words of the sages of Yao, Shun, Tang and Wu, but we can at least see that Confucius held key points to have come down to him from the past. These words reveal two interrelated lines of making a sage-king: the mandate from the *Tian* (天) / *Di* (帝) and the responsibility of the One Man. On the one hand, it constantly asserts the absolute authority of the transcendent Ultimate as a just and universal divine named *Tian* (天) or *Di* (帝). On the other hand, it emphasized the subjectivity of the human in the ultimate form of the One Man running through the ancient sage-king Yao to king Wu, the founder of the Zhou dynasty.

Confucius developed the ideas about the divine mandate in the Zhou dynasty and made his creative contribution to the transcendent Ultimate Divine by emphasizing His rational moral dimension. Confucius differed radically from the past in his cheerful faith in *Tian* (天) / *Di* (帝) on the basis of his rational wisdom. Unlike the past sage-kings, he did not rely on the divination to inquire into the intention of *Tian* (天) / *Di* (帝). Unlike the popular practice of the past, he did not even rely on prayers to various spirits to change the condition of his life. Like the great sage-king Wen, he studied the *Book of Changes* to know the Way of *Tian* (天) / *Di* (帝) and hence the reason for the physical, social and personal changes on earth. Like the legendary sage-king Fuxi who initiated the basic ideas of the *Book of Changes*, he directly observed the working of *Tian* (天) in nature and thus understood the universal laws of *Tian* 天. His cheerful faith in *Tian* (天) / *Di* (帝) went beyond his personal and even social ups and downs in a limited time and space. He adhered firmly to humanity and thus corresponded to the Way of *Tian* (天) / *Di* (帝) under any circumstances, even at the cost of worldly wealth, fame and life.

Thus, Confucius and his followers not only inherited the ideas about the transcendent Ultimate Divine but also had faith in the moral dimension of that Ultimate Divine as on the basis of human wisdom and humanity.

4.1.2 The Immanent Ultimate Embodied in Nature (*Xing* 性)¹⁵⁶

Modern and contemporary scholars often argue vehemently regarding the issue of the transcendent in Confucianism, and many of these scholars insist on the immanence of Confucianism. Confronted with the western Judaic-Christian idea of transcendence, New Confucians like Xu Fuguan, Mou Zongsan, Tang Junyi, Tu Wei-ming and Liu Shuxian emphasized the “inner” or “immanent” transcendence found in Confucianism. For them, Judaic-Christian transcendence is a kind of external one while the Confucian transcendence is a kind of inner or immanent one. The diction of inner or immanent transcendence might be confusing and misleading. It seems to deny the immanence of Judaic-Christian tradition. However, it simply suggests the essential difference between the Confucian Ultimate and the Judaic-Christian Ultimate. The major difference among these interpretation lies in their opinions as to the relation between human nature and the Ultimate. For the Judaic-Christian tradition, the Ultimate both transcends the world and is immanent within the world. However, the Ultimate in Judaic-Christian tradition remains absolutely different from human beings. For the Confucian tradition, as in the Judaic-Christian tradition, the Ultimate transcends the world and also is immanent in it. But the mandate of the Ultimate in Confucianism descends into the world and becomes the Nature *Xing* (性) of earthly lives, which makes the essential distinction between Confucianism and

¹⁵⁶ In this part the Chinese character *xing* (性) will be used frequently. It is usually translated into nature in English. I will employ “Nature”, the capitalized form, to specifically refer to the *Xing* 性 as being the Mandate of *Tian* 天. It is used in the lowercase in all other cases such as simply referring to the character *xing* (性) or the physical desires of human beings or the natural world.

Judaic-Christian traditions. Therefore, I'd rather call this specific feature of Confucianism the immanent Ultimate embodied in Nature (*Xing* 性). In order to emphasize its divine origin and its function, I capitalize its initial letter when it means this particular sense in this dissertation.

4.1.2.1 The Divine Origin of Nature (*Xing* 性)

It is very hard to find an equivalent English word for *Xing* (性) in Chinese. It is usually translated as “nature” possibly because they both mean the inherent features, character, or qualities of something. However, if we examine the Chinese character “*xing* (性)” and the English word “nature” carefully, we'll see the specific character of the Chinese concept *Xing* (性).

The Oxford English Dictionary defines “nature” as having two basic meanings.

- 1) The phenomena of the physical world collectively, including plants, animals, the landscape, and other features and products of the earth, as opposed to humans or human creations.
- 2) The basic or inherent features, character, or qualities of something.

“*Xing* (性)” in Chinese culture does not have the first meaning of “nature” in English. This sense is usually expressed traditionally through other Chinese words such as “*tiandi-wanwu* (天地萬物)” or “*tiandi-zaohua* (天地造化)”. Later on in the 19th century

it was translated into *ziran* (自然) from English by Japanese scholars with Chinese characters and then accepted by the Chinese¹⁵⁷. Even though the relations between humans and *tiandi-wanwu* (天地萬物) is different from humans and nature in Confucianism, we can not simply say *tiandi-wanwu* (天地萬物) and humans are opposed to each other in Confucianism since their *Xing* (性) within all descends from the same divine root: *Tian* 天. Therefore, although the common translation of *xing* (性) is “nature” in English, we should bear in mind that “Nature *Xing* (性)” in Confucianism refers to a person’s or thing’s inherent features, character or qualities that originate in *Tian* (天).

4.1.2.2 Nature (*Xing* 性) and *Tian* (天)

Some new Confucians like Xu Fuguan and Mu Zongsan have noticed the connection between Nature *Xing* (性) and the Mandate *Ming* (命) of *Tian* (天). They inherited the Neo-Confucians’ ideas in Song and Ming dynasties and consciously traced them back to the pre-Qin period. They held that Confucius contributed to the divinity of Nature (*Xing* 性) by defining Nature (*Xing* 性) via the Mandate (*Ming* 命) of *Tian* (天).

¹⁵⁷ Chen Weifen, Nature Running its Course, A Study of the Concept of Japanese *Shizen* [日本「自然」概念考辯], *Zhongguo Wenzhe Yanjiu Jikan*, Vol.36, 2010, 117-126.

Nature (*Xing* 性) as a Chinese character was possibly invented in the late Zhou Dynasty. It has not been found in the oracle bone inscriptions. According to the research of Fu Sinian, it was also not found on any of the bronze inscriptions of the Zhou dynasty. The character closest to Nature (*Xing* 性) is “*sheng* (生)” from which Nature (*Xing* 性) might have derived its sound and even meaning. According to Xu Hao, *sheng* (生) and *xing* (性) are often substituted for each other in the *Book of Documents* and *Zhuan*. Fu Sinian listed all the sentences containing the character *sheng* (生) found in the Zhou bronze inscriptions and summarized six types of usage. Among these six types of usage three kinds were identical with the notion of *sheng* (生) in later generations. Two other kinds were expressed by another character “*xing* (姓)” that means family name. The last type appeared in such phrases as “*mi-jue-sheng* (弥厥生)” or “*ming-mi-sheng* (命弥生)”¹⁵⁸. Usually the two characters *mi* (弥) and *sheng* (生) occurred together and were used as a blessing. This type of the character *sheng* (生) is almost identical to the expressions with the character *xing* (性) found in the *Book of Poetry*.

¹⁵⁸ See note 150, Fu Sinian, 514.

叔俛孙父毀 (嘯 下·五五)	永令弥厥生。
六 媯 毀 (代 六·五三)	永令弥厥生。
黹 罇 (代 一·六七)	用求丂命弥生。

Here is the summary of Fu Sinian's research on the usage of character *sheng* (生)

found in Zhou bronze inscriptions.

identical with its later form and meaning	Same with family name <i>xing</i> 姓	Same with <i>xing</i> 性 found in the Book of Poetry
Part of the first name (to describe the situation when that person was born)	<i>Zi-sheng</i> 子生 (one's family name, same with the later character <i>xing</i> 姓)	<i>mi-jue-sheng</i> 彌厥生 <i>ming-mi-sheng</i> 命彌生
<i>Sheng-ba</i> 生霸 (the growing brightness of moon light)	<i>Bai-sheng</i> 百生 (hundreds of family names, that means the people, same with the later <i>xing</i> 姓)	
<i>Sheng-bi</i> 生妣 (one's mother that gave birth to him/her)		

Table 6. My Sixth Table : *Sheng* (生) in Zhou Bronze Inscriptions.

In the earlier Confucian works of pre-Qin period the character “nature (*xing* 性)” occurred very rarely. In the *Book of Changes*, “nature (*Xing* 性)” was not found although it occurred 6 times in the Confucian commentary known as the *Ten Wings*. In the *Book of Poetry* it appeared 3 times. In the *Book of Documents* nature (*xing* 性) occurred only 5 times.

In the *Book of Poetry*, *Xing* (性) occurred three times in the identical phrase “*mi-er-xing* 彌爾性” in the same poem “*Juan-er* 卷耳”.

豈弟君子，俾爾彌爾性，似先公酋矣。

豈弟君子，俾爾彌爾性，百神爾主矣。

豈弟君子，俾爾彌爾性，純嘏爾常矣

“*Mi-er-xing* (彌爾性)” is also used as a blessing in that poem. Its usage is nearly identical with the phrases “*mi-er-sheng* (彌爾生)” found in the Zhou bronze inscriptions except for the different forms of the two characters “*sheng* (生)” and “*xing* (性)”. Traditionally it is believed that the character “*xing* (性)” is derived from “*sheng* (生)”,

however, exactly how to understand this *xing* (性) or *sheng* (生) is controversial. “*Jue* (厥)” means “that” or “his” while “*er* (爾)” means “your”. *Mi* (彌) may refer to “end, go throughout” or “long, make it long” according to *Zheng Jian* or “satisfy, fulfill” according to *Shuowen*.

The traditional view interpreted “*mi* (彌)” as “end” and thus “彌爾性” means “(live) till the end of your life” or “(live) throughout your life”¹⁵⁹. Fu Sinian found that the usage of “*mi-er-xing* (彌爾性)” in the *Book of Poetry* was nearly identical with “*mi-ju-sheng* (彌厥生)” in the Zhou bronze inscriptions. He concluded that later generations might, therefore, make the mistake of writing *mi-er-sheng* (彌爾生) as *mi-er-xing* (彌爾性). Like *mi-ju-sheng* (彌厥生), *mi-er-xing* (彌爾性) should parallel blessings to wish the king had a long life¹⁶⁰. These two types of interpretation regarded *xing* (性) were derived from *sheng* (生) and still had the original meaning of *sheng* (生) as a person’s life. Xu Fuguan adopted *Shuowen*’s explanation of *mi* (彌) and believed *mi-er-xing* (彌爾性)

¹⁵⁹ Mao Heng, Zheng Xian and Kong Yingda, *Maoshi Zhengyi*, edited by Li Xueqin (Taipei: Taiwan Guji, 2001), 1325.

¹⁶⁰ See note 150, Fu Sinian, 514, 538.

means “to satisfy your desire”. He regarded *xing* (性) as a new word. Although it was derived from *sheng* (生) it was completely different from *sheng* (生)¹⁶¹.

I find Fu’s opinion on the basis of Zhou bronze inscriptions the more convincing. However, he simply regarded *xing* (性) or *sheng* (生) as a person’s natural life and failed to see their connection with the Ultimate, *Tian* 天. *Mi-ju-sheng* (彌厥生) in the bronze inscriptions and *mi-er-xing* (彌爾性) in *the Book of Poetry* are both used as a blessing that would not make sense without the belief of the Ultimate, *Tian* 天. In that context of blessing, *sheng* (生) or *xing* (性) rather reflects the idea that the existence and fulfillment of human life relies upon the Ultimate, *Tian* (天). This sense of *sheng* (生) or *xing* (性) is consistent with the religious belief of the Ultimate in the name of *Di* (帝) in the Shang dynasty and the religious belief of the Ultimate in the name of *Tian* (天) and *Di* (帝) in Zhou dynasty. In the Shang Dynasty, as we have seen in the previous chapters, *Di* (帝) was in absolute control of the good or bad destiny on earth. In the Zhou dynasty, except for those bronze inscriptions praying for the blessing of long life, we can also see that

¹⁶¹ Xu Fuguan, *Zhongguo Renxing Lunshi* (Shanghai: Shanghai Sanlian Shudian, 2001), 50.

relation between human life and the Ultimate *Tian or Di* (帝) from the lines in the *Book of the Poetry* below.

天生烝民、其命匪諶

靡不有初、鮮克有終

- - 蕩

Heaven gave birth to the multitudes of the people,
But the mandate it confers is not to be depended on.
All are [good] at first,
But few prove themselves to be so at the last.

- - Dang

天生烝民、有物有則。

民之秉彝、好是懿德。

- - 烝民

Heaven, in giving birth to the multitudes of the people,
To every faculty and relationship annexed its law.
The people possess this norm,

And they [consequently] love its constant virtue.

- - Zhengmin

These lines show clearly that in the Zhou Dynasty people had held that the Ultimate *Tian* (天) gave birth or life to the earth's population. Compared with the Shang dynasty, it established the direct sacred relationship between the Ultimate and human life. It is in this sense that *sheng* (生) or *xing* (性) is distinct from other types of usage of *sheng* (生) found in the Zhou bronze inscriptions. It is exactly in this sense that *xing* (性) was identical in use or could possibly be seen to have been derived from *sheng* (生). Later on *xing* (性) began to specifically refer to this divine essence received from the Ultimate *Tian* (天) that was intrinsic in human life. Therefore it is not an accidental mistake to write *sheng* (生) in the form of *xing* (性) in *mi-er-xing* (彌爾性). On the contrary, it reveals a dominant perspective on the relation between human life and the Ultimate since the time of the Zhou dynasty.

In the *Book of Change* completed before Confucius “*xing* (性)” is found nowhere although three characters of *xing* (性) occurred in the commentary work *the Ten Wings*

composed after Confucius. *Xing* (性) occurred 5 times in *the Book of Documents*. However, after Fu Sinian examined all the documents in it, he suggested that only the twelve-chapter “Zhougao” were reliable historical documentations written in the early Zhou dynasty. In these twelve chapters of the “Zhougao”, only one character of *xing* (性) appeared in the sentence.

節性惟日其邁。王敬作所，不可不敬德--周書 - 召告

This will regulate their (perverse) natures, and they will make daily advancement. Let the king make reverence the resting-place (of his mind); he must maintain the virtue of reverence. ---from “Zhaogao” in *The Book of Zhou*.

And as with his interpretation about the character “*xing* (性)” in the *Book of the Poetry*, Fu Sinian held that this “*xing* (性)” was also actually *sheng* (生), that simply means natural human life. He cited the descriptions about *jie-xing* (節性) from *Spring and Autumn of Master Lü* the *Lüshi Chunqiu* (呂氏春秋) and tried to prove what it was that regulated all of the physical life. I agree that the character “*xing* (性)” in this context can be interpreted with the character “*sheng* (生)”. But, as in the *Book of Poetry*, *xing* (性) in

“Zhaogao” already possessed a meaning related with *Tian* 天. It is derived from *sheng* (生), however, suggests more than the natural state of human life.

If we read this sentence in the context, we will see it focuses on the responsibility of the king to harmonize the officials of the previous dynasty and the new dynasty by emphasizing the relation between the king and the Ultimate in the name of *Shang-Di* (上帝) or *Huang-Tian* (皇天). In this circumstance, the king was advised to follow several suggestions including *jie-xing* (節性). Therefore, it makes sense for Zheng Xian to interpret *jie-xing* (節性) from the perspective of not deviating from the center *zhong* (中)¹⁶². And it does not matter whether *xing* (性) is related with physical desires as seen in *Lüshi chunqiu* or with emotional states as seen in *Zhongyong* (中庸). That is to say, in both cases, it assumes there is a center *zhong* (中), a state that self can reach via conscious self-control or self-cultivation. The choice of the wording suggests that *xing* (性) or *sheng* (生) is endowed by the Ultimate, which is critical to fulfill one’s life and the mandate from the Ultimate. Although a person can not determine his or her origin, he or she can regulate or cultivate the self in order to allow it to reach their Confucian center or grow normally. Xu

¹⁶² Kong Anguo & Kong Yingda, *Shangshu Zhengyi* Vol.2 (Taipei: Taiwan Guji Chuban Youxian Gongsi, 2007), 470.

Fuguan makes a good distinction between *sheng* (生) and *xing* (性) : *Sheng* (生) refers to a concrete life while *xing* (性) refers to the natural endowments of the concrete life¹⁶³.

As we see the character *xing* (性) occurred rarely in the sources produced before Confucius, nevertheless, a few of the cases that have already been examined showed the sacred relation between life and the Ultimate. This relation was not clearly revealed until Confucius and his followers interpreted it via the mandate *ming* 命. In the *Analects*, *xing* (性) only appeared twice and did not have any clear explanation. In the *Ten Wings* and the *Book of Rites* , *xing* (性) occurred 6 times and 26 times respectively. *Ming* 命 was found 7 times in the *Book of Changes*, 87 times in the *Book of Poetry* and 120 times in the 12 books of “Zhougao” in *the Book of Documents*. As to the Confucian works since Confucius, *Ming* 命 appeared 24 times in the *Analects*, 26 times in the *Ten Wings* and 317 times in *the Book of Rites*. The *Ten Wings* and the *Book of Rites* made creative contributions to the understanding of *xing* (性). Their theoretical ideas made clear what was simply stated in the tradition and laid the foundation for the development of later Confucianism, especially the Neo-Confucianism of the Song and Ming dynasties.

¹⁶³ See note 161, Xu Fuguan, 8.

Early Confucian Classics	Nature <i>Xing</i> 性	Mandate <i>Ming</i> 命	The Mandate of <i>Tian</i> 天命(The two character “天命” + the one character “命” which means “天命” + meaning of 天命)	性命
<i>The Book of Poetry</i>	3 (like <i>sheng</i> 生)	87	9+?	0
<i>The Book of Documents</i>	5	270	26+?	0
<i>Zhougao in The Book of Documents</i>	1 (like <i>sheng</i> 生)	120		
<i>The Book of Changes</i>	0	7	0 +<3>	0
The Analects	2	24	3+< 4 > + 3	0
<i>The Ten Wings</i>	6	26	2+<16>	3
The Book of Rites	26	317	2+?	1

Table 7. My Seventh Table: Xing (性) and Ming (命) in the Classic Works and

The Confucians during the periods of the Spring and Autumn and the Warring States mainly answered the question how the idea *Xing* (性) came into being, or how the Ultimate gave birth or life to human beings via the Mandate. Hence the focus of human life shifted from relying upon the outside transcendent Ultimate to fostering or cultivating the *Xing* (性) that the Ultimate endowed the Mandate to human beings.

The concept of *Xing* (性) was fluid during the periods of the Spring and Autumn and the Warring States. In its graphic form and meaning, it was often substitutable with *sheng* (生). Yet it has formed its distinct feature in a way different from the usual meanings of *sheng* (生). It needs to be seen from the perspective of the relation between the Ultimate and human rather than the natural physical state or act of life. Xu Fuguan noticed that *xing* (性) already possessed two main kinds of meanings as early as the period of the Spring and Autumn. One meaning refers to physical desires while the other refers to the essence or nature of all human beings¹⁶⁴. I agree with Xu Fuguan that *xing* (性) already had different meanings during these periods. However, I believe that the word “impulse” is a better choice to express the first type of *xing* (性) that is more closely related with the physical desires of a natural life. Desires are just the phenomenon of the impulse endowed by the Ultimate into the human body. When it is used in this sense, I would like to use the lowercase of “nature (*xing* 性)” to mark its difference from the second type. The second type of “*xing* 性” refers to the mandate or code of the Ultimate given to each individual. The transcendent Mandate of the Ultimate now became immanent in human being in the form of Nature *Xing* (性). I would like to mark it in the capitalized form indicating its

¹⁶⁴ Ibid, 50, 51.

relationship with the Ultimate. It possesses a moral and rational power in contrast to the physical and impulsive characteristics of the first type. It not only originates from the Ultimate but also becomes the inner source of human beings. It constitutes the essence or nature of human being and eventually determines a person's selfhood. At the same time, both ideas are both called "*xing* (性)" in Chinese, as both are received from the Ultimate and both were neutral and without moral judgment in the beginning, that is, before the arguments rose in the the period of the Warring States such as Mengzi and Xunzi. I would argue that this is the common basis of Confucianism regarding the concept of *xing* (性).

These ideas were expressed typically in the *Ten Wings* and "Zhongyong" in the *Book of Rites* as well as sporadically seen in the historical books.

In the *Analects*, the character "*xing* (性)" hasn't been clearly differentiated into separate categories related, on the one hand, with physical impulse, and on the other hand with the source of morality. It only appeared twice but gives us important indications. The first appearance is in Zigong' commentary on his master Confucius' teaching.

子貢曰：「夫子之文章，可得而聞也；夫子之言性與天道，不可得而聞也。」--公

冶長

Zi Gong said, "The Master's personal display of his principles and ordinary descriptions of them can be obtained and heard. His discourses about *xing* 性 and the Way of *Tian* 天, cannot be obtained and heard." - - Gongye Chang

Zigong's commentary is involved with Confucius' teaching about two important, related, concepts: *Xing* (性) and the Way of *Tian* (天). The Way of *Tian* is an expression of the Ultimate. This commentary may have the following applications: 1. During the period of the Spring and Autumn, it had already been popular to talk about *xing* (性) and the Way of *Tian* (天). 2. During that period, *xing* (性) and the Way of *Tian* (天) became closely related and needed to be interpreted 3. Confucius also had his own opinions about *xing* (性) and the Way of *Tian* (天). 4. Confucius did not speak about *xing* (性) and the Way of *Tian* (天) frequently and publicly. He may have only talked about it in a very small group with his most talented students, like the rabbis' attitude toward the teaching of Jewish mysticism. 5. For common students and other people, it is impossible to receive from Confucius the teaching about *xing* (性) and the Way of *Tian* (天) 6. Confucius ideas about *xing* (性) and the Way of *Tian* 天 may be new and very creative. Therefore, Confucius was very careful in speaking of them. No matter what interpretation is true, it shows "xing (性)" was already a higher category than "wen-zhang (文章)", a category that is closely related

with the Way of *Tian*. Therefore, it is reasonable to classify it into the second type, that is immanent Ultimate in human being.

The second one is Confucius' own opinion about two other related concepts, "nature *xing* 性" and "practice *xi* 習".

子曰：「性相近也，習相遠也。」--阳货

The Master said, "By *xing* (性), people are nearly alike; by practice, they get to be wide apart." - - Yang Huo

Confucius' comments on "nature *xing* (性)" and "practice *xi* (習)" may imply the following meanings: 1. The nature *xing* (性) of each individual is not the same or utterly different or opposite. They are similar. 2. A person's degree of practice according to his *xing* (性) eventually determines what kind of person he/she becomes and what kind of life he/she will have. 3. The determinate element of a person's life thus shifts from the transcendent Ultimate to the immanent Ultimate *xing* (性) and eventually to each individual's will and effort to bring out this Ultimate in reality.

Confucius' first comment on "*xing* (性)" connects *xing* (性) with the Way of *Tian* (天) while the second one connects it with the practice *xi* (習), the habitual conduct of

human beings. The first one is about its relation with the Ultimate while the second one is about its relation with an individual's practice in reality. At a minimum the two sentences about *xing* (性) in the *Analects* bring the three key elements together: The transcendent Ultimate *Tian* 天, the immanent Ultimate *Xing* (性) and the individual practice that brings it into reality.

The character “nature (*Xing* 性)” occurs 6 times in the *Ten Wings*. Its origin, essence and role shown in the “Tuanzhuan of Qian” and the “Great Treatise” reveal its unusual relationship with the transcendent Ultimate and its decisive function in the formation of selfhood and the transformation of the world.

乾道變化，各正性命，保合大和，乃利貞。

The Way of *Qian* (乾) is to change and transform, so that everything obtains its correct Nature as mandated by *Tian* 天; and (thereafter the conditions of) great harmony are preserved in union. The result is 'what is advantageous, and correct and firm.

The “*Qian*” in the *Book of Changes* talks about the Way of *Tian* (天) and the creation of the world. It points out that everything obtains its correct Nature from the Mandate of *Tian* 天 during the changing and transforming process of the Way of *Qian*

(乾) . If one could achieve great harmony in the expression of these values he/she would acquire an advantage while acting in the world.

The “Great Treatise” reveals how the transcendent Ultimate was transformed into Nature (*Xing* 性) and became immanent in human being and all things.

一陰一陽之謂道，繼之者善也，成之者性也。仁者見之謂之仁，知者見之謂之知。

The successive movement of the inactive *Yin* (陰) and active *Yang* (陽) operations constitutes what is called the Way. That which ensues as the result (of their movement) is goodness; that which shows it in its completeness is the Nature *Xing* (性). The men of humanity see it and call it humanity. The men of wisdom see it and call it wisdom.

It points out that the Way of *Tian* (天) operates with the successive movement of *Yin* (陰) and *Yang* (陽). Nature (*Xing* 性) is the one that fulfills the Way of *Tian* (天) in its completeness. Here, the seemingly mystical and arbitrary Mandate of *Tian* 天 is manifest in the natural and regular movement of the Way of *Tian* (天). Moreover , it also points out how the development of Nature *Xing* (性) influences people’s understanding of the Way of *Tian* (天). It holds that those who have developed their Nature (*Xing* 性) in

humanity will see the Way of *Tian* (天) and believe it is manifest in humanity while those who developed their Nature (*Xing* 性) in the field of wisdom will see it and think of it as wisdom.

“Zhongyong” theoretically and systematically expounded the relationship between the three key elements. The very beginning of this text, states clearly how the relation between *Xing* (性) and the Ultimate, came into being, and how its expression matters to the self and the universe.

天命之謂性，率性之謂道，修道之謂教。道也者，不可須臾離也，可離非道也。是故君子戒慎乎其所不睹，恐懼乎其所不聞。莫見乎隱，莫顯乎微。故君子慎其獨也。喜怒哀樂之未發，謂之中；發而皆中節，謂之和；中也者，天下之大本也；和也者，天下之達道也。致中和，天地位焉，萬物育焉。

——中庸

The Mandate of *Tian* 天 (conferred to each life) is called the Nature (*Xing* 性); an accordance with the Nature is called the Way; the regulation of the Way is called the Teaching. The Way may not be left for an instant. If it could be left, it would not be the Way. On this account, the superior man does not wait till he sees things, to be cautious, nor till he hears things, to be apprehensive. There is nothing more visible than what is secret,

and nothing more manifest than what is minute. Therefore, the superior man is watchful over himself, when he is alone. While there are no stirrings of pleasure, anger, sorrow, or joy, the mind may be said to be in the center *zhong* (中). When those feelings have been stirred, and they act in their due degree, there ensues what may be called the state of Harmony (和). This center *zhong* (中) is the great root from which grow all the human actions in the world, and this Harmony is the universal Way which they all should pursue. Let the Center *zhong* (中) and the harmony *He* (和) exist in perfection, and a happy order will prevail throughout heaven and earth, and all things will be nourished and flourish.

——“Zhongyong”

Here it is pointed out that the Mandate of *Tian* conferred on each life what is called Nature (*Xing* 性). Thus, each individual has the immanent Ultimate within themselves since birth. The mysterious and remote Mandate of *Tian* is now brought together with them and constitutes their own individual life. It is not necessary to rely on any external way such as divination in order to search for the Way of *Tian* so that they can live according to it. What a person can do is simply do what is in accordance with Nature (*Xing* 性). However, it also makes the point that it is not always a natural and correct process to live in accordance with Nature (*Xing* 性). Nature (*Xing* 性) is immanent within human body, but manifested in all aspects of human life. Since its expressions may be impulsive and out

of control, one must be very cautious about all things even including those he/she does not see and hear. Thus it is necessary to know how to regulate one's way of living in accordance with Nature (*Xing* 性). The regulation of the Way is what the Teaching is primarily concerned about. The primary aim is to regulate the impulsive expressions of (*xing* 性) and to make it accord with the immanent *Xing*. Once the expression of *Nature* goes freely and harmoniously with the immanent Nature (*Xing* 性) the Ultimate is established in a person's selfhood. The spirit of this paragraph is consistent with the teaching of the Duke Zhou to the king Cheng in the *Book of the Documents*. Duke Zhou taught King Cheng to regulate his *xing* (性, actually the expressions of his *Xing* (性)) and thus not move too far away from the Center *zhong* 中, that is, the immanent Ultimate.

The Ultimate in Confucian tradition has two forms: the first is the transcendent Ultimate in the name of *Di* (帝) or *Tian* (天) or the Way of *Tian*, the Mandate of *Tian* (天); the second is the immanent Ultimate in the form of Nature (*Xing* 性). The transcendent Ultimate is dominant in the literature of the Shang and Zhou dynasties. And it is described in two different forms. According to the first, the transcendent Ultimate in the name of *Di* (帝) or *Tian* (天) has personal characteristics acting like a just King who has absolute authority and power to determine the lives lived on earth. On the other hand, the transcendent Ultimate in the name of the Way of *Tian* (天) or the Mandate of *Tian* (天)

acts more like a reasonable and objective power or energy for *Di* (帝) or *Tian* (天) to carry out His will. In the late Zhou dynasty the idea of *Tian* as the reality giving birth to all began to be shown in the new meaning of the character *sheng* (生), from which the new character *xing* (性) came into being. The form and meaning of *Xing* (性) were still fluid during the periods of the Spring and the Autumn and the Warring States. However, some early Confucian works since the time of Confucius such as the *Ten Wings* and the *Book of Rites* defined it as the Mandate of *Tian* (天) and thereby made it into the immanent Ultimate intrinsic in human beings. These new creative ideas laid the foundation for the later theory and practice of the cultivation of selfhood.

The new Confucians such as Xu Fuguan and Mou Zongsan were aware of these two understandings of the Ultimate. Though they did not employ this wording, they regularly juxtaposed “Nature (*Xing* 性)” with “the Way of *Tian* (天)” or “the Way of *Tian* (天)” with “Nature (*Xing* 性) and the Mandate (*Ming* 命)”¹⁶⁵. Moreover, Mou Zongsan described the moral practice of human lives as nothing but a process of humanity’s subjective effort to align itself with the Nature and the Way of *Tian* 天. Thus for him Nature *Xing* (性) and the Way of *Tian* were parallel ultimate moral sources. Yu Yingshi

¹⁶⁵ Chien Yeong-Shyang, “Tailoring the Confucian Cloth: A Reconstruction of Moral “Innerism” in the Light of Charles Taylor’s Moral Theory”, National Chengchi University Philosophical Journal, No19.

regarded the way of seeking the source of moral behavior from inside rather than outside of the human being as “inward transcendence”¹⁶⁶. This is not the description of Nature *Xing* 性 but the description of the particular Confucian way of seeking the source of morality. At the same time, the word “inward” indicates that the Ultimate was immanent in human being while the word “transcendence” suggests the transcendent characteristics of Nature (*Xing* 性) as the Ultimate.

4.2.1 The External Authorities: the Sages, the Rituals and the People

The Ultimate in Confucianism in the pre-Qin period has transcendent and immanent dimensions. The transcendent Ultimate is rooted in the ancient tradition that goes back as far as the Shang dynasty. The immanent Ultimate originated in ideas about Nature (*Xing* 性), that are found in the text of the Zhou bronze inscriptions and that were fully developed after Confucius. The influence of the Ultimate upon human beings is achieved via authorities or agents that can faithfully represent the Ultimate. Since the Ultimate exists in transcendent and immanent forms, the authorities also come in two types: internal authorities and external authorities, although the two types of authorities sometimes overlap.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid, 17.

4.2.1 The External Authorities: the Sages, the Rituals and the People

Confucian tradition is not a typical religious tradition directly revealed by a personal God as is in the case in the Judaic-Christian tradition nor is a typical philosophical tradition simply formed by reason and conversation. Rather it is believed that the Ultimate sent His Mandate to certain human beings who would, therefore, know how to govern the world in accordance with the Way of the Ultimate. This task was done by the class of witches and wizards in an earlier age, then later on by sages in the classical literature of Confucianism. During the period between the Shang dynasty and Zhou Dynasty the authorities began to represent the will of the Ultimate and started a rational transition from mystical divination to ritual performance, from witches to sages, from kings to the people. This transitional process was completed mainly by Confucius and his followers during the periods of the Spring and the Autumn and the Warring States. Since then the sages, the rituals and the people have been regarded as the main external authorities to manifest the Ultimate in Confucianism. The *Book of the Documents* indicates the transition of the authorities that manifest the reality of the Ultimate in Confucianism. The rising of the new authorities was rooted in ancient Chinese tradition but reinforced in the Zhou dynasty and made clear in the teachings of Confucius and his followers.

The idea that sages embodied the Mandate of the Ultimate is a venerable tradition. Its legitimacy usually depends upon and includes two aspects: approval from the Ultimate and a commitment to nurture the world together with the Ultimate. The approval of the Ultimate manifest through signs or divination was indispensable in the narrative of

classical Confucian literature, although the interpretation of sages began to play a decisive role probably from the Zhou Dynasty.

Divine approval takes various forms in the accounts offered by classical Confucian literature. The divine approval might be achieved by receiving auspicious signs passively from the Ultimate, or by asking the Ultimate actively via divination with the help of tortoise-shell or milfoil. The first form descends from the Ultimate to human beings while the second one, from human beings to the Ultimate and then back to human beings. Due to the efforts of several generations of sages the second form developed and became the *Book of Changes*, a guidebook of divination and self-cultivation. “The Chart from Yellow River *Hetu* (河圖)” and “The Writing from Luo River *Luoshu* (洛書)” are believed to have been sent by the Ultimate to Fuxi (伏羲) and Yu (禹). They were also recorded in many other writings of pre-Qin period such as the *Book of the Documents*, the *Book of the Rites* and the *Ten Wings*. In the *Analects*, Confucius sighed and said that the Yellow River did not send forth the “Chart” to him as it did to Fuxi, which indicated that *Tian* 天 did not send signs to approve his sagehood.

The Ultimate sends signs to the world while their interpretation and fulfillment rely upon sages. The auspicious signs from the Ultimate were not only regarded as signs for approving the sagehood, but were also believed to contain the mandate or teachings from the Ultimate, which would be deciphered and followed by sages. “The Great Treaties I,” *Xici I* (繫辭上), in the *Ten Wings* expressed the interaction between the Ultimate and sages.

It explains “*Tian* 天” hangs out the brilliant figures from which are seen good fortune and bad, and the sages made their emblematic interpretations accordingly. The Yellow River gave forth the Chart and the Luo River the Writing while the sages followed their rules (and made the Eight Trigrams, *Bagua* (八卦), to manifest their meanings). Since the Eight Trigrams was created, it has been used as a system of signs to reveal the divine mandate or human fortunes in the world. It is performed mainly through two forms: turtle shell and milfoil. The oracle bone inscriptions indicate that divination was the major way to know and follow the will of the Ultimate, *Di* (帝), in the Shang dynasty. In the *Book of the Documents*, when Shun (舜) tried to persuaded Yu (禹) to be his successor, Yu (禹) suggested submitting meritorious ministers, one by one, to the trial of divination and then following the favorable indication. *Shun* (舜) declined this suggestion and insisted that it was the rule for divination to make up one’s mind first and then refer the judgment to the tortoise-shell for divination¹⁶⁷. This process of crown transition between *Shun* (舜) and Yu (禹) shows that it was a necessary procedure to turn to divination in order to be seen to have the legitimacy from the Ultimate. Meanwhile, it also indicates that sages actually played a prime, if not decisive, role in seeking and interpreting the Mandate of the Ultimate.

¹⁶⁷ See the “Councels of the Great Yu” (大禹謨) in *The Book of Documents* .

What's more, the work of sages was regarded as an indispensable contribution to the cultivation and sustainment of the world together with the Ultimate. This idea runs through the Pre-Qin literature. The ideal position for a sage is held to be the throne with which he/she could best fulfill the Mandate of the Ultimate¹⁶⁸. Therefore in the words of the ancient-sage kings, the position of the throne was always related to the flourishing of all the lives in the world¹⁶⁹. Otherwise the Ultimate would take back the Mandate and give it to the one who was qualified for it¹⁷⁰. The partnership of the sages with the Ultimate is well expounded in the *Ten Wings* and the *Book of Rites*. In the *Ten Wings*, sages are regarded as those individuals who all creatures would look to once they make their appearance. It is they who will bring harmony and peace to the world since they are able to influence the mind of the people. And it is they who will transform the world since they persevere in realizing the Way of *Tian* 天¹⁷¹. In the *Book of Rites*, the most important role

¹⁶⁸ See “Xici II” (繫辭下) in the *Ten Wings*, the Confucian commentary on the *Book of Changes*. What is the most precious for the sage is the (highest) position (聖人之大寶曰位).

¹⁶⁹ See what King Yao said to King Shun and King Xun said the same thing to King Yu in the last chapter of *The Analects* which was also found in the “Councils of the Great Yu” (大禹謨) of *The Book of the Documents*. *The Analects*, 20:1: King Yao said: “Oh, You, Shun, the order of succession determined by *Tian* 天 now rests in your person. Honestly hold fast the Center of the Way. If there shall be distress and want within the four seas, the Heavenly revenue will come to a perpetual end (天之曆數在爾躬。允執其中。四海困窮，天祿永終。)

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ See “Wenyan” of Qian Hexagram, “Tuanzhuán” of Xian Hexagram and “Tuanzhuán” of Heng Hexagram.

of sages is described as “assisting the transforming and nourishing powers of *Tian* 天 and *Di* 地.”¹⁷²

Beside sages, Ritual is another external authority that manifests the will of the Ultimate. It is the sages’ great product and tool to assist in the transformation and nourishing of the powers of the Ultimate. The significance of the Ritual lies in the sages’ effort to make a channel by which human beings can comprehend the Way of the Ultimate and govern their feelings in this world¹⁷³. Thus by observing the Ritual human beings can follow the Way of the Ultimate and make it the way of life in this world. Moreover, Ritual was important because people would not necessarily rely on the mysteries of divination that could be conducted only by professional people. The establishment of the Ritual makes the Way of the Ultimate accessible to all human beings and makes it an inner need rather than an outer requirement in all fields of life.

According to the *Analects*, the tradition of the Ritual has existed at least since the Xia dynasties although there have been some changes over times. Confucius still could describe the rituals of the Xia dynasty and Shang Dynasty and even knew the differences

¹⁷² See “Zhong Yong” in *The Book of Rites*.

¹⁷³ See “Liyun” in the Book of Rites: They supply the channels by which people can apprehend the ways of *Tian* 天 and act as the feelings of a human being requires (所以达天道顺人情之大窦也). Therefore, the sage-kings fashioned the lever of the justice and the ordering of the rites in order to govern the feelings of people (故圣王修义之柄、礼之序，以治人情。)

between them. However, there was no substantial record for him to attest his words¹⁷⁴. The ritual system of the Zhou dynasty inherited the advantages of the previous rituals and made it a complete and elegant one in the hands of Duke Zhou¹⁷⁵.

The Ritual of Zhou Dynasty was inherited and developed by Confucius and his followers during the pre-Qin period. In the Zhou and previous dynasties, the Ritual was applied only to the noble class. In the late Zhou dynasty, the Ritual was about to collapse with the corruption of the noble class. Mou Zongsan described this situation as “the Fatigue of Zhou Culture”, which means that the nobles could not bring out the life of the Ritual with their own practice¹⁷⁶. Confucius confirmed the significance of the Ritual and regarded it as the indispensable way to humanity.¹⁷⁷ For him it contained the most important humane value that correspond with the Way of the Ultimate at a distance¹⁷⁸.

Third, the people rather than the king was emphasized as manifesting the Mandate of the Ultimate. King vs the people reflects the shift of criteria from birth to virtue for the one who receive the Mandate of the Ultimate. A sage-king had usually been regarded as the only person who received and manifested the Mandate of the Ultimate. With the hereditary monarchy established in the Xia dynasty, a king was regarded as being born with the Mandate.

¹⁷⁴ The *Analects*, 2:23 子張問：「十世可知也？」子曰：「殷因於夏禮，所損益，可知也；周因於殷禮，所損益，可知也；其或繼周者，雖百世可知也。」3:9 子曰：「夏禮，吾能言之，杞不足徵也；殷禮，吾能言之，宋不足徵也。文獻不足故也，足則吾能徵之矣。」

¹⁷⁵ The *Analects*, 3:14. 子曰：「周監於二代，郁郁乎文哉！吾從周。」

¹⁷⁶ Mou Zongsan

¹⁷⁷ See the *Analects*: Yanyuan.

¹⁷⁸ Mou Zongsan,

According to *The Book of the Rites*, the king was called “the Son of *Tian* (天)”.

While meeting with the feudal princes to assign their offices and to give out the laws of the government, and to employ the able, a king often addressed himself as follows “I/me , the One Man *Yu-yi-ren* (余 / 予一人)” modestly¹⁷⁹. “The Son of *Tian* (天)” shows that the legitimacy of the king came from the Ultimate while “*Yu-yi-ren* (予一人)” indicates that the king took the full responsibility when he exercised his power to govern the world in order to fulfill the Mandate of the Ultimate. In the *Book of the Documents*, the term “*Yu-yi-ren* (予一人)” occurred 26 times. In three historical documents (*Tanggao*, *Pangeng I*, *Taishi II*), “*Yu-yi-ren* 予一人” was used by King Tang, King Pangeng and King Wu four times in order to show their resolution to take full responsibility no matter whether it was he, or the feudal nations, or the people who had sinned¹⁸⁰. In the *Analects*, Confucius cited the words of King Tang to emphasize the great responsibility of a king.

The usage of these two titles for kings suggests that the kings were not necessarily those whose activities were always in accord with the will of the Ultimate although he was the son of *Tian* (天). How could we know the will of the Ultimate? Or how could we know whether a king failed the Mandate of the Ultimate? To sum up the ways found in the inscriptions of the oracle bones, the *Book of the Documents* and the *Analects*, we can

¹⁷⁹ “Quli II” from the *Book of the Rites*.

¹⁸⁰ See the three chapters of the *Book of the Documents*: “*Tanggao*”, “*Pangeng I*” and “*Taishi II*”

identify three major options: divination, sacrifice and the people. “Chief of the West’s Conquest of Li” in the *Book of the Documents* typically dealt with this issue. Zuyi, the minister of Shang Dynasty, rushed to warn King Zhou that *Tian* 天 would end the Mandate granted to Shang. His main proof was the ominous signs received from the sacrifice and the divination. King Zhou assumed that he had been born with the Mandate and no one else could take away from him. Zuyi responded that it was King Zhou himself who had ruined his Mandate so that he had no reason to complain or to blame his ancestors and *Tian* (天). Zuyi’s response indicates that the Ultimate took away the Mandate since King Zhou had failed.

The hereditary system could not guarantee that all kings would be born with the sagacious virtue needed to fulfill the Mandate. Therefore, it is necessary and reasonable to resort to the criteria of “virtue” rather than birth. The criteria of virtue was rooted in the ancient tradition but was clearly raised to stand against a tyrant during the transition period between the Shang Dynasty and the Zhou Dynasty. The literature of the Zhou Dynasty expressed the idea that the Ultimate had no partiality and would bestow the Mandate to the virtuous¹⁸¹. If it is virtue rather than birth that is the criteria for selecting the one who is to receive the Mandate, how did the Ultimate know the world and make the decision to give or take away the Mandate?

¹⁸¹ It says “the Mandate of *Tian* 天 is not constant” in “King Wen”, a poem in the *Book of Poetry*. It says “*Tian* 天 has no partiality and only aids the virtuous” in “Charge to Zhong of Cai” in the *Book of the Document*.

The pre-Qin literature shows that the people, *min* (民), were given the unprecedented authority since the period of the Zhou dynasty. The authority of the people had been rooted in the ancient tradition as we can see in the “Counsels of Gao-yao” in the times of the legendary sage-king Yu. Gao-yao held that *Tian* (天) heard and saw as the people heard and saw¹⁸². This direct and intimate relationship between *Tian* 天 and the people was inherited and developed later following the Zhou dynasty. *Min* 民 the people occurs 24 time in “The Books of Yu”, 5 times in “The Book of Xia”, 57 times in “The Book of Shang”, but 190 times in “The Book of Zhou”. In the three books prior to “The Book of Zhou”, the relation between *Tian* 天 and the people mainly focused on the top-bottom influence from the Ultimate to the people. They expressed the ideas that Tian gave life and desires to the people¹⁸³ and conferred good nature to the people¹⁸⁴. *The Book of Zhou* not only confirmed these ideas but also further claimed that *Tian* (天) blessed the people, created rulers and teachers to help the people, had compassion for the people, and

¹⁸² “Counsels of Gao-yao” in the *Book of the Documents* : Heaven hears and sees as our people hear and see (天聪明，自我民聪明)。

¹⁸³ “Announcement of Zhong-hui” from “the Book of Shang”: *Tian* (天) gives birth to the people with such desires (惟天生民有欲).

¹⁸⁴ “Announcement of King Tang” from “the Book of Shang”: The Great God Above has conferred good Nature to the people below (惟皇上帝，降衷于下民). The translation is done according to the interpretation of Kong Anguo in the *Shangshu Zhengyi* (尚書正義) edited by Kong Yingda.

would definitely follow the will of the people¹⁸⁵. Thus the need and the will of the people rather than the interests of the king are what the Ultimate eventually cared about. In effect, the perspective has been subtly reversed from the Ultimate to the people and from the king to the people. It makes the intangible Mandate of the Ultimate clear and concrete. Moreover, the people rather than the king became the active subject to embody the will of the Ultimate.

4.2.2 *The Internal Authority of the Ultimate: Nature (Xing 性)*

Sages, the Ritual and the people are the external authorities that manifest the will or Mandate of the Ultimate while Nature *Xing* (性) is the authority immanent within the human body that manifests the will or Mandate of the Ultimate.

The belief in the external authorities of the Ultimate represents a long tradition in Chinese culture, however, the appearance of Nature (*Xing* 性) as the internal authority seems quite new in the pre-Qin literature. As we know there are different opinions about the evolution of Nature *Xing* 性. Fu Sinian held that Nature (*Xing* 性) was simply the same with birth/life, *sheng* (生) in the pre-Qin literature. Xu Fuguan believed Nature, *Xing* (性),

¹⁸⁵ “Great Declaration I” from “the Book of Zhou”: *Tian* 天 blesses the people below (天佑下民). *Tian* 天 has compassion for the people. Therefore what the people desires *Tian* 天 will definitely follow (天矜于民，民之所欲，天必從之).

and birth/life, *sheng* (生), were different terms although Nature (*Xing* 性) was derived from birth/life (*sheng* 生). *Xing* (性) might be interpreted as desires, dispositions and the nature of human beings and all other things endowed by the Mandate of *Tian* 天. Confucius broke a new path to relate Nature, *Xing* (性), with the Way of *Tian* (天) but the meaning of the term as being the endowed nature by the Mandate of *Tian* (*hire* 天 did not appear until Zisi, the grandson of Confucius. Mou Zongsan insisted that the ideas about the relation between Nature, *Xing* (性), and the Way of *Tian* 天 had already existed long before Confucius as shown in the *Book of Poetry* and *Zuozhuan*¹⁸⁶. However, it was Confucius who perceived and revealed its profound meaning as the Mandate descending into all beings in the world. Mou Zongsan found that the inner connection between the new character Nature (*Xing* 性) and the more ancient character birth (*sheng* 生). Nature (*Xing* 性) was derived from *sheng* (生) both graphically and semantically. In the hands of Confucius and his followers during the pre-Qin period, the peculiar trait of Nature *Xing* (性) was revealed and made clear particularly found in the “Zhongyong”, *Mengzi*, and the *Ten Wings*.

¹⁸⁶ Mou Zongsan, *Zhongguo Zhexue De Tezhi* [中国哲学的特质](Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe,1997), 19-24.

For human beings, Nature (*Xing* 性) is both human and divine. The most precise definition of Nature, *Xing* 性, is “Tian Ming Zhi Wei Xing” (天命之謂性) in the “Zhongyong”. This seemingly simple sentence is very controversial in meaning. It might be interpreted as the nature of human beings and all things with the divine origin from *Tian* 天. It might also be understood as the Mandate of *Tian* (天) that is immanent within human beings and all other things. The former regards Nature (*Xing* 性) as simply a human trait even though it originates from the transcendental Ultimate while the latter admits it has a divine or transcendent trait. In the pre-Qin period, Xunzi insisted on the human trait of Nature (*Xing* 性) so that he proposed to use the Ritual to reshape it. Mencius held the trait of Nature (*Xing* 性) to be divine, so he proposed to know *Tian* 天 by knowing Nature (*Xing* 性), which could be achieved by exhausting all one’s mental constitution¹⁸⁷. Mencius even claimed that it was a service to *Tian* (天) if a person preserved his/her mental constitution and nourished his/her Nature (*Xing* 性). The writer of the “Zhongyong” is traditionally believed to be Zisi, who was Mencius’ teacher and Confucius’ grandson. On

¹⁸⁷ See “Jinxin I” of Mencius: 7A:1. Mencius said, “He who exerts his mind to the utmost knows his nature. He who knows his nature knows Heaven. To preserve one’s mind and to nourish one’s nature is the way to serve Heaven” (尽其心者，知其性也。知其性，则知天矣。存其心，养其性，所以事天也). See note 84, Wing-Tsit Chan (Trans.), 78.

the whole, Nature, *Xing* 性, in the “Zhongyong” has a divine or transcendent character. The divine attribute of Nature *Xing* 性 could also be found in the ideas of Mencius and the *Ten Wings*. The “Tuanzhuan of Qiangua” illustrates how human beings and all things obtain their correct Nature, *Xing* (性), with the changing of the Way of the Ultimate¹⁸⁸. The “Xici I” points out that Nature (*Xing* 性) shows the Way of the Ultimate in its completeness¹⁸⁹ and thus to complete and continually preserve Nature, *Xing* (性), is the gate to the Way of the Ultimate and the righteous¹⁹⁰. The examples of the sages in the “Shuogua” show that a person would fulfill the Mandate of the *Tian* (天) by effecting the complete development of Nature (*Xing* 性)¹⁹¹. The wording in the “Shuogua” is almost identical with that in Mencius, although their ways of knowing or fully developing *Xing* (性) diverge because they start from “Li” (理) or “Xin” (心) in different ways.

¹⁸⁸ See “Tuanzhuan of Qian”: The method of Qian is to change and transform, so that everything obtains its correct nature as appointed (by the mind of Heaven) (乾道变化，各正性命). From *the I Ching*, translated by James Legge.

¹⁸⁹ See “Xici I”, The successive movement of the inactive and active operations constitutes what is called the course (of things). That which ensues as the result (of their movement) is goodness; that which shows it in its completeness is the natures (of men and things) (一阴一阳之谓道，继之者善也，成之者性也). From *the I Ching*, translated by James Legge.

¹⁹⁰ See “Xici I”: The nature (of man) having been completed, and being continually preserved, it is the gate of all good courses and righteousness (成性存存，道义之门). From *the I Ching*, translated by James Legge.

¹⁹¹ See “Shuogua”: They (thus) made an exhaustive discrimination of what was right, and effected the complete development of (every) nature, till they arrived (in the Yi) at what was appointed for it (by Heaven) (穷理尽性以至于命). From *the I Ching*, translated by James Legge.

Xu Fuguan emphasized the human attribute of Nature (*Xing* 性). Nature (*Xing* 性), is what the Ultimate mandates to human beings and all things in the world. It is part of the human and belongs to the human. However, Xu Fuguan saw Nature (*Xing* 性) as originating in the Ultimate, *Tian* (天), and did not see the divine attribute of Nature (*Xing* 性). Like Mencius, Mou emphasized the divine attribute of Nature (*Xing* 性) but expressed it in philosophical language. For him, the Mandate of *Tian* (天) is the metaphysical reality in Confucianism while Nature (*Xing* 性) is the metaphysical reality immanent in human life. I would agree that Mou's insight regarding Nature (*Xing* 性) is more convincing. Nature (*Xing* 性) is not only what *Tian* 天 mandates to human beings and all things from above but also embodies the Mandate of *Tian* 天 descending from above and being absorbed within human beings and all things as their respective Nature (*Xing* 性) . Therefore this internalized Mandate or metaphysical reality is not a alien matter of human selfhood but constitutes the essence of human selfhood. In this sense human "Nature (*Xing* 性)" is both human and divine.

Since Nature (*Xing* 性) possesses divine attributes, it is possible for each individual to know the Ultimate and serve the Ultimate from inside rather than outside. Compared

with the eternal authorities (the Ritual, sages and the people) of the Ultimate, Nature (*Xing* 性) is a more direct and intimate way for human beings to know and connect with the Ultimate. It is always ready to manifest or enlighten the Way of the Ultimate and nothing can obstruct it as long as one is willing to search for the Way of the Ultimate sincerely. Mencius claimed that a person would know *Tian* (天) by knowing his or her Nature (*Xing* 性) and, at the same time, if a person was nourishing his/her Nature, he was serving the Ultimate¹⁹². Mencius' ideas about Nature (*Xing* 性) is congruent with the *Ten Wings*. As illustrated in the “*Shuogua*”, the ancient sages were actually examples that had achieved fulfillment of the Mandate via Nature (*Xing* 性). These fragmentary ideas in Mencius and the *Ten Wings* were further expounded with precision in the “*Zhongyong*” in the *Book of Rites*.

As the internal authority of the Ultimate, Nature (*Xing* 性) has the power of creation. This power of creation is hidden and within a person's selfhood until it becomes known and activated by one's sincerely searching via mind/heart (*xin* 心). Once one's Nature (*Xing* 性) is known and fully developed it unleashes the creative power inside of the self and directs it to all earthly beings outside. “The Great Learning” and the “*Zhongyong*” exhibit the mechanism and process of creation that is driven from inside and

¹⁹² See note 187.

then that extends to the outside. “The Great Learning” starts with the Way of learning to be great, that teaches that one must manifest a clear character, love (another interpretation is “renovate”) the people, and abide in the highest good¹⁹³. To manifest a clear character one needs internal and external cultivation. The interior cultivation is a process of spiritual transformation that requires one’s will to become sincere and one’s mind to be rectified. Once the mind is rectified, he/she will possess a creative power to transform his/her own individual life and then the lives of those around him/her. Although the term Nature (*Xing* 性) did not appear in the text, it is obvious that the author holds that the rectified mind leads to the self enlightenment of Nature (*Xing* 性) which generates the power for external cultivation and transformation. The “Zhongyong” expressed similar ideas about the creative power of Nature (*Xing* 性), but from a different perspective. In the “Zhongyong” we are taught that Nature (*Xing* 性) has the impulse to possess enlightenment via sincerity¹⁹⁴. It claims sincerity is a quality shared by the Way of the Ultimate and human beings. Only those who are absolutely sincere could fully develop their Nature and thus develop the nature of others and eventually bring about the transformation of their own lives and the lives of all around them. In the classic Confucian literature, the perfect example of a human being who had an absolutely pure Nature is King Wen, who could

¹⁹³ See note 84, Wing-Tsit Chan, 98.

¹⁹⁴ See the paragraphs from 21-26 about sincerity in “Zhongyong”. The translation by Wing-Tsit Chan, 107-110.

assist the Way of *Tian* 天 and *Di* 地 in the sense of creation. The “Zhongyong” cited verses from the *Book of Poetry* to illustrate the point about Nature (*Xing* 性).

The Book of Poetry says, “The Mandate of *Tian* 天, how beautiful and unceasing,”

This is to say what makes *Tian* 天 to *Tian* 天. Again, it says, “How shining is it, the purity of King Wen’s virtue!” This is to say, this is what makes King Wen what he was.

《诗》云：“维天之命，于穆不已！”盖曰天之所以为天也。“于乎不显！文王之德之纯！”盖曰文王之所以为文也，纯亦不已。

CHAPTER V THE CULTIVATION OF SAGEHOOD

5. 1 The Self

As we have shown in the previous chapters, sagehood is a fully developed selfhood, the ultimate state of self-cultivation. Therefore, the cultivation of sagehood requires the knowledge of what constitutes selfhood. Selfhood in pre-Qin Confucianism consists of three major elements: Nature (*Xing* 性), mind/heart (*xin* 心) and body (*shen* 身). Nature is the core of selfhood. Mind/heart makes self act as a free and conscious subject. Body is the necessary physical condition for the self to fulfill the selfhood in the narrow sense and the embodiment of the self in its broad sense.

5.1.1 The Core of the Selfhood: Nature (Xing 性)

The pre-Qin literature suggests that selfhood cannot be defined without the Ultimate although the sources differ as to how the Ultimate shapes human selfhood due to their different understandings of the characteristics of human Nature (*Xing* 性).

Nature (*Xing* 性) was derived graphically and semantically from the character birth (*sheng* 生). One significant opinion interpreted Nature (*Xing* 性) as the Mandate descending from *Tian* (天) that is internalized within human life. This view usually insisted

that the meaning of Nature (*Xing* 性) had already existed in *sheng* (生) although this type of meaning began to be specifically represented by a new form of character nature (*xing* 性) from the time of Zhou dynasty . This opinion was deeply rooted in ancient classic literature and was mainly expressed in *The Book of Rites*, *The Ten Wings* and *Mencius*, especially in “Zhongyong” and “the Great Learning”. Later it came to represent the mainstream of Confucianism that was inherited by the Neo-Confucianism of the Song-Ming dynasties and the new Confucianism in modern times. This opinion regards Nature (*Xing* 性) as both divine and human but stresses the significance of its divine character for the cultivation of selfhood. It is therefore reasonable to call it immanent or internalized transcendence.

Alternatively, there is a second opinion that holds Nature (*Xing* 性) was simply a human attribute although it is what *Tian* (天) mandated for human beings. This view insists that Nature *Xing* 性 has the same meaning with the earlier character *sheng* (生) , that means nothing but life or giving birth to life. That is to say, human being and *Tian* (天) are absolutely different in the sense of divinity or transcendence. Since Nature (*Xing* 性) is completely human, it is its natural response to follow human emotions and desires, which may lead to disastrous consequences if not governed. Therefore if a person only follows his/her Nature (*Xing* 性) he/she will go astray from the Way of *Tian* (天) and end up in

difficulties. In this circumstance, it is necessary for a human being to follow the Ritual and govern their Nature since the Ritual embodies the Way of the Ultimate found and accumulated by sages. This opinion is mainly represented by Xunzi but often has been regarded as a non-orthodox Confucian perspective by some later Confucian scholars.

The first opinion emphasizes the importance of Nature (*Xing* 性) in consequence of its divine attribute. In contrast, the second opinion stresses its importance due to its lack of divine attribute. No matter how different the interpretations are, however, Nature (*Xing* 性) was placed at the core of selfhood. It is the key to the fulfillment of selfhood or sagehood.

5.1.2 The Subject of Selfhood: Mind/Heart (Xin 心)

Xin (心) is another Confucian word that is hard to translate into English. It is similar to the combination of the English words “mind” and “heart”. I will adopt the translation “mind/heart” in the present dissertation for the sake of convenience. In Confucianism, mind/heart (*xin* 心) possesses intellectual, emotional/psychological and responsive functions. These three basic functions of mind/heart (*xin* 心) were rooted in the ancient Chinese tradition but developed in classic works of the Zhou dynasty and the Confucian works of the pre-Qin period. More importantly, the Confucians of the pre-Qin period not

only adopted the uses of mind/heart (*xin* 心) but also interpreted its meanings. On the basis of its usage and interpretation, mind/heart (*xin* 心) acted as the subject of selfhood in the sense of forming the basis of its free will and its willing connection with others.

5.1.2.1 What is mind/heart (*xin* 心) ?

The use of mind/heart (*xin* 心) can be traced back to sources as early as the oracle bone inscriptions and the bronze inscriptions in the Shang and Zhou dynasties. Mind/heart (*xin* 心), is a pictographic character taking the form of a heart although the form of the heart varied in different periods. It had already been used in the most ancient Chinese text. Its earliest form was found on the oracle bones in the Shang dynasty. It was also shown in the bronze inscriptions created in the Zhou dynasty. They all broadly look like a heart with some differences in their strokes as shown below.



Placeholder for the Seventh Illustration for Mind/ Heart (Xin 心) in the Oracle Bones Script and in the Bronze Inscription.

In the inscriptions of the oracle bones, mind/heart (*xin* 心) was found in the sentence “the king made up his mind to conquer” (“王出(有)心正(征)”) ¹⁹⁵. Mind (*xin* 心) here was a verb, meaning “making one’s mind” or “want”. It represents a psychological or thinking activity. Mind/heart (*xin* 心) also occurred as a noun in such contexts as “the mind of the king regarded it as nice or satisfying” (“王心若”), “there was no hardship in the mind/heart of the king” (“王心亡艰”) ¹⁹⁶. In these examples, mind/heart (*xin* 心) played the role of responding to external situations. It reflects the psychological state of the king after a process of intellectual analysis since it was related with the activity of thinking. In the inscription of the ritual bronze, mind/heart (*xin* 心) was discovered in the sentence: “My great eminent passed father had bright thoughts” (不(丕)顯朕皇考，克彞明畢(厥)心) ¹⁹⁷. It was used as a noun which means “thoughts”. These texts show that mind/heart (*xin* 心) had already been used as the subject of selfhood in charge of thinking, feeling and responding to external situations during the Shang and Zhou dynasties.

Who has a mind/heart (*xin* 心)? The character of mind/heart (*xin* 心) on the oracle bones and bronzes had the image of a physical heart. Therefore, “*xin* 心” originally

¹⁹⁵ See note 133, Guo Moruo, 6928.

¹⁹⁶ See note 39, Yu Shengwu, 1891.

¹⁹⁷ The inscription is from Laibian Bell (逯編鐘).

referred to the organ “heart”. It is often used to refer to the physical heart of human beings and animals in the inscriptions of the oracle bones. However, does the mind/heart (*xin* 心) related with selfhood refer to the heart of human beings and animals? From the inscriptions of the oracle bones to the classic Confucian works and the pre-Qin Confucian literature we see that it had nothing with animals. It was usually related to human beings. In the *Book of Documents* we found that the mind/heart (*xin* 心) had also been applied to the Ultimate, the Way of the Ultimate and the people. Not only human beings had minds/hearts (*xin* 心), the Ultimate named *Tian* 天 or *Di* 帝 also had mind/heart (*xin* 心). King Tang (湯) announced that all the good and sinful deeds of each person were all examined in the Mind/Heart of the Ultimate (*Shangdi-Zhixin* 上帝之心)¹⁹⁸.

尔有善，朕弗敢蔽；罪当朕躬，弗敢自赦，惟简在上帝之心。其尔万方有罪，在予一人；予一人有罪，无以尔万方。

The good you did I will not dare to keep concealed; and for the sin I committed I will not dare to forgive by myself. These things will be only examined in the Mind/Heart of *Di* (帝)

¹⁹⁸ The “Announcement of Tang” in *The Book of the Documents*. The “good (*shan* 善) and “Sin (*zui* 罪) in this context are two concepts directly related with the Ultimate rather than the worldly law or custom. Therefore “*zui* 罪” cannot be translated into “bad”. It is not borrowed from Christian terminology but based on the logic of Chinese tradition. This usage is similar in the following texts of the *Analecets* and the “Common Possession of Pute Virture”.

above. When guilt is found anywhere in the myriad regions, let it rest on me, the One man. When guilt is found in me, the One man, it shall not attach to anyone in the myriad regions.

Later Confucius transmitted this message to his students in the last chapter of the *Analects*¹⁹⁹. He abbreviated it into *Dixin* (帝心).

曰：“予小子履，敢用玄牡，敢昭告于皇皇后帝：有罪不敢赦。帝臣不蔽，简在帝心。朕躬有罪，无以万方；万方有罪，罪在朕躬。”

(King Tang) said, "I, the young man Lu, presume to present a dark-colored ox as sacrifice, and presume to announce to Thee, O most great and sovereign Di (帝), that the sinner I dare not pardon, and the ministers of Di (帝), I do not keep in obscurity. The examination of them is by thy mind, O God. If, in my person, I commit sins, they are not to be attributed to the people of the myriad regions. If anyone in the myriad regions commit sins, they must rest on my person."

No matter whether the composition of the present "Tang Announcement" was done during the Shang or Zhou dynasty, the idea had apparently appeared in the classic literature

¹⁹⁹ The "Chapter 20" of *The Analects*, “予小子履，敢用玄牡，敢昭告于皇皇后帝：有罪不敢赦。帝臣不蔽，简在帝心。朕躬有罪，无以万方；万方有罪，罪在朕躬。”周有大赉，善人是富。“虽有周亲，不如仁人。百姓有过，在予一人。”

before Confucius. In the “Common Possession of Pure Virtue” (“咸有一德”) Yiyin said only he and King Tang both had pure virtue and thus were able to satisfy the Mind/Heart of *Tian* 天 (天心) and received the clear Mandate of *Tian* (天)²⁰⁰.

惟尹躬暨汤，咸有一德，克享天心，受天明命....

Only Yiyin myself and Tang both had pure virtue, which was able to satisfy the Mind/Heart of *Tian* (*Tianxin* 天心) and make us receive the clear Mandate of *Tian* (天).

In this context, the Mind/Heart of the Ultimate could enjoy the pure virtue of human beings, feel satisfied and make an appropriate response by sending the Mandate to them.

We see the concepts of the good (*shan* 善), sin (*zui* 罪) and virtue (*de* 德) in the examples above are essentially defined by the Ultimate. As the ruler of the world, King Jie of Xia dynasty did not violate any secular laws. Only when King Jie was regarded as the one who brought disasters to the people and thus failed the Mandate of the Ultimate, was he regarded as being guilty and sinful. The good and the pure virtue also meant more than simply ethics although it did have moral content. The Ultimate had the final standard for what was the the good (*shan* 善), sin (*zui* 罪) and virtue (*de* 德). However, the Ultimate would not judge arbitrarily but according to what they did to others in the world. As to the rulers, the Ultimate would judge them according to that they did to the people. Therefore in these texts we see the Ultimate was not a naturalist Being but had intelligence, affection

²⁰⁰ “Common Possession of Pure Virtue” in the *Book of Shang of the Book of the Documents*.

and authority. The three examples of the Mind/Heart of the Ultimate (上帝之心, 帝心, 天心) suggest that the Ultimate, like an individual person, had the Mind/Heart to think, feel, discern and make responses individually and in the relations with others. The mind/heart (*xin* 心) of a person and the Ultimate reflects the subjectivity of a person and the Ultimate. It often reflects the subjectivity of the people and the Ultimate.

There are two other special types of minds/hearts (*xin* 心) in the classic Confucian works: the mind/heart of the Way (*daoxin* 道心) and the mind/heart of the people (*minxin* 民心 or *renxin* 人心). These concepts, however, occurred very rarely in classic works. The former occurred only once while the later is found only 5 times including 4 times in the *Book of Documents*. It is a point of controversy whether the mind/heart of the Way was a concept transmitted from Yao and Shun which was written down during Zhou dynasty or an idea proposed only since Xunzi. It had apparently existed before Xunzi because Xunzi quoted from a book *Daojing* (道經, its literal meaning is “Book of the Way”). In the *Book of Document*, Shun told Yu that “the mind/heart of human beings (*renxin* 人心) is restless while the Mind/Heart of Dao (*daoxin* 道心) is subtle. By discriminating and in

accord (with the Ultimate), hold fast to the due Mean. ²⁰¹ In the last chapter of the *Analects*, Confucius taught his students that Yao (尧) told Shun (舜) to “hold fast to the due Mean” (允执厥中) and Shun (舜) transmitted it to Yu (禹) too. Although in this verse the mind/heart of the Way (*daoxin* 道心) did not appear, we still could recognize it from the “due Mean” (厥中). The Mean in Chinese is “zhong 中” that is often regarded as the right place of mind/heart (*xin* 心).

The mind/heart of the Way (*daoxin* 道心) represents the universal laws of the Ultimate while the mind/heart of the people shows the objective direction of the collective consciousness of a human community. Therefore, the mind/heart (*xin* 心) of the Way or the people possessed a strong and subtle power that could not be changed at will by any individual person even including the king. Unlike the mind/heart of a person or the Ultimate, the minds/hearts of the Way and the people are usually referred to in relationship with the King in the sense of governing of the world.

The term mind/heart (*xin* 心) occurred more frequently and its three basic functions were expressed more fully and subtly with various examples of application in classic Confucian works and pre-Qin Confucian works after Confucius. It occurred 8 times in the

²⁰¹ The translation was done on the basis of the interpretation in *Zhouyi Zhengyi*, 213. The original text: “人心惟危，道心惟微，惟精惟一，允执厥中。”

Book of Changes (not including the *Ten Wings*), 65 times in the *Book of Documents* and 168 times in the *Book of Poetry*. In addition it occurred 6 times in the *Analects*, 20 times in the *Ten Wings*, 132 times in the *Book of Rites*, 126 times in the *Mencius* and 168 times in the *Xunzi*. Furthermore, on the basis of their use in the classic works the roles or functions of mind/heart (*xin* 心) began to be interpreted in different ways during pre-Qin period. In the following I would analyze its the basic functions of mind/heart (*xin* 心) as the subject of selfhood.

5.1.2.2 The Basic Functions of Mind/Heart (Xin 心)

5.1.2.2.1 the Intellectual Agent of Selfhood

As we see from the inscriptions of the oracle bones and the bronzes, the intellectual function is the most basic function of mind/heart (*xin* 心) at least since the Shang dynasty. It was wide used in this way in the classic Confucian works. In the *Book of Changes* the intellectual and emotional uses of mind/heart (*xin* 心) each accounted for half. The intellectual function of mind/heart (*xin* 心) was mainly shown in the three hexagrams of Kan (坎), Mingyi (明夷) and Yi (益) . It involves quite difficult intellectual work to have the mind/heart penetrating (“維心亨” in Hexagram Kan), or carry out the mind/heart

appropriately despite a dangerous situation (“获明夷之心” in Hexagram Mingyi). The Hexagram Yi (益) displays two different types of mind/heart (*xin* 心): a sincere mind/heart (*xin* 心) seeking to benefit all below (有孚惠心) and a (greedy) mind/heart (*xin* 心) that is without regular rules (立心勿恒). But no matter whether a sincere mind/heart or a greedy mind/heart, it indicates intellectual and psychological calculations behind their different choice.

In the *Book of Documents*, we see the mind/heart (*xin* 心) of a person and the Ultimate both had the intellectual ability to perceive, evaluate and make their decision or judgment. The mind/heart of a person or the Ultimate presented intellectual features in many cases of the *Book of the Documents*. The following are obvious examples.

1. 有言逆于汝心，必求诸道；有言逊于汝志，必求诸非道。---太甲下

When you hear words that go against your mind/heart, you must enquire whether they are fitting with the Way; when you hear words that accord with your own views, you must enquire whether they are not contrary to the Way. ---Tai Jia III

2. 恐人倚乃身，迂乃心。---盘庚中。

I am afraid that men bend your persons, and pervert your minds/hearts.--Pangeng II.

3-4. 亦越文王、武王，克知三有宅心，灼见三有俊心。--立政

Then subsequently there were king Wen and king Wu, who knew well the minds/hearts of those whom they put in the three positions, and saw clearly the minds/hearts of those who had the three grades of ability--Establishment of Government

5. 呜呼！罔曰弗克，惟既厥心 - 毕命

Oh! Do not say, "I am unequal to this;" but exert your mind/hearts to the utmost. - -

Charge to the Duke Bi

6. 汝则有大疑，谋及乃心，谋及卿士，谋及庶人，谋及卜筮。--洪范

When you have doubts about any great matter, consult with your own mind/heart; consult with your high ministers and officers; consult with the common people; consult the tortoise-shell and divining stalks.--Great Plan

7. 汝惟小子，未其有若汝封之心。朕心朕德，惟乃知

Yes, though you are the little one, who has a mind/heart like you, O Feng? My mind/heart and my virtue are also known to you.

8. 汝猷黜乃心。--盘庚上

Take counsel how to put away your (selfish) thoughts--Pan Geng I

9. 文王惟克厥宅心.--立政

King Wen was able to make the minds/hearts of those in the (three high) positions his own.

--Establishment of Government

10. 作德，心逸日休；作伪，心劳日拙.--周官

Practise them as virtues, and your minds/hearts will be at ease, and you will daily become more admirable. Practise them in hypocrisy, and your minds/hearts will be toiled, and you will daily become more stupid. --Officers of Zhou

11. 格其非心,俾克紹先烈。--冏命

...thus correcting my wrong mind/heart, and enabling me to be the successor of my meritorious predecessors. --Charge to Jiong.

12. 汝丕远惟商考成人宅心知训。--康誥

(Again), you must in the remote distance study the (ways of) the old accomplished men of Shang, that you may establish your mind/heart, and know how to instruct (the people).--

Announcement to the Prince Kang

13. 今惟民不静，未戾厥心。---康誥

Now the people are not quiet; they have not yet stilled their minds/hearts.---Announcement to the Prince Kang

14. ...用康乃心，顾乃德，远乃猷...--康誥

...Hereby give repose to your mind/heart, examine your virtue, send far forward your plans...

--Announcement to the Prince

15. 罪当朕躬，弗敢自赦，惟简在上帝之心。---汤诰

...and for the evil in me I will not dare to forgive myself. It is only the mind/heart of Di 帝 above that will examine these things. --Announcement of Tang

15. 咸有一德，克享天心，受天明命。--咸有一德

Then there were I, Yin, and Tang, both possessed of pure virtue, and able to satisfy the mind/heart of Tian 天. He received (in consequence) the bright favour of Tian 天. --

Common Possession of Pure Virtue

In the *Book of Poetry*, the emotional/psychological function of mind/heart (*xin* 心) takes a dominating position. However, some emotional/psychological feelings were a

mixture of emotional/psychological and speculative states such as those expressed in the verbs “like” (*hao* 好)²⁰², “toil” (*lao* 勞), and “worry” (*you* 憂). A typical example is “worry” (*you* 憂), that occurred most frequently among various terms for emotions in the *Book of Poetry*. Mind/heart (*xin* 心) occurred 168 times in the *Book of Poetry* while it occurred 63 times together with the character “憂” (*you*) not including other words to express a similar meaning. “憂” (*you*) was often translated as “sorrow” by James Legge. But actually “憂” (*you*) usually expresses worries and anxieties mixed with sadness and sorrow because of seeing or foreseeing something bad or dangerous on the basis of what he/she observed and thought. Therefore, it is a combination of intellectual and emotional/psychological activity. The similar use of “憂” (*you*) was also found in the *Book of Documents*.

5.1.2.2.2 The Emotional/Psychological Agent of Selfhood

²⁰² 中心好之、曷饮食之 ---有杖之杜

In the centre of my heart I love him,
[But] how shall I supply him with drink and food? --- You Di Zhi Du

我有嘉宾、中心好之---彤弓

I have here an admirable guest,
And with all my heart I love him---Tong Gong

If the usage of mind/heart (*xin* 心) tended to be more intellectual in the oracle bones and bronze inscriptions, its emotional function has been fully shown in a number of classic Confucian works. Among the 8 examples of mind/heart (*xin* 心) in *the Book of Changes*, 4 characters of mind/heart (*xin* 心) are used to express an emotional or psychological state experienced by a person. The context of these 4 cases shows that the mind/heart felt sad (Hexagram Jing, the third Nine, 井渫不食，為我心惻), worried (Hexagram Gen, the third Nine, 厲薰心), and dissatisfied (Hexagram Gen, the second Six 其心不快 and Hexagram Lu, the fourth Nine, 我心不快). *The Book of Documents* contains 65 examples of mind/heart (*xin* 心) which reveals its emotional or psychological function in at least the following ten contexts.

1. Depression crowds together in our hearts --Songs of the Five Songs (郁陶乎予心--五子之歌)
2. You, (however), have no sympathy with the anxieties of my mind—Pangeng II (汝不忧朕心之攸困 - - 盘庚中)
3. I shall feel ashamed in my heart, as if I were beaten in the market-place--Charge to Yue III) (其心愧耻，若挞于市--说命下)

4. but greatly wounds his father's heart --Announcement to the Prince. (大伤厥考心
--康誥)

5. The people were all sorely grieved and wounded in heart - - Announcement about
Drunkenness (民罔不蠹伤心--酒誥)

6. The people, blaming you, will disobey and have a grudge in their hearts; yea, they
will curse you with their mouths. ---Against Luxurious Ease (民否则厥心违怨, 否则厥
口诅祝 - - 無逸)

16. The paths which you tread are continually those of disquietude; have you in your
hearts no love for yourselves? - - numerous regions (爾乃迪屢不靜, 尔心未爱
- - 多方)

17. the trembling worry of my mind makes me feel as if I were treading on a tiger's tail,
or walking upon spring ice - - - Junya (心之忧危, 若蹈虎尾, 涉于春冰--君
牙)

18. The anxiety of my heart is, that the days and months have passed away, and it is not likely they will come again, (so that I might pursue a different course.) --Speech of the Marquis Qin (我心之忧，日月逾迈，若弗云来--秦誓)

19. when he finds accomplished and sage men, loving them in his heart more than his mouth expresses--Speech of the Marquis of Qin (人之彥圣，其心好之--秦誓).

These ten examples show that mind/heart (*xin* 心) is the place to generate such emotional or psychological reactions as anxiety (1,2,8,9), shame (3), sorrow, like (7,8), grudge and disobedience. Anxiety accounts half of the feelings. It mainly expressed the concerns or worries of those in high positions toward the political situation that faced to them.

The emotional or psychological function of mind/heart (*xin* 心) was fully displayed in the *Book of Poetry*. Mind/heart (*xin* 心) occurs 168 times in total and 153 cases express various emotional or psychological states, such as worries, sorrow, delight, joy, peace and satisfaction. *The Book of Poetry* consists of four parts according to the categories of the poems: the “Lessons from the States”, the “Minor Odes of the kingdom”, the “Greater Odes of the Kingdom” and “the Odes to the Temple and the Altar”. In these four parts, mind/heart

(*xin* 心), appears respectively 76 times, 70 times, 20 times and 2 times while they include the emotional or psychological mind/heart (*xin* 心) 68 times, 65 times, 12 and never accordingly. Some kind of emotions appear repeatedly. There are also different words or phrases used to express the same type of emotion. It shows that mind/heart, *xin* 心 had been extensively used as the part of selfhood utilized to feel the external world and respond to it with a certain kind of emotion or psychological activity.

Among these various emotional or psychological activities, anxiety or worry (忧) is the most frequently occurring one in the *Book of Poetry* as it was in the *Book of Documents*. It occurred 26 times in the “Lessons from the States”, 32 times in the “Minor Odes of the kingdom” and even 5 times in the “Greater Odes of the Kingdom”. Anxiety or worry (忧) was often connected together with other emotions such as sorrow (悲/伤). Sometimes this emotion was expressed with other words instead of the word “anxiety or concern (忧)”. For example, the poem “Shuli” (黍离) described the state of the innermost mind/heart with metaphors such as being shaken, drunk and choked to indicate how anxious or concerned it was. Anxiety or worry (忧) had become a dominating theme in the classic works.

5.1.2.2.3 The Responsive Agent of the Selfhood

Besides thinking and feeling, mind / heart (*xin* 心) is readily responsive to others. Unlike Nature (*Xing* 性) , mind / heart (*xin* 心) is capable of perceiving, feeling and responding to others. Here, “others” refers to both the external elements and the internal elements. The external elements are usually called “*Tian* (天), the Earth (*Di*, 地) and the “myriads of things” for which I would like to use the term “others”, that is, the transcendent Ultimate, other people and the things in the world. The internal elements are desires and the immanent Ultimate, Nature (*Xing* 性) . Robert Neville interprets the self in Confucianism as a set of physical, psychological, and social structures through which a person perceives (or misperceives) the worthy things in the environment and then with intuitive or innate appreciation responds to them appropriately (or inappropriately)²⁰³ . I agree with his view of the responsive function of the self and believe it is conducted by mind / heart (*xin* 心). Moreover, I think this responsive activity is poly-dimensional, that is, horizontal in the sense of its relation with other people and things in the world, vertical in the sense of its relation with the transcendent Ultimate, and introversive in the sense of its relation with the Nature (*Xing* 性) and desires. Therefore, unlike Nature (*Xing* 性) a mind/heart (*xin* 心) is not born to be purely good , but to be responsive and cultivatable. It might perceive or misperceive, feel or unfeel, empathize or apathize, will to do good or

²⁰³ See note 21, Robert Neville, 95.

evil. The responsive function of mind/heart (*xin* 心) is not only involved with its intellectual and emotional/psychological activity, but also with free will and empathy . On the one hand, a mind/heart (*xin* 心) is capable of choosing certain responses rather than passively making mechanical ones. On the other hand, a mind/heart (*xin* 心) is capable of being empathetic and even compatible with the minds/hearts (*xin* 心) of others.

The responsive function of mind/heart (*xin* 心) was already indicated in the oracle bone and bronze inscriptions, and was abundantly used in the classic texts and expounded at length in the pre-Qin period. Besides the emotional/psychological responses, mind/heart (*xin* 心) is often related with a certain kind of action that a person would intend to undertake. Sometimes it overlapped with a kind of psychological activity, such as the sentence on the oracle bones: “the king made up his mind to conquer” (“王出(有)心正(征)”) . The classic literature provides rich resources for the responsive function of mind/heart (*xin* 心) . It is both involved with the free will of a person and also with the empathy and even compathy between a person with others. In the *Book of changes*, mind/heart (*xin* 心) occurred 8 times and all show its responsive function. As we have discussed already, four examples show its emotional response to the external situations while the other four reveal its intellectual response to external situations. Besides the

emotional/psychological and intellectual abilities possessed by the mind/heart (*xin* 心), the three hexagrams of Kan (坎), Mingyi (明夷) and Yi (益) show the power of free will. A person's mind/heart (*xin* 心) can make his/her own choice despite the external situations and even the Ultimate, this choice will transform the situation and even the life of that person toward a good or bad direction. The hexagrams of Kan (坎) indicate repeated dangers, however the mind/heart (*xin* 心) will go forward without being stopped. The hexagrams of Mingyi (明夷) also suggest that a person is in a very dangerous situation, but eventually, he/she is very certain about how to carry out his/her mind appropriately without yielding to the evil party risking his/her life. As to the Hexagram Yi (益), it displays two opposite types of mind/heart (*xin* 心): a sincere mind/heart (*xin* 心) seeking to benefit all below (有孚惠心) and a (greedy) mind/heart (*xin* 心) without regular rules (立心勿恆). It also indicates that these two opposite minds/hearts (*xin* 心) will lead to two opposite outcomes respectively: an auspicious consequence and an ominous consequence.

The responsive function of mind /heart (*xin* 心) was applied more broadly in the *Book of Poetry*. Because of the nature of the *Book of Poetry*, there are rich varieties of emotional/psychological responses made by mind/heart (心). Then, too, we see more

frequent use of free will in the *Book of Poetry*. There are several types of expressions related with mind/heart (心) to show the choice or the determination a person made out of his/her free will such as “my mind/heart (我心)”, “keep the mind/heart (秉心)” and “have the mind/heart (有心)”. “Bo Zhou (柏舟)” is a typical poem to show that mind/heart (*xin* 心) is in charge of the function of free will. It has three lines with the character “mind/heart (*xin* 心)”.

我心匪鉴、不可以茹。

My mind/heart is not a mirror; It cannot receive [all impressions].

我心匪石、不可转也。

My mind/heart is not a stone; It cannot be rolled about.

我心匪席、不可卷也。

My mind/heart is not a mat; It cannot be rolled up.

In these lines the poet announced that his/her mind/heart (*xin* 心) had the right to refuse the external impressions and manipulations imposed upon him/her. Together with the later four examples in the *Book of Changes*, the *Book of Poetry* illustrates that

mind/heart (*xin* 心) is not simply receiving, perceiving and responding to signals correctly or incorrectly but also has the ability to form his/her own will and choose to act according to it despite the external situations and even the laws of the Ultimate.

The responsive function of mind/heart (*xin* 心) is also shown in the empathy and even compathy with “others”. “Others” here refers to all except the self including, very specifically, another person or people, things and the Ultimate. In the classics, we see that not only a person had mind/heart (*xin* 心), but also the Ultimate, the Way of the Ultimate and the people as a collective noun also had mind/heart (*xin* 心), which constitutes the basic condition for empathy and agreement between minds/hearts (*xin* 心). In the *Book of Documents*, we see clear expressions like the mind/heart of human beings (*renxin* 人心), the mind/heart of the people (*minxin* 民心), the mind/heart of Tian (*Tianxin* 天心), the mind/heart of Di Above (*Shang di -zhiXin* 上帝之心) and the mind/heart of the Way (*Daoxin* 道心). In the *Analects*, Confucius quoted from the *Book of Documents* and used the term the mind/heart of Di (*Dixin* 帝心), which clearly indicates that the idea regarding the mind of the Ultimate was not a new idea that was just proposed after Confucius.

To achieve consensus is the ultimate form of a person's mind/heart (*xin* 心), the objective being the establishment of mutual empathy with the mind/heart (*xin* 心) of others. This state is described by various expressions such as “same mind/heart (*tongxin* 同心), “not two mind/hearts (*bu/wu-er-xin* 不 / 無貳心), “one mind/heart (*yixin* 一心). It was given high value in the the *Book of Poetry* and the *Book of Documents*. In the *Book of Poetry*, this expression of mind/heart (*xin* 心) only occurs twice. It was used in regard to the relation between husband and wife, and in connection with the Ultimate and the king Wu. In the poem “Gufeng”, it said: “[Husband and wife] should strive to be of the same mind and not let angry feelings get arise.”²⁰⁴ In the poem “Daming”, a minister told King Wu “The Di above (Shangdi 上帝) is being with you and please do not have a different mind/heart (*xin* 心) with Him.”²⁰⁵ To have the consensus mind/heart (*xin* 心) is one most important motifs in the *Book of Documents*. The consensus mind/heart occurred 8 times in different expressions and its opposite meaning occurred twice in the form of “being divided in mind/heart (*lixin* 離心)” and “thousands and myriads of minds/hearts (*yiwanzin* 億萬心)”. The following are the cases related with the consensus mind/heart or its opposite in the *Book of Documents*.

²⁰⁴ “Gufeng” in the *Book of Poetry*. The original text: “黽勉同心、不宜有怒”.

²⁰⁵ “Daming” in the *Book of Poetry*. The original text: “上帝臨汝，無貳爾心”.

1. 尔尚一乃心力，其克有勋。 - - 大禹谟

Do you proceed with united mind/heart and strength, so shall our enterprize be crowned with success. ---Counsels of Great Yu

2. 暨予一人猷同心。 - - 盘庚中

...and cherish one mind/heart with me, the One man. ---Pangeng II

3. 式敷民德，永肩一心。 - - 盘庚下

Reverently display your virtue in behalf of the people and ever maintain one mind/heart.--
-Pangeng III

4. 惟暨乃僚，罔不同心，以匡乃辟。 - - 說命上

Do you and your companions all cherish the same mind/heart to assist your sovereign, that I may follow my royal predecessors, and tread in the steps of my high ancestor. ---Charge to Yue I.

5. 受有臣亿万，惟亿万心；予有臣三千，惟一心。 ---泰誓上

Shou has hundreds of thousands and myriads of officers, but they have hundreds of thousands and myriads of minds; I have (but) three thousand officers, but they have one mind. ---Great Declaration I.

6. 受有亿兆夷人，离心离德。予有乱臣十人，同心同德。---泰誓中

Shou has hundreds of thousands and millions of ordinary men, divided in mind/heart and, divided in practice; I have of ministers, able to govern, ten men, one in mind/heart and one in practice. -- Great Declaration II

7. 不二心之臣--康王之诰

Ministers with no different minds/hearts. --Announcement of King Kang

8. 三后协心，同砥于道。--毕命

You three princes will have been one mind/heart, and will have equally pursued the proper way.---Charge to the Duke.

Confucius and his followers contributed their creative interpretations of the functions of mind/heart (*xin* 心) during the Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States Period. They devoted themselves to expounding the tradition systematically and exploring what it should ideally be as well as the reasons behind it. Their common representative works are the *Analects*, the *Book of Ritual* and the *Ten Wings*. These works

provided explanations and interpretations from different perspectives. The responsive function of mind/heart (*xin* 心) was the essential theoretic breakthrough of pre-Qin Confucianism. It not only merged the free will and empathetic aspects of mind/heart (*xin* 心) but also pointed out the reasons and principles to direct the balance between free will and empathy on the basis of a person's mind/heart (*xin* 心).

The core value regarding the responsive function of mind/heart (*xin* 心) can be summarized with a word, humanity (*ren*, 仁) or with the golden rule, “the way of *zhong* and *shu* (忠恕之道)” as taught by Zengzi. The way of *zhong*(忠) was interpreted by Zhu Xi as being faithful to one's mind/heart (*xin* 心) while the way of *shu* (恕) was understood as being empathetic to the mind/heart (*xin* 心) of another. Surveying the pre-Qin Confucian literature, I would argue that neither the way of *zhong* (忠) nor the way of *shu* (恕) can be separated from “*zhong* (中)”, which was translated as “the Center” or “the Mean”. The pre-Qin Confucians worked diligently to explain why and how to regulate one's mind/heart (*xin* 心) and how to make it possible to respond willingly and consciously according to the Center or the Mean (*zhong* 中) of the mind /heart (*xin* 心). Therefore, the

way of *zhong* (忠) is not simply being faithful to one's mind/heart (*xin* 心) but to the Center or the Mean (*zhong* 中) of one's mind/heart (*xin* 心).

The idea “*zhong* 中” had already been used in the classic Confucian works and received emphasis and was interpreted in the pre-Qin Confucian works. It often occurred separately and sometimes together with other word such as mind/heart (*zhongxin*, 中心), action (*zhongxing* 中行), way (*zhongdao* 中道), to be ordinary (*zhongyong* 中庸). In the *Analects*, Confucius mentioned it three times and held it to be one of the highest values inherited directly from Yao and Shun. Confucius traced the idea of “*zhong* 中” back to the words of Sage-King Yao “sincerely hold fast the due Mean” and sighed at how hard it was to find a person to possess the virtue of “*zhong* 中” (中庸) or realize the virtue of *zhong* in life (*zhong xing* 中信). The idea of “*zhong* 中” as one of the highest values always existed in the most ancient classic works such as the *Book of Changes* and the *Book of Documents*. In the *Book of Changes*, “*zhong* (中)” and “*zheng* (正)” are the two most important principles to judge whether a hexagram was auspicious or ominous. It was used in a few linear judgement texts and substantively used in the *Ten Wings*. In the *Book of the Documents*, it was often related with the Sage-King, the Ultimate and the people. All the Classic texts and pre-Qin Confucian works regarded it as the key to the transformation of selfhood and the universe.

What is the Center or Mean (zhong 中)? Does it universally exist in everyone's mind/heart (*xin* 心) or only in some particular mind/heart (s) (*xin* 心)? Is a person's mind/heart (*xin* 心) born to have the “zhong (中)” or is it established later? What is its relation with the Ultimate, with other people and things? How can one regulate one's mind/heart (*xin* 心) in accordance with the Center or Mean (zhong 中)? These questions will lead us to the cultivation of selfhood in pre-Qin Confucianism. I would explain them in detail below.

5.1.3 Body (shen 身) as the Basic Executive Unit to Fulfill Selfhood

It is not accurate to translate the Chinese character “*shen* 身” as “body” in English because it is different from the dualism between body and soul in western philosophy. In the present analysis I will adopt “body” to mean “*shen* (身)” for convenience but we have to be aware of the particular features of “*shen* (身)” in Confucianism. Many scholars have already noticed “*shen* 身” was not the equivalent of body in English. On the basis of David Hall's theory, Roger T. Ames regarded body (*shen* 身) as a process, an organic oneness

mind/heart (*xin* 心) in the relationship of polarism rather than dualism²⁰⁶. Yasuo Yuasa pointed out that *shen* (身) and mind/heart (*xin* 心) usually had different roles to play, though after training it was possible for them to achieve an inseparable union²⁰⁷. Yang Rubin thought *shen* (身) and mind/heart (*xin* 心) were two sides of the same body and each side could not exist alone without the other side²⁰⁸. Zhou Yuchen held that *shen* (身) could be understood in a narrow sense and in its broad sense according to its contexts. In its narrow sense it referred simply to the physical body while in its broad sense it meant one's whole life²⁰⁹. They all noticed the special feature of “*shen* 身” to be inseparable with mind/heart (心) as one being although they disagreed with what kind of relationship between *shen* (身) and mind/heart (*xin* 心) exists. Their exploration of the feature of “*shen* (身)” usually started with work of Mencius. Even when they traced the term back to the classic works, they did not examine the texts carefully and hence did not clearly point out what “*shen* (身)” originally meant, how its other meanings were derived, and what role

²⁰⁶ Roger T. Ames, “The Meaning of Body in Classical Chinese Thoughts,” *International Philosophical Quarterly*, 1984, Vol. 24, No.1,

²⁰⁷ Yasuo Yuasa, *The Body: Toward an Eastern Mind-Body Theory* (New York: SUNNY Press, 1987), 24-25.

²⁰⁸ Yang Rubin, *Rujia Shenti Guan* [儒家身體觀] (Taipei: Academia Sinica, 1996), 1.

²⁰⁹ Zhou Yuchen, *Shenti: Sixiang Xiuxing* [身体：思想与修行] (Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 2005), 132.

it played in the pre-Qin Confucian thoughts. After exploring the evolution of the character of “*shen* (身)” and its use in the classic and pre-Qin Confucian texts after Confucius, I believe that “*shen* (身)” is the most basic or smallest executive unit to fulfill selfhood. *Shen* (身) and mind/heart (*xin* 心) are two inseparable sides rather than two polars of the living self, which respectively emphasize the physical and spiritual aspects of the self. But at the same time each of them are interrelated and can even eventually achieve the oneness either from the perspective of *shen* (身) or that of mind/heart (*xin* 心).

The evolution of the character *shen* (身) reveals its original meaning as the belly of a person and its inseparable relationship with mind/heart (*xin* 心) as different sides or references of the upper body and the living self. *Shen* (身) and mind/heart (*xin* 心) are the references of the outer and inner sides or the physical and spiritual reference of the living self.

There are three especially common Chinese characters related with the meaning of body or the physical features of a person: *shen* (身), *ti* (體) and *xing* (形). As we survey the graphic evolution of these characters, we will see *shen* (身) may be the most ancient one. *Ti* (體) was found among bronze inscriptions while it did not have a presence on oracle bones. *Xing* (形) was neither found on oracle bones nor in the bronze inscriptions.

Ti (體) was composed by bone (*gu* 骨) and ritual vase (*li* 豊). It originally meant the flesh for sacrifice according to the *Rituals of Zhou* and later derived its meaning as the body of a person or animal²¹⁰. Form (*Xing* 形) was made of *model* (*kai* 开) and decorative pattern (*shan* 𠄎), which originally meant the form of what was made by a model and derived its meaning as the form of anything including the body²¹¹. They could have only occurred after the appearance of religious rituals and the skill of making things out of models. *Shen* (身) had various forms in the inscriptions of the oracle bones with the same typical feature that looked like a big belly. It maintained this graphic form in the bronze inscriptions, which still could be seen from the form of *Xiaozhuan* in Qin and Han dynasties. Li Xiaoding believed the original form of *shen* (身) was the character pregnancy (*yun* 孕) and both meant “pregnancy”. Later on, it derived its meaning as “body” as was explained in *Shuowen*²¹². confirmed the explanation of *shen* (身) as *gong* (躬) in *Shuowen* and further proved that the three synonyms *shen* (身), *gong* (躬) and *gong* (躬) actually all referred to the front and the back sides of the same upper part of a person’s body²¹³ from the top of the spine to the bottom of the spine, that is, the belly and the back (*Gong* (躬) got the form

²¹⁰ See note 35, Shirakawa Shizuka, 291.

²¹¹ Ibid, 101.

²¹² See note 39, Yu Shengwu, 35.

²¹³ Ibid, 36.


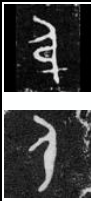

according to the image of the bones of the spine while *gong* (躬) got the form according to the whole image of the spine) . I agree with Chen Hannian's opinion that the original meaning of *shen* (身) was related to the belly of a person rather than to pregnancy (*yun* 孕) . The character pregnancy (*yun* 孕) on oracle bones had the image of a child or the sign of a woman besides the image of *shen* (身) while the examples of *shen* (身) had no such meaning . On the oracle bones, *shen* (身) and *yun* (孕) are two totally different characters in graphic forms and semantic sense. However, at least since the Zhou dynasty *shen* (身) can be used as an euphemism to imply the pregnancy of a woman. In the *Book of Poetry* there is a verse to describe King Wen's mother Great Ren giving birth to him.

大任有身，此生文王。《詩經·大雅·大明》

Great Ren got pregnant and gave birth to King Wen.

Here “有身” literally means “had *shen* (身) or a (rising) belly” . This expression was not found on the oracle bones but might be derived from what was in the belly (*shen* 身) or the rising belly or a new life (In the Zhou dynasty *shen* 身 had already been used to mean life or self) in the belly. Similar expressions still exist in contemporary Chinese .

Since the belly was the place for generating life for oneself or for a baby it came to indicate the meanings of the physical body, the living self and pregnancy. Thus we see *shen* (身), mind/heart (*xin* 心) and *gong* (躬 / 躬) are not polar opposite but different sides of the upper body that constitutes the essential elements of a living person. *Ti* (體) and *xing* (形) were originally related with inanimate things, either flesh for sacrifice or things cast from models. Only *shen* (身) was originally related with the life of a person and only *shen* (身) formed the oneness with mind/heart (*xin* 心) that was critical to the life of a person.

Body in Chinese	On Oracle Bones in Shang	On Bronzes in Zhou	Xiaozhuan in Qin and Han
shen (身)			






Body in Chinese	On Oracle Bones in Shang	On Bronzes in Zhou	Xiaozhuan in Qin and Han
ti (體)			
Form (xing 形)			
Pregnancy (Yun 孕)			

Table 8. My Eighth Table: The Graphic Evolution of Shen (身)/Ti (體)/Xing (形)/ Yun (孕)

The frequency of the occurrence of the three characters relating to the body also revealed the importance of *shen* (身) in the classic and pre-Qin Confucian tradition. Since “Zhongyong” and “the Great Learning” are the most important articles about the self-cultivation in the *Book of Rites*, I have also checked the frequency with which the three characters appear.

Body in Chinese	The Book of Changes	The Book of Poetry	The Book of Documents	The Analects	The Ten Wings	The Book of Rites (Zhongyong +Great Learning)
shen 身	2	9	22	17	15	129 (17+15)
ti 體	0	4	2	1	5	61 (4+1)
xing 形	1	0	1	0	6	26 (2+1)

Table 9. My Ninth Table : Shen (身)/Ti (體)/Xing (形)/ Yun (孕) in pre-Qin Texts

The meanings of *shen* (身) experienced a process of extension from “belly” to “pregnancy”, to “body”, to the life and self of a living person. Its original meaning as belly existed in the inscriptions of the oracle bones and can still be seen in the most ancient and reliable classic text *The Book of the Changes*. In the oracle bone inscriptions, there are many divinations about some kings’ illness on the *shen* (身), which usually referred to the part of belly instead of the whole body. The following are the examples collected by Chen Hannian. The third one from the right is 「貞：王疾身，隹(維)匕(妣)已害」, which means “the King of Shang had illness in the belly and Biji may have it hurt”.

Hexagram Gen (艮), the fourth linear judgement and their respective commentaries. It even survived in some sentence of the *Analects*.



艮：艮其背，不獲其身，行其庭，不見其人，无咎。
象傳：艮，止也。時止則止，時行則行，動靜不失其時，其道光明。艮其止，止其所也。上下敵應，不相與也。是以不獲其身，行其庭不見其人，无咎也。

象傳：兼山，艮；君子以思不出其位。

艮：六四：艮其身，无咎。

象傳：艮其身，止諸躬也。

The Hexagram Gen (艮) is about the significance of “stop (zhi, 止)”. Except for the sixth line, the five lines used different parts of human beings as metaphors to illustrate when to stop and how to stop in the process of an event. From the bottom line these five parts of a body are the toes (*zhi* 趾), the calves of the legs (*fei* 腓), the waist (*xian* 限), the belly (*shen* 身), and the cheekbone (*fu* 輔). The order of the successive five lines in the context determines the literal meaning of “*shen* 身”. In the fourth line it clearly stands for the belly. The judgment of *the Hexagram Gen* (艮) indicates the opposite positions of *shen*

(身) and back (bei 背). The pre-Qin Confucian commentary “Xiangzhuan” interpreted “shen 身” in the fourth line with the term “gong 躬”. This corresponded with *Shuowen*’s interpretation and Chen *Hannian*’s analysis regarding their meanings according to their graphic forms on the oracle bones. *Zhengyi* further pointed out that “shen 身” in the fourth line literally meant the upper body and actually meant the action conducted by the whole body. This interpretation is consistent with what belly (*shen* 身) and back (*gong* 躬) referred to the same part of a living person from different perspectives. From the above we can see in the *Book of Changes* *shen* (身) still maintained its original meaning as belly and already also involved a sense of oneness with the back (*gong* / *bei* , 躬 / 背) as the upper body and the whole living body from head to toes.

The meaning of *shen* 身 as the upper body derived from the original meaning “belly” still existed in the *Analects*. There is a teaching of Confucius about traditional rules for dressing, among which one rule was concerned about the length of a superior man’s sleeping dress (*qinyi*, 寢衣). Some famous Confucian scholars, even including Kong Anguo and Zhu Xi, interpreted *qinyi* (寢衣) as a sleeping covering since it did not make sense to have such a long sleeping dressing that was one and half times as long as one’s body from head to toes. However, if it were so it would be a covering in stead of a dress that would not fit in the context about dressing. Qian Mu resolved this problem by saying

that *shen* (身) could refer to actually two different measurements of the body: from head to toes or from under the neck to above the legs. He took the latter and believed the sleeping dressing was down to the knees. The following was Confucius teaching about the rules of dressing and the underling was the rule about sleeping dress.

君子不以紺緇飾。紅紫不以為褻服。當暑，衫絺綌，必表而出之。緇衣羔裘，素衣麋裘，黃衣狐裘。褻裘長。短右袂。必有寢衣，長一身有半。狐貉之厚以居。去喪，無所不佩。非帷裳，必殺之。羔裘玄冠不以弔。吉月，必朝服而朝。

The superior man did not use a deep purple, or a puce color, in the ornaments of his dress. Even in his underwear, he did not wear anything of a red or reddish color. In warm weather, he had a single garment either of coarse or fine texture, but he wore it displayed over an inner garment. Over lamb's fur he wore a garment of black; over fawn's fur one of white; and over fox's fur one of yellow. The fur robe of his underwear was long, with the right sleeve short. He required his sleeping dress to be one and half as long as his upper body. When staying at home, he used thick furs of the fox or the badger. When he put off mourning, he wore all the appendages of the girdle. His undergarment, except when it was required to be of the curtain shape, was made of silk cut narrow above and wide below. He did not wear lamb's fur or a black cap on a visit of condolence. On the first day of the month he put on his court robes, and presented himself at court.

We also see *shen* (身) was frequently used as the whole living body from head to toes in the bronze inscriptions and the classic works. From this meaning, it derived other related meanings such as life and the person. Usually its physical or external aspect was emphasized but it was inseparable one with the spiritual aspect. That is to say, it may emphasize its physical feature of the whole body, but it also means the totality of a person including the body and the mind/heart (*xin* 心). Some bronze inscriptions often recorded the information of the divination to protect or preserve the *shen* (身) of a certain king or prince²¹⁴. *Shen* (身) here meant the whole living body from head to toes, that is, the physical life.

The same usage also occurred in the *Book of Poetry*. There are two verses concerned with preserving the body or the life as shown in the following.

既明且哲、以保其身。--蒸民

Intelligent and wise was he, which preserved his body (life). --zhengmin

休矣皇考、以保明其身。--訪落

²¹⁴The original text : 師克蠶 : 「干(捍)害(禦)王身 , 乍(作)爪牙。」 冀公壺 : 「永保其身」

Admirable art thou, O great Father, [Condescend] to preserve and enlighten my life
(Fangluo)

Shen 身 occurred in the *Book of Poetry* nine times. All except one meant “pregnancy” while the others meant “the body” or derived their meanings as “the life” and “the person”. It was clear in the following two verses (the first one actually repeated four times in the poem):

如可贖兮、人百其身-- 黃鳥

Could he be redeemed, we would give a hundred people for his life (*shen* 身)----Huangniao

我聞其聲、不見其身。--何人斯

I heard his voice, but did not see his body/his person (*shen* 身).--Herensi

The literal meaning of *shen* (身) in these two verses is body, but not a dead body.

Therefore, it actually referred to the person.

The next two verses are a little bit different. The original texts and their translations appear as the following.

終溫且惠、淑慎其身。--燕燕

Both gentle was she and docile, virtuously careful of her person. --Yanyan

凡百君子、各敬爾身。胡不相畏、不畏于天。--雨無正

All ye officers, Let each of you revere your body/life (what your manner was embodied at their positions).

How do ye not stand in awe of one another? Ye do not stand in awe of Heaven. -- Yuwuzheng

In the first verse “*shen* (身)” was used to emphasize the lady’s virtues embodied in her behavior. The second verse admonished the officials that they should revere their body/life. *Shen* (身) in these two verses are involved with virtues and manners that are more spiritual than physical, and more cultivated than born with. Therefore, *shen* (身) is not simply a physical living body but the embodiment of the physical and the spiritual self that can change or be cultivated.

Shen (身) as the oneness of the cultivable self appeared frequently in the *Book of Documents* and pre-Qin Confucian works. This meaning became the main concern about *Shen* (身) in the above works.

The semantic evolution of the character *shen* 身 displays the process of extension in the size of the body it referred to. At least since the Zhou dynasty the concept of *shen* (身) started to experience this process as we can see from both the bronze inscriptions and the classic Confucian corpus. Its meaning extended from the front side of the upper body in the Shang dynasty material, to the upper body from shoulder to waist, then to what have in the upper body (being pregnant), then to the whole body from head to toes, and finally to the life or self of a person including the body and mind in their broad sense. The derived meanings of *shen* (身) as the body from head to toes and as life or self of person have become the most common senses from the period of the late Zhou dynasty until the present. However, the other meanings like the upper body and pregnancy are also found in pre-Qin Confucian works. If we exam this early material carefully we can discern a pattern of life extension that have the upper body at the external center and have the mind/heart (*xin* 心) at its internal center. Mind/heart (*xin* 心) as the inner center plays the role as the subject of selfhood and *shen* 身(the upper body) as the external center extending to realize selfhood. *Shen* 身 (the whole living body), in pre-Qin confucianism, has become the most basic unit or center through which to cultivate and realize selfhood. In addition it also has mind/heart (*xin* 心) as its inner most center and meanwhile extends outward to form oneness with others.

5.2 The Cultivation of Sagehood

5.2.1 The Nature of Pre-Qin Confucian Sagehood

Robert Neville regarded the soldier, the sage and the saint as ancient models of spiritual perfection²¹⁵. He believed that the ideal soldier, the sage and the saint were respectively the model of psychic integrity, the model of enlightenment, and the model of perfection of the heart²¹⁶. His classification and definition are pertinent and enlightening relative to the understanding of sagehood. However, when we observe the pre-Qin Confucian notion of sagehood, we will see the diminishing of the boundaries between the three categories. The pre-Qin Confucian sage has all the qualities as a soldier, a sage and a saint since the cultivation of Confucian sagehood starts from the basic level as a soldier (*shi* 士) and is deeply rooted in the knowing and fulfilling of the mandate from the Ultimate in person and in the world. It is a ceaseless process of self-transformation and the transformation of the world. In the *Analects*, Confucius taught there were three ways for a superior man: humanity, wisdom and courage²¹⁷. In “The Doctrine of the Mean (Zhongyong 中庸)”, Confucius told the Duke Ai that “wisdom, humanity and courage, these three are the universal virtues.”²¹⁸ Wisdom, humanity and courage respectively manifest the dimension of enlightenment, the perfection of the heart and psychic integrity.

²¹⁵ Robert C. Neville, *Soldier, Sage, Saint* (New York: Fordham University Press) 1979, 1.

²¹⁶ Ibid.

²¹⁷ The *Analects* 14:28.

²¹⁸ See note 84, Wing-Tsit Chan, 105.

Steven Angle proposed the tension between sagehood's elusiveness and its accessibility as the defining feature of Confucian sagehood²¹⁹. He listed many supreme qualities that Confucian sagehood was supposed to possess such as creativity, political authority, keen perception, moral virtue and situational flexibility²²⁰. Those qualities can be classified under the traditional categories of wisdom and humanity as well as their social or political expressions in the world. Although his emphasis on Confucian sagehood was attached to the qualities of Confucian sages, he has recognized its defining features were closely related with the Ultimate while its cultivation was accessible.

Tu Wei-ming interpreted Confucian sagehood from the perspective of relations with the self at the center responding to the humanity, the transcendent, the community and the cosmos. He defined sagehood as an authentic manifestation of human nature,²²¹ that is, the most authentic, genuine, and sincere humanity²²², that led to the ultimate self-transformation and the participation of the communal and cosmic transformation²²³. Humanity was the public property of the cosmos via which a person could consciously establish connections with the Ultimate, other people and the cosmos²²⁴. Tu Wei-ming defined Confucian sagehood from the perspective of relations rather than certain qualities or virtues. His study about sagehood developed the New Confucians' theory about humanity which interpreted humanity (*ren* 仁) oConfucianism from the perspectives of

²¹⁹ Stephen C. Angel, 14.

²²⁰ Ibid., 14-15.

²²¹ Tu Wei-ming, *Humanity and Self-Cultivation* (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1979), 96.

²²² Ibid., 111.

²²³ See note 20, Tu Wei-ming, 78, 102-116.

²²⁴ Ibid, 102

modern philosophy and religion. Although pre-Qin confucians attached great emphasis to the function of Humanity (*nature* 性) in the cultivation of sagehood, they actually revealed a new way to connect the self to the Ultimate without denying the old traditional understanding.

Inspired by the studies on sagehood conducted by the scholars mentioned above, I would like to further explore the nature of pre-Qin Confucian sagehood. According to what we have discussed regarding the etymologic, textual studies on the *sheng* (聖) and the relations between the Ultimate and the self, I believe that the Confucian concept of sagehood in the pre-Qin period is the full enlightenment and the ultimate transformation of the self as well as “others” that happens through his/her willing subjection to the Ultimate, both the transcendent and the immanent Ultimate. The nature of the pre-Qin Confucian sagehood lies in the relation between the self and the Ultimate. The willing subjection, the full enlightenment and the ultimate transformation of the self are the full embodiment of the relationship between the self and the Ultimate from the perspective of the self. The three elements are closely related with each other. They require the full devotion of the self’s will and intellect and when accomplished the effect of transformation of the self as well as others in accordance with the Way of the Ultimate. In the pre-Qin period, the Confucians had productive interpretations of the immanent Ultimate and the way in which the self should respond to the immanent Ultimate.

5.2.2 *The Willing Subjection and Full Enlightenment*

The willing subjection and full enlightenment of the self to the Ultimate were the intrinsic requirements for pre-Qin Confucian sagehood and deeply rooted in Chinese ancient tradition. They are different but cannot be separated from each other. The willing subjection of the self to the Ultimate demands the will of the self willingly subjected to the Ultimate. It is the pre-condition for the full enlightenment of the Way or the Mandate of the Ultimate. The full enlightenment of the self requires not only the willingness of the self but also the intellectual engagement of the self. The willingness and the intellectual activities are involved with functions of the mind/heart (*xin* 心) as the subject of the self to choose, feel, think and respond to the Ultimate and “others”.

The willing subjection and the full enlightenment were strongly indicated in the etymological evolution of the character *sheng* 聖, the written record from the oracle bones in the Shang dynasty, the bronzes to the classic works in the Zhou dynasty. Pre-Qin Confucian thinking revealed them more clearly, especially in such works as the *Analects*, the *Book of Rites*, the *Ten Wings*.

The willing subjection and the enlightenment of the self to the Ultimate were encoded in the character *sheng* 聖. No matter how much change the graphic and semantic character of the term *sheng* (聖) experienced over the course of history, it maintained the basic message that a sage (or being sagacious) was supposed to have a big ear listening, understanding and following what the Ultimate mandated. The oracle bones presented the

very basic elements of the character *sheng* (聖): the combination of “a big ear (er 耳)” and “a mouth (kou 口)” or “mouths” (𠂇, 𠂈, 𠂉, 𠂊, 𠂋). Later on in the late Shang dynasty, we see a figure of a bowing person under the big ear (𠂇𠂋). Although it is the mouth/opening (*kou* 口) on the oracle bones it is certain that the person was humble and reverent, listening attentively with the big ears. The bronzes made it clear by adding the horizontal line (𠂇𠂋) at first and then the radical “earth (*tu* 土)” (𠂇𠂋, 𠂇𠂋) under the figure of a person (indicating the place where the person performed the ritual to receive the message from the mouth (*kou* 口)). Later the graphic combination of person “ren 人” and earth (*tu* 土) was combined into a radical “*ting* 亼”. Its original image in the inscriptions of the bronzes and small seal characters was still a person performing a certain ritual standing at a place made of earth (𠂇, 𠂇, 𠂇).

This place might be a high place at the beginning and later on became “*Mingtang* 明堂” “Mingtang” was the most sacred place in the temple-palace for kings and princes to offer sacrifice to the Ultimate and their ancestors and to meet with the princes and ministers who came to discuss political issues since the Shang and Zhou dynasties. The image of the reverent posture and the big ear indicates that the sagacious person or king would act that way only when communicating with the Ultimate and their ancestors (their ancestors

serving as the medium or agents to communicate with the Ultimate for that sagacious person/king). The place should be the Great Room (*Taishi* 太室), the most sacred place in the *Mingtang* (*mingtang* 明堂) to offer sacrifice to the Ultimate. Therefore, the two openings/mouths (*kou* 口) in the oracle bone character *sheng* (聖) might originally refer to the Ultimate and the ancestors. The position and the function of the ancestors in the sacrifice determines that the ultimate purpose of the ritual was to receive, understand and follow the Mandate of the Ultimate.

The use of *sheng* (聖) in the ancient and classic literature shows *sheng* 聖 was originally an adjective to describe the intellectual state of a person that enables him/her to hear, understand and follow the message of the Ultimate. Anyone who possessed that gift or ability could be described as being sagacious (聖) or described as a sagacious person (聖人). *Sheng* (聖) was sometimes used as a noun abbreviated for a sagacious person (聖人), and sometimes it was employed as an honorable title to praise a person who was sagacious.

Reverence (*jing* 敬) and Sincerity (*Cheng* 誠)

The willing subjection of the self was expressed in terms of reverence (*jing* 敬) and sincerity (*cheng* 誠) by the Confucians during the pre-Qin period. The ideas of reverence and sincerity had been embodied in the strict requirements for the rituals that governed all aspects of the life related with the Ultimate, the ancestors, the political, social and family activities. The pre-Qin Confucians after Confucius pointed them out and thus granted the spiritual content in the rituals.

In the *Analects*, “reverence (*jing* 敬)” occurred 21 times. Reverence was required for the self in dealing all the relations with the Ultimate²²⁵ and “others” including the ancestors²²⁶, the parents²²⁷, other people²²⁸ and public service²²⁹. Working with reverence in the public service was particularly emphasized. It occurred four times. Reverence was clearly regarded as the basic quality for the self-cultivation²³⁰. It has universal values that

²²⁵ *The Analects*: 6:22; 樊迟问知。子曰：“务民之义，敬鬼神而远之，可谓知矣。” 19: 1.

子张曰：“士见危致命，见得思义，祭思敬，丧思哀，其可已矣。”

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ Ibid, 2:7. 子游问孝。子曰：“今之孝者，是谓能养。至于犬马，皆能有养；不敬，何以别乎？”

4:18: 子曰：“事父母几谏。见志不从，又敬不违，劳而不怨。”

²²⁸ Ibid, 5:16 子谓子产，“有君子之道四焉：其行己也恭，其事上也敬，其养民也惠，其使民也

义。” 13:4 “上好礼，则民莫敢不敬；上好义，则民莫敢不服；上好信，则民莫敢不用情。” 15:33

“不庄以涖之，则民不敬。” 5: 17 子曰：“晏平仲善与人交，久而敬之。”

²²⁹ Ibid, 1:5 子曰：“道千乘之国：敬事而信，节用而爱人，使民以时。” 13:19: 樊迟问仁。子曰：“居处恭，执事敬，与人忠。虽之夷狄，不可弃也。” 子曰：“事君，敬其事而后其食。” 16:10: 季氏：孔子曰：“君子有九思：视思明，听思聪，色思温，貌思恭，言思忠，事思敬，疑思问，忿思难，见得思义。”

²³⁰ Ibid, 15:6 子路问君子。子曰：“修己以敬。” 19:6 子张问行。子曰：“言忠信，行笃敬，虽蛮貊之邦行矣。” 12:5 君子敬而无失，与人恭而有礼。四海之内，皆兄弟也。

can establish a positive relationship with the Ultimate and other people, even with those in the nation of barbarians. Thus, the willing subjection to the Ultimate was not only manifested in the action but in the true feelings of the self toward the Ultimate as well as “others”.

“Sincerity (*cheng* 誠) ” was expounded in depth in the “Zhongyong”. Sincerity was interpreted to have the ontological dimension, which was possessed by the Way of the Ultimate and could be attained by the way of human beings. Human being could become sincere through study and become enlightened about the Ultimate through sincerity. The highest sincerity led to the complete fulfillment of the Nature (*Xing* 性) of oneself and others and hence bring the transformation of the self and the world. In the “Zhongyong” we can see that sincerity meant to be both sincere and true to the self and “others”, which constitutes the characteristics of the Way of the Ultimate and the sages. In this sense the cultivation of sagehood requires the self to be sincere and true while being subjected to the Ultimate.

5.2.3 To Establish the Relation between the Self and the Ultimate

There are various ways to establish the relation between the self and the Ultimate in the cultivation of sagehood. The Ultimate might descend and speak to a sagacious person directly such as King Wen. In the *Book of Poetry* King Wen was said to be on the left and

the right of the Ultimate (*Di* 帝)²³¹ as hearing the teachings of the Ultimate.²³² However, the common ancient ways to know the will of the Ultimate were most often achieved through performing divination, offering sacrifice and observing the nature. It was believed that sagacious individuals might hear the Mandate of the Ultimate via the spirits of their ancestors who could help communicate between their descendants and the Ultimate. They may also try to get it by asking professional diviners who knew the tradition of divination with tortoise shell or milfoil. Its usage and theory were written in the *Book of Changes*. Besides, a sagacious person could also figure out the will or the way of the Ultimate from the phenomena of nature. This way had been incorporated into the theory of the divination book the *Book of Changes*.

In the transitional period between Shang and Zhou dynasties the importance of the living people had been emphasized. The objects of “hearing” were extended from the Ultimate, the ancestors, the nature to the wise of the upper class and even to the common people whose words or acts might reflect or be consistent with the will or the Way of the Ultimate. In the Zhou Dynasty it was believed that the people embodied the will of the

²³¹ “Wen Wang” in the *Book of Poetry*: King Wen ascends and descends, on the left and the right of God (文王陟降、在帝左右)。

²³² “Huang Yi” in the *Book of Poetry*: God said to king Wen, 'Be not like those who reject this and cling to that; Be not like those who are ruled by their likings and desires(帝謂文王：無然畔援，無然歆羨)’. God said to king Wen, 'I am pleased with your intelligent virtue; Not loudly proclaimed nor portrayed; Without extravagance or changeableness; Without consciousness of effort on your part, In accordance with the pattern of God '(帝謂文王：予懷明德，不大聲以色，不長夏以革。不識不知，順帝之則。)。 God said to king Wen, 'Take measures against the country of your foes; Along with your brethren, Get ready your scaling ladders; And your engines of onfall and assault, To attack the walls of Chong (帝謂文王：詢爾仇方，同爾弟兄。以爾鉤援，與爾臨冲，以伐崇墉。)’

Ultimate and that the Ultimate followed the will of the people. By contrast, the subject of “hearing” had been limited to a few wise individuals who could hear and follow the will of the Ultimate no matter whether he/she received the message directly or indirectly. In ancient times they might arise from those who knew how to communicate with the Ultimate, for example from among the witches, wizards and later from among the priestly class who usually comprised of the first sons of the noble families. The best or most powerful among them usually became the sage-king. The others could also be praised as “sagacious” if they followed the way of the Ultimate as we can see from the bronze inscriptions and classic works. When the patriarchal-feudal system had been established, the kings made it a royal privilege to communicate with the Ultimate via the rituals of sacrifice. This practice was consistent with the development of the patriarchal-feudal system, the inscriptions of the unearthed oracle bones and bronzes and the classic works. With the establishment of the patriarchal-feudal system since in the Xia dynasty, the king became both the religious and political head who had the privilege of sacrificing to the Ultimate and of dealing with the political issues at the Temple-Palace “Mingtang (明堂) ”.

The pre-Qin Confucians developed a lofty yet universal way for all to establish the relation between the self and the Ultimate. First, they attached great emphasis to the enlightenment of the self to gain full knowledge of the Ultimate and the way in which one could transform the lives of both oneself and others. As Steven Angle noticed “being sagacious” (*sheng* 聖) became a very lofty and mysterious state that few people, except for a few legendary sage-kings, could reach. Second, the subject of “hearing” or “being

sagacious” was liberated from the privileged classes and returned back to all human beings. Pre-Qin Confucians did not deny the traditional ways such as rituals and divination being performed only by some particular groups. However, they explored a universal way for everyone to become related to the Ultimate by turning inside, and knowing and responding to Nature (*xing* 性) with one’s mind-heart (*xin* 心). They pointed out that Nature (*Xing* 性) and mind-heart (*xin* 心) were the universal basis for all to establish the relation between the self and the Ultimate. Nature (*Xing* 性) was the Mandate of *Tian* for each one, serving as the immanent Ultimate in each life. Mind-heart (*xin* 心) possessed the capacities to decide and respond intellectually, emotionally and empathetically. Humanity was the universal value or virtue that each person could cultivate and manifest to establish the relation with the Ultimate and all “others”. The cultivation of sagehood requires a person’s reverence and sincerity to make himself/herself willingly subordinated to the Ultimate, fully enlightened and ultimately transformed. Thus any person could potentially establish the relation between the self and the Ultimate although a few would completely realize it.

5.2.4 Transformation

Transformation of the self includes physical transformation and spiritual transformation. Physical transformation was mainly shown in the ritual performance and activities carried on in temples, at court, in society and at home. It was mainly concerned about how and what a person did in their relations with the Ultimate and “others”. The

tradition of rituals was believed to have begun very early in Chinese history. Its system was completed and enhanced during the Zhou dynasty. It covered and governed nearly all aspects of the life of the noble class. Confucius said he still knew the rituals of the Xia and the Shang dynasties as well as their changes, however his words could not be approved because of the insufficient materials of the historical records²³³. He praised the ritual system of the Zhou dynasty as complete and elegant²³⁴. However, as Mou Zongsan has pointed out, the ancient ritual system was faced with the risk of collapse because the nobles could not give life to the rituals at the end of the Zhou dynasty.

Confucius and his followers tried to solve this problem mainly from the perspectives of universalism, spirituality and the subjectivity of selfhood. The relation of the self and the Ultimate did not particularly exist only between the nobles and the Ultimate but universally existed between each person and the Ultimate. As we have discussed above the pre-Qin Confucians revealed that every person was possible and capable of establishing the relation between the self and the Ultimate by responding correctly to his/her own Nature (*xin* 性) with his/her own mind-heart (*xin* 心). There all human beings would be eligible for the transformation of the self despite their gender, class and social differences.

This turning toward the inner life not only provide an universal way for every person to establish the intimate relationship with the Ultimate, it also reshaped the way of self-transformation. Self-transformation requires transformation in action and transformation in the realm of spirituality. Therefore the rituals involved more than the

²³³ See *the Analects*, 2: 23; 3:9.

²³⁴ *Ibid*, 3:14.

requirements in the things to offer and the physical participation of the people. Humanity had to be cultivated inside and manifested in the rituals that governed all the aspects of human life as well as in the relations of a person with the Ultimate and “others”. The transformation of the self thus became a process of both physical and spiritual transformation. The fulfillment of the selfhood did not rely on any external physical or social conditions but on the willingness of the self to know and embody the Nature, the immanent Ultimate within a person’s own life.

5.2.5 The Process of the Cultivation of Sagehood

I choose the word “cultivation” rather than “making” because sagehood in pre-Qin Confucianism is not simply made by external power but cultivated from inside of a person’s life with the help of external power. The cultivation of sagehood in pre-Qin Confucianism has a dual system which is respectively represented by the rituals and humanity. The rituals refer to the ritual tradition completed in the Zhou dynasty while humanity referred to the spiritual tradition developed by the pre-Qin Confucians. Like many concepts such as body (*shen* 身) v.s mind/heart (*xin* 心), the outside (*biao* 表) v.s the inside (*li* 裏) noticed by David Hall and Roger Ames the ritual tradition and the spiritual tradition are essentially one system with two sides. The rituals focused on the physical response of the self in reality while humanity focused on the spiritual response of the self in the area of the spirituality. In the pre-Qin Confucianism each side could not stand

alone and it would be argued both would be eventually expressed by the person in the relations with the Ultimate and “others”.

The cultivation of sagehood is concerned about how the self willingly becomes subjected to the Ultimate, achieves full enlightenment and the ultimate transformation. Considering the particular relations between the self, the Ultimate and “others”, I propose there are vertical and horizontal dimensions going through the dual system of the pre-Qin cultivation of sagehood represented by the rituals and humanity. The vertical dimension deals with the relation between the self and the Ultimate while the horizontal dimension deals with the relation between the self and “others”.

5.2. 5.1 The Vertical Dimension of the Cultivation of sagehood

The cultivation of sagehood in the pre-Qin Confucianism is first and primarily dealing with the vertical relation between the self and the Ultimate. The Ultimate has the transcendent form in the name of *Tian* (天) or *Di* (帝) beyond the world and the immanent form in the name of Nature (*xing* 性) within the life of the creation including human being. The transcendent Ultimate is the origin of creation, the highest sovereign and judge of the natural and social world, which is the ancient Chinese tradition transmitted at least from the Shang dynasty to the pre-Qin Confucians. Nature (*Xing* 性) is the immanent Ultimate for each and all within their own lives, which is revealed by the pre-Qin Confucians. Accordingly, there are external and internal forms of enlightenment of transformation for

the self achieved by being willingly subordinated to the Ultimate. In either form there are their respective authorities and processes for the cultivation of sagehood.

As far as the vertical dimension is concerned, the cultivation of sagehood in the pre-Qin Confucianism requires the self's willing subjection to the Ultimate. The Ultimate is the absolute authority although the self has free will and therefore can choose to follow or not follow. In the vertical dimension the main concern for the self is to know and follow the Way or the Mandate of the Ultimate. Except the rare case of born sages, learning is the universal way for all to become enlightened and subjected to the Ultimate. It is a gradual process of making up one's mind, becoming completely enlightened and ultimately transformed and finally fitting the Way of the Ultimate while whatever he/she does. It is a process by which one comes to know and reach the Ultimate the physical and spiritual transformation. Confucius expressed his personal experience:

子曰：“吾十有五而志于学，三十而立，四十而不惑，五十而知天命，六十而耳顺，七十而从心所欲，不逾矩。”

Confucius said: At fifteen my mind was set on learning. At thirty my character had been formed. At forty I had no more perplexities. At fifty I knew the Mandate of Heaven (T'ien-ming). At sixty I was at ease with whatever I heard. At seventy I could follow my heart's desire without transgressing moral principles.”²³⁵

²³⁵ See note 84, Wing-Tsit Chan, 22.

In the vertical dimension of sagehood cultivation it is ideally and theoretically possible for the self to be one with the Ultimate in the sense of following the Way of the Ultimate or fulfilling the Mandate of the Ultimate. However, the Confucian texts carefully remind us that the self could not be equal with the Ultimate even when the self was fully developed as a sage. The transcendent Ultimate played the role as the Origin, the Sovereign and the Judge of the universe including the human society. The Way of the Ultimate was always giving life to all things without any anxieties while the sages could not make it without concerns and worries for the world²³⁶.

Sagehood cultivation in the vertical dimension cannot be done without the guidance of the authorities that represent the Ultimate. Since there are the transcendent and immanent forms of the Ultimate, there are two different sets of authorities: the external authorities and the internal authorities.

The external authorities include the transcendent Ultimate and those that manifest the Will or the Way of the Ultimate such as the previous sages, the ritual system, classic literature and nature. The authorities can also be classified into two traditions: a learning tradition at school and a ritual tradition in the temples and courts. Confucius is regarded as the example and the first teacher for the school of Confucianism who taught the words of the previous sage-kings, the ritual system and the classic literature to all regardless of their classes and social status. The ritual tradition lay in the hands of the nobles who were often political officials and religious leaders found at different social status. The king was

²³⁶ “Xici I” from the *Ten Wings* for the *Book of Changes*.

regarded as the son of the Heaven and hence the head of the nation and the religion. He served both as the high priest and the king. In the Xia, Shang and Zhou dynasties the learning and ritual traditions a union system and only accessible to the noble families. The most complete and best ritual system was the Zhou Rituals designed by Duke Zhou. The Rituals governed nearly all aspects of the lives of the noble class particularly the political and religious life. Confucius commented that the Rituals were made to manifest the Way of Heaven and govern the feelings of human beings²³⁷. It was critical to the survival of a person as well as a nation. From the period of the Spring and the Autumn the learning tradition and the ritual tradition began to be divided. The learning tradition began to be accessible to all. The ritual tradition was also more accessible than before because those who learned well and made great contributions to the nation could become new nobles and served not only at court but also in the Temples. Therefore the external authorities for the sagehood cultivation in the pre-Qin Confucianism are the rituals, the legendary sage-kings who made and embodied the rituals, the teachers who taught the rituals and the officials including the kings who performed the rituals. In the *Analects* it recorded how Confucius asked and learned the rituals while observing the ritual performance in the temple of Lu²³⁸.

The internal authorities mainly consist of Nature (*xing* 性) and mind/heart (*xin* 心).

As the immanent Ultimate, Nature (*xing* 性) dissolved the strong tension between the self and the transcendent Ultimate because Nature (*xing* 性) was both the Mandate derived from

²³⁷ From “Conveyance of Rituals” (Liyun 禮運), *The Book of Rites*.

²³⁸ The *Analects*: 3:15; 10:14.

the Ultimate as well as an inseparable part of the self. It constituted the core of selfhood. The mind/heart (*xin* 心) serves as the subject of the self. It has the intellectual, emotional and empathetic functions that is capable of exploring, knowing and properly responding to his/her own Nature (*xing* 性), the internalized Ultimate. The self is able to rely on his/her own mind/heart (*xin* 心) to discern and hear the inner voice of the Ultimate in the process of sagehood cultivation. Therefore, the self is possible to become sincerely subjected to the Ultimate to fulfill the real selfhood.

In the vertical dimension of sagehood cultivation the self has two directions through which to search for the Ultimate and through which to be willingly subjected to the Ultimate. One is upward, attempting to know and establish the relation with the transcendent Ultimate with the assistance of the external authorities represented by the sage-kings, the rituals, the classic literature and the nature. The other is turning deeply inward trying to recognize and follow his/her own Nature (*Xing* 性), the immanent Ultimate with his/her own mind/heart (*xin* 心). The two directions are different but constitute one organic system of the vertical dimension of sagehood cultivation. They meet at the *shen* (身) which is the most basic unit from which the self can start the process of the cultivation of sagehood.

5.2. 5.2 The Horizontal Dimension of the Cultivation of Sagehood

The horizontal dimension of the cultivation of sagehood deals with the relation between the self and “others”. The cultivation of sagehood in the horizontal dimension is an endless process of enlarging the self from the *shen* (身) to other people and even to all things in the universe. In essence it is a process of applying the Way of the Ultimate to all “others” in the world and connecting “others” with the self to make a larger self. There are no “others” in its absolute, or strict sense in Confucianism. Like in the feudal-patriarchal construction of society, selfhood extends from the self as the center to the family, then to the nation and eventually to the world all under Heaven, achieving coherence with the Ultimate. The transformation of the self extended to the self to the family, to the nation and then to all under Heaven. The transformation of the self will eventually bring about the transformation of the world in accordance with the Way of the Ultimate. In terms of time, it is an endless process since the Ultimate is eternally changing, creating and beyond the full comprehension of human beings. In terms of space, it is also an endless process since the extending of the self transformation will not stop until it is one with the people, the world and the Ultimate.

In terms of stages the “Great Learning” listed “three items” and “eight steps” for the cultivation of sages. The three items include manifesting the clear character of man, loving the people, and abiding in the highest good while the eight steps consist of the investigation of things, the extension of knowledge, sincerity of the will, rectification of the mind, cultivation of the personal life, the regulation of the family, national order, and

world peace²³⁹. The three items and eight steps are more than educational, moral and political programs²⁴⁰. They are, rather, concerned with the enlightenment and the transformation of the self from one to all until each and all willingly and completely abide in the highest good.

When the full enlightenment and ultimate transformation of the self is extended from one person to all, that person will become one with the people, the world and the Ultimate in accordance with the Way of the Ultimate. Under that circumstance, each and all under Heaven will be in order, peace and prosperity will occur. That person who achieves this will be called a sage, or a sagacious or a great man according to pre-Qin Confucian works. However, that is the ideal state of the full realization of selfhood. In the eyes of Confucius even the legendary sage-kings such as Yao and Shun did not completely accomplish the stage of bringing order, peace and prosperity to the people.²⁴¹

In the horizontal dimension the main concern for the self is how to get rid of the barriers between the self and “others”. Full enlightenment is still required. It is not only the full enlightenment of the Mandate of the Ultimate but also the clear comprehension of “others”. Besides intellectually knowing the “others”, the self has to be empathetic with “others”, feeling, considering and eventually acting from the perspective of the “others”. In this process the self comes to regard “others” as being part of a larger self. However it does not mean the self loses its own essence and becomes “the other” or the “other” loses its essence and become another version of the self. The self always follows the true

²³⁹ See note 84, Wing-Tsit Chan, 84, 86.

²⁴⁰ Ibid, 84.

²⁴¹ *The Analects*: Xianwen 30; Yongye 42.

response of his/her mind/heart (*xin* 心) to his/her own Nature (*Xing* 性) while being empathetic with “others” and responding consentaneously together with “others”. The foundation for being empathetic with others was the universal characteristics of the Nature and the mind/heart. Thus, empathy is breaking the barriers between the self and others while making the self and others part of a larger self on the basis of being willingly subordinated to the Ultimate, either the transcendent or the immanent. “Empathy” was such an important element in order for the self to know “others” and for the self to form a larger self with others that it was emphasized and interpreted from different perspectives in various classic and pre-Qin Confucian works. This idea was manifested in the “Xian Hexagram (咸卦)” in the *Book of Changes*, “tongxin (同心)” in the *Book of Documents*. The pure and universal value cultivated in this process is called humanity (*ren* 仁) by Confucius. Zengzi summed it up as the principles of “zhong (忠)” and “shu (恕)”.

CHAPTER VI CONCLUSION

In this final chapter I will revisit the main topics that were raised in the present dissertation. I will sum up my research and set out the main problems that I have tried to solve regarding the concept of sagehood in pre-Qin Confucianism. I will attempt to summarize the relationship that exists between the self, the Ultimate and “others” in pre-Qin Confucian sagehood. I will, in addition, explore the nature of pre-Qin Confucian

sagehood on the foundation of the etymological, textual and philosophical studies related with *sheng* (聖). I will then restate the main ideas of each chapter and draw the conclusions that emerge from this dissertation.

6.1 The Background and Problems Restated

I chose the cultivation of pre-Qin Confucian sagehood as my dissertation topic in order to set out the consequences of issues raised by the modernization of Confucianism in the contemporary world. Since the 19th century the tradition of Confucianism has been faced with the rupture between the past and the present as well as the difference suggested between the Chinese and the western. The rupture between the past and the present needs to be overcome while the difference between the Chinese and the western needs to be recognized and reconciled in an organic way. Li Hongzhang, for example, has helped us understand that Chinese culture confronted a tremendous change in the modern era, creating a dramatic challenge different from any other that had occurred before in the three thousand years history of Chinese culture. Liang Qichao has emphasized the importance of the masses rather than the upper class as the key to the realization of modern civilization. Thus, he started to look at the significance of Confucianism for the Chinese people and China from modern perspectives, that is, with regard to the issues of freedom of religion and the separation between the church and the state²⁴². As Levenson correctly pointed out,

²⁴² Liang Qichao, *Baojiao Fei Suoyi Zunkong Lun* [保教非所以尊孔論], eds. Ge Maochun, Jiang Jun (Beijing: Peking University Press, 1984), 98-100.

Confucian tradition had, in modern times, disintegrated and needed to be reinterpreted in the spirit of western ideas in order to save what could be saved.

Some contemporary scholars like Li Minghui argued that the modernization of Confucianism represented a process of transformation from the ancient to the modern. These thinkers tried to dissolve the cultural conflict between the Chinese and the West and regarded the modernization of Confucianism as simply a branch of the main stream of global changes of religious modernization along with deeper changes in economic and political structures. These scholars were aware that Confucianism, like other ancient traditions such as Judaism and Christianity, needed to be transformed into a modern tradition. However, unlike the western religious traditions, and even unlike Confucianism of 3000 years ago, what Confucianism has now had to confront in the modern world is not only changes inside the system of Confucian culture but also the differences between the eastern and western cultural systems.

The new Confucians, particularly from the generation of Mou Zongsan and Tang Junyi through the generation in America such as the Boston Confucians, have been consciously working to re-interpret Confucian tradition in such a way that it shares the life spirit of western ideas. In addition, they have also attempted to present the intrinsic features of Confucianism in such a way that their character is not misunderstood as a result of the application of western ideas. An example in particular is the notion of self-cultivation. Self-cultivation in Confucianism has been a popular topic of study for many scholars, as it has long been an important topic in the tradition of Confucianism. Possibly due to the influence of the Judaic-Christian tradition, modern scholars of Confucian studies have viewed self-

cultivation from the perspective of the relation between the self and the Ultimate. However, it needs to be noticed that there are various opinions about the features of the self, the Ultimate and the ways that they interact in Confucianism. It must be pointed out that one of the most important contributions of the new Confucians are their discussions regarding the immanence of the Ultimate in Confucianism, or in the words of Mou Zongsan, the notion of immanent transcendence. While they have realized the significant difference regarding the concept of the Ultimate in Confucianism they have denied the absence of transcendence argued for by some western scholars.

They have also explored the significant roles of a number of important concepts in the formation of selfhood such as nature (*xing* 性), mind/heart (*xin* 心), humanity (*ren* 仁) and ritual (*li* 禮). Their works have, thus, been helpful in constructing a close and subtle understanding of the Confucian Ultimate. However I do not agree with the approach that places a conception of the Confucian ultimate standing in opposition to the Judaic-Christian Ultimate although each of these concepts has their distinctive characteristics. Pre-Qin Confucians did not abandon the idea of the transcendent Ultimate in the name of *Tian* (天) or *Di* (帝). However, at the same time, they began to develop the idea of the immanent Ultimate, that is, the idea of Nature (*Xing* 性), being inherent in each and every single individual life. Therefore the Ultimate in pre-Qin Confucianism actually is seen to possess both transcendent and immanent features rather than immanent transcendence. This dual relation between the self and the Ultimate further determines the relationship

between the self and “others (including other human beings, all creatures and even the natural environment)”. The relation between the self and “others” also has dual features that reveal both oneness and otherness. Accordingly, there exists a dual system of interaction between the self, the Ultimate and others.

Many contemporary scholars like Tu Weiming, Robert Neville and Jonathan Schofer have argued for certain specific patterns relative to the formation of selfhood. Among these various patterns Jonathan Schofer proposed a universal pattern on the foundation of his studies of rabbinic sagehood. In his view, the making of a sage meant that the self willingly chose to subordinate himself/herself to, and even internalize, particular authoritative others. In Confucianism these authoritative others were Heaven, the sages and the *Rituals*. I think that this particular pattern helpfully catches the nature of the formation of sagehood. However it makes sense only in those traditions that posit a transcendent Ultimate. It is problematic, or at least incomplete, if it is applied to the cultivation of sagehood in pre-Qin Confucianism because of the dual features of the Ultimate in this distinctive system of thought.

In this dissertation I have attempted to show that the cultivation of sagehood in pre-Qin Confucianism represents a dual process of the willing subjection of the self to the transcendent and immanent Ultimate in both vertical and horizontal dimensions. This process entails both the enlightenment and willing subjugation to the external authoritative others as well as to the internal authority Nature (*Xing* 性). It is both a process of internalization of the external authoritative others and a process of restoring the true inner self and enlarging that self to become one with “others” and even the Ultimate.

6.2 The Etymological Analysis

The meaning of a Chinese character is often hidden in its etymological evolution, including its graphic and semantic changes. Therefore it is necessary to make an etymological analysis on *sheng* (聖) if we want to understand pre-Qin Confucian sagehood.

In the Chapter Two, I began to survey the representative traditional and contemporary interpretations of the Chinese character *sheng* (聖). There are many Chinese dictionaries that have been edited over the past 2000 years of Chinese history. *Shuo-wen* (說文) is one of the oldest and most authoritative dictionaries. It was edited around 100-121 CE, close to the time of pre-Qin Confucianism. The traditional interpretation of *sheng* (聖) came into being mainly on the foundation of the explanation of this concept in the *Shuowen*. It held that *sheng* (聖) was a logographic (*xing-sheng* 形聲) character made up of a semantic indicator “ear (*er* 耳)” and a phonetic indicator “*cheng* (呈)”. This explanation was accepted as an authoritative interpretation for about 2000 years but has now been challenged by many scholars in modern times.

One type of modern challenge came from those scholars who were familiar with the Judaic-Christian tradition, scholars such as Roger Ames, David Hall and Rodney L. Taylor. They did not deny the phonetic function of “*cheng* (呈)” in the character *sheng* (聖)

but emphasized that *cheng* (呈) also made its semantic contribution to *sheng* (聖). Thus *sheng* (聖) should be understood as an ideological character rather than a logographic character. Since *cheng* (呈) meant “to disclose, manifest”, they believed that *cheng* (呈) indicated that *sheng* (聖) was both aural and oral. In addition, they tried to use “*tong* (通)” and “*xian* (獻)”, that is the semantic interpretation of *sheng* (聖) from *Bai-hu-tong-yi* (白虎通義) and *Er-ya* (爾雅), to prove that *cheng* (呈) carried the meaning of “manifestation”. That is to say, *sheng* (聖) is a person who can both acutely hear and manifest. What does the *sheng* (聖) hear and what does he/she manifest? The scholars believed that *sheng* (聖) hears the message from Heaven (*Tian* 天) or the Way of Heaven (*Tian* 天) and manifests it to other human beings. Their version of Confucian sages functions very much like the prophets in Judaic-Christian tradition. I agree with their view regarding what Confucian sages hear but think their semantic understanding of *cheng* (呈) is problematic due to the absence of an understanding of the newly unearthed script with *sheng* (聖) and their misunderstanding of *tong* (通) and “*xian* (獻)”. The unearthed materials showed that this *er* (耳)-*cheng* (呈) structure was not the original form of *sheng*

(聖). *Cheng* (呈) as a component appeared very late in its evolution. That is to say, the character *cheng* (呈) had nothing to do with its semantic meaning. Besides, *tong* (通) in *Bai-hu-tong-yi* (白虎通義) is related with *er* (耳) rather than with *cheng* (呈), while “*xian* (獻)” in *Er-ya* (爾雅) is related with sacrifice to the spirits or the Ultimate rather than with oral manifestation to other people. The object of “*Tong* (通)” and “*xian* (獻)” is not other human beings but the same one that the person (sage) hears.

Another type of modern challenge has been made by scholars such as William Boltz, Julia Ching, Shirakawa Shizuka and Chen Ning who were allowed access to the unearthed ancient oracle bone scripts, bronze inscriptions and silk manuscripts. They all affirmed the semantic function of ear (*er* 耳) in the formation of *sheng* (聖) and believed it suggested acute hearing and a high degree of intelligence or wisdom. They all challenged the traditional view about the *er* (耳)-*cheng* (呈) structure and proposed an *er* (耳)-*kou* (口)-*ting* (壬) structure instead. They believed *ting* (壬) rather than *cheng* (呈) was the phonetic indicator for *sheng* (聖). However, they had different views about the owner and function of “*kou* 口”, the profession of *sheng* (聖) and its part of speech, as well as its significance for understanding the semantic evolution of *sheng* (聖).

1) William Boltz separated *ting* (壬) from *kou* (口) but he did not explain what *kou* (口) signified in the constitution of *sheng* (聖). From the component *er* (耳) shared by *sheng* (聖) with other characters like *sheng* (聲), *ting* (聽) and *cong* (聰), he concluded that *sheng* (聖) was a person adept at hearing and thus a wise person. However, he mistook 聲 and 聑, the two ancient forms of *sheng* (聖) appearing in the Ma-Wang-Tui silk manuscripts, merely as the load word and the abbreviation form of *sheng* (聖) due to his lack of the etymological studies of *sheng* (聖) on the oracle bone scripts.

2) Julia Ching believed that the *kou* (口) belonged to the person who heard indicating by the image of ear (*er* 耳) that is, the sage. She described the different types of sages with different roles to play during different historical periods, such as gods of men, shamman-kings, and a virtuous person. She believed that the sage was the person who heard the voice of the spirits or the deity and then transmitted the message heard to others with his own mouth. The sage played the role of mediator between the human and the divine world. Ching found textual support for the sage's role as mediator but no specific texts to prove the sage's oral responsibility to transmit the message of the spirits or the deity to others. She also noticed that *sheng* (聖) appeared on the bronze inscriptions more

usually as an adjective than a noun but did not explore its evolution and significance relative to the meaning of *sheng* (聖).

3) Shirakawa Shizuka listed representative examples of *sheng* (聖) from the oracle bone script and the bronze inscription to the seal script. He opposed taking the component *kou* (口) as the mouth of the sage and believed that it was meant to represent a ritual vessel for prayers to the divine. He believed that the original meaning of *sheng* (聖) was a shaman or clergyman who conducted the ritual prayers that created communication between human beings and the divine in front of the ritual vessel. Shirakawa Shizuka's assumption about the profession of the sage may make sense but the component *kou* (口) as the image of a ritual vessel does not receive any textual support from the early resources that have come down to us from the Shang and Zhou dynasties.

4) Ning Chen listed nearly all the possible varieties of *sheng* (聖) on the oracle bones and the bronze vessels, which showed a clear graphic evolution of *sheng* (聖). He also showed the semantic evolution of *sheng* (聖) as well as its part of speech throughout the historical period from Shang oracle bones to pre-Qin texts. He proved *cheng* (呈) was

neither a phonetic indicator nor a semantic indicator because *kou* (口) and *ting* (壬) were not attached together and became a *cheng* (呈) component by mistake until the Warring-states period. *Sheng* (聖) occurred in the form of *er* (耳)-*kou* (口) in the earliest Shang oracle bone scripts and then with *ting* (壬) attached to *er* (耳) in the *er* (耳)-*kou* (口)-*ting* (壬) structure in the Zhou dynasty. Chen did not clearly point out what *kou* (口) referred to but indicated that *sheng* (聖) was originally related with hearing any voice or sound, then with state affairs and, since Confucius, was connected with the Way of *Tian*. The religious dimension of *sheng* 聖 was not a concept that actually rejected the view that *kou* (口) belonged to the sage or the sage had the responsibility to manifest or transmit the message to other people.

These contemporary studies of *sheng* (聖), on the basis of the unearthed oracle bones scripts, bronze inscriptions and silk manuscripts, reveal the graphic evolution of *sheng* (聖). They show that the traditional *er* (耳)-*cheng* (呈) logographic structure of *sheng* (聖) was wrong and that the modern interpretation of *cheng* (呈) as both a phonetic and semantic indicator is also wrong. It has been shown that the modern form of *sheng* (聖)

is made up of three elements: er (耳)-kou (口)-ting (壬) while (壬) is the phonetic indicator.

In addition, it has shown that the most ancient form of *sheng* (聖) was made up of two key elements, *er* (耳) - *kou* (口) and was often interchangeable with the character *sheng* (聲) which meant “sound,” or “making sound”. *Ting* (壬) was an element added later. However, these modern interpretations had quite different views about *kou* (口) and the role of *sheng* (聖), especially the religious dimension of *sheng* (聖) during different historical periods from the Shang dynasty to the pre-Qin period. What is more, none of these scholars discussed how and why *ting* (壬) was added as a component into the constitution of *sheng* (聖). Did *ting* (壬) make any semantic contribution to the character *sheng* (聖) ?

In order to solve these problems I examined the two key elements, *kou* (口) and *ting* (壬) in the *er* (耳)-*kou* (口)-*ting* (壬) structure of *sheng* (聖). When I traced the graphic evolution of the component *ting* (壬) in the formation of *sheng* (聖) on the oracle bones and bronze vessels, I found *ting* (壬) was actually made up of two elements, that of a “person” (*ren* 人) and that of earth (*tu* 土). The sign for “person” (*ren* 人) had always been the image of a standing or bowing person while the sign for earth (*tu* 土) experienced various changes from being unmarked to being marked with a flat stroke until it finally

turned into the character earth (*tu* 土) in the late Zhou dynasty. Besides, as Ning Chen found, *ting* (壬) had always been attached to the sign for a big ear (*er* 耳) rather than *kou* (口) until as late as the period of the warring states, and thus the modern form of *sheng* (聖) came into being. That is to say, originally the sign for the standing/bowing person (*ren* 人) had always been attached to the sign for a big ear (*er* 耳) upon a high place made of earth (*tu* 土). From the earliest *er* (耳)-*kou* (口) form, to the modern *er* (耳)-*kou* (口)-*ting* (壬) form, *sheng* (聖) evolved over a period of about a thousand years.

The *er* (耳)-*kou* (口)-*ting* (壬) image of (*sheng*) 聖 on the oracle bone and bronze ritual vessels indicates the following important points: (1) The person has a big ear which means he/she has acute hearing ability or high level intelligence. (2) The person indicated is performing a ritual humbly and with respect. (3) The indicated person is standing upon a high place made of earth, a special or sacred place for performing the ritual. (4) The component *kou* (口) does not belong to that person. Instead, it must be related with the one that the person is humbly listening to with respect. Therefore the original form of *sheng* (聖) with *er* (耳)-*kou* (口) structure is better understood as being an ideologic character, however its modern form, with *er* (耳)-*kou* (口)-*ting* (壬), being better understood as a logo-ideologic character.

As to the small component *kou* (口) , there had been two or one *kou* (口) appearing in the constitution of *sheng* (聖). I cannot agree with Shirakawa Shizuka's interpretation that refers to a ritual vessel, nor with Ning Chen's reading that describes it as the mouths of people, particularly the ministers at court. Instead, I would interpret it, based on its original meaning, as an opening or hole. A mouth is its derived meaning. Thus *kou* (口) refers to a message that comes or is heard. It may be a mouth (mouths) but not necessarily a mouth (mouths) of a person (people). Its small size might suggest the subtlety of the message to be received. Considering the reverent pose of the person with the giant ear on a sacred high place, I'd rather believe he was receiving the sacred message or mandate from the Ultimate although the messenger might be the Ultimate Himself, or the passed ancestors, or other people, or even nature in the broad sense. If we further consider the temple structure since the Shang and Zhou dynasties, the *kou* (口) or the two *kou* (口) in its earliest form of *sheng* (聖) may indicate the spirit of the ancestors and the Ultimate in the narrow sense.

Therefore my etymological analysis reveals that *sheng* (聖) originally started as an ideological character and evolved into an logo-ideographic character with (亼) as its phonetic and semantic indicator. The graphic and semantic evolution of *sheng* (聖) indicates a strong religious dimension through the historical periods from the Shang

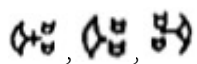
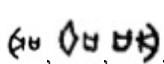

dynasty to the pre-Qin Period. However these assumptions need to be tested and investigated by further textual studies on *sheng* (聖) in order to reach a still clearer and better understanding of the pre-Qin Confucian notion of sagehood.

6.3 The Textual Explorations of pre-Qin Confucian Sagehood

In the third chapter I provided a thorough investigation of the meaning and the part of speech related to *sheng* (聖) when used in the context of the earliest oracle bone scripts and the representative Confucian works mainly completed in the pre-Qin period. In doing so I attempted to determine the semantic evolution of the concept and its defining features in the pre-Qin period. The following are the results of my studies on these sources insofar as they are related with *sheng* (聖) in chronological order.

6.3.1 “Sheng” in the orcle bone scripts in Shang dynasty

I chose Yao Xiaosui’s book *Yinxu jiagu Keci Leizuan* as the source for my analysis of *sheng* (聖) in the oracle bone scripts. On the foundation of the studies of Yao Xiaosui and Ning Chen, I classified various forms of *sheng* (聖) found on the oracle bones into

three types of form : 1) *er* (耳) +[*kou* (口)+*kou* (口)] :  , 52 items 2) *er* (耳) +*kou* (口):  , 21 items [*er* (耳) + *ren* (人)] + *kou* (口)  , 5 items. The

entire cognate group of *sheng* (聖) on the oracle bones consists of 78 items in total. The graphic form of *sheng* (聖) in later bronze inscriptions and the modern form apparently evolved from the third type. The third type evolved from the first one. Therefore its original graphic form contains two components *kou* (口)+*kou* (口) that were then abbreviated into one *kou* (口) to stand for the meaning expressed by two *kou* (口). In the second chapter I assumed that the component *kou* (口) did not necessarily refer to the mouth of a person. In relation to the constitution of *sheng* (聖) it might use its original meaning, “an opening or a hole”, that is, the source of a sound or voice that represents certain messages. It might, in the beginning, refer to the message from the spirits of the ancestors and the Ultimate in its narrow sense. Later it might refer to the mandate from the Ultimate delivered by anyone, such as the Ultimate Himself, the spirits of the ancestors, the diviner, other people, or even nature in its broad sense.

By examining the usage of *sheng* (聖) in the oracle bones scripts, I have found that *sheng* (聖) on the oracle bones was used as a verb in most cases and as a noun in some cases. No *sheng* on the oracle bones was found to be used as an adjective. The first two types of *sheng* (𠄎, 𠄎, 𠄎) and (𠄎, 𠄎, 𠄎) involved both verbs and nouns, while the last type (𠄎, 𠄎) were only nouns. In the first two types, *sheng* occurred 42 times as a

verb, 9 times as a noun. Whether *sheng* in the oracle bone scripts was used as a verb or a noun, all the cases were related with the function of ear (*er* 耳)“listening or hearing.”As a verb, “*sheng*” usually meant “listening to” or “hear”. Since the oracle bone scripts were the record of the kings’ divination in the Shang dynasty, the subjects of the verb *sheng* were usually the kings and the objects were usually the king’s activities. It showed that the kings undertook two major types of activity: hearing political/judicial issues and hearing the messages from the spirits of the ancestors by performing a particular ritual. As a noun, *sheng* of the first two types meant “news, information or message” in 7 cases, and 2 meant “a court”. The former can be regarded as what a person heard, while the latter, where a person heard. The last type of *sheng* had an image of a tall standing/bowing person added to the *er* (耳)-*kou* (口) structure of the second type. It only maintained the meaning “news, information or message”. No use of the term *sheng* in oracle bone script was found to be an adjective meaning “being sagacious” or a noun meaning “sagacity” or “a sage”.

Compared with other characters, it was found that the three graphic types of *sheng* (𠄎, 𠄏, 𠄐) ; (𠄑, 𠄒, 𠄓) ; (𠄔, 𠄕) shared the same phonetic, semantic, and even some graphic features, with sound/voice (*sheng* 𠄖). They could also be interchangeable in usage. Therefore, they might share the same origin. The character sound/voice (*sheng* 𠄖) was made of two components: 𠄗 and 𠄘. The second part was made of the ear (*er* 耳) and *kou* (口), and the same was true of the second graphic type of *sheng* (𠄑, 𠄒, 𠄓). The

first part was made of chime stone (*qing* 磬) and hand (shou 手), which means using the hand to beat the chime stone. The combination of the two components meant the sound (or what one heard) when a person beat the chime stone with their hands. Therefore it is clear that *sheng* (𦉳) on the oracle bones referred to the sounds that a person heard, while *sheng* of the second type (𦉳, 𦉳, 𦉳) referred to listening and hearing used as a verb, or the message one heard as a noun. As a noun, *sheng* (聲) emphasizes the sound while *sheng* (聖) emphasizes the message. Therefore *sheng* (聖) was originally related with the ear's function of "hearing", what was heard and where the hearing was conducted.

As a noun, the first two graphic types of *sheng* (𦉳, 𦉳, 𦉳) ; (𦉳, 𦉳, 𦉳) shared similar graphic and semantic features with another character, *ting* (𦉳), which meant the court (*ting* 庭 / 廷). Yu Shengwu believed *sheng* was abbreviated from 𦉳. I think it makes better sense to regard *ting* (𦉳) as a later word, with the upper component added to specifically indicate a place for hearing. No matter whether *sheng* was an abbreviated word or the original word of *ting* (𦉳), it meant court (*ting* 庭 / 廷). Court (*ting* 廷 / 庭) was the very central place of the *mingtang* (明堂) where religious and political activities were conducted under the leadership of the king or the princes. Considering the religious tradition, as well as the structure of the temple of *Shang*, suggests



the presence of a person at the sacred place of the temple who was performing religious and political obligations. This meaning of *sheng* (聖) as court (*ting* 廷 / 庭) corresponds with the political and religious activities that *sheng* (聖) was involved with as a verb in the first two graphic types. Therefore there should be no doubt that the character *sheng* (聖) had religious dimensions at the beginning of its formation.



The graphic evolution of *sheng* in the oracle bone scripts indicates that it was a regular person rather than a king who was hearing or possessed the accurate hearing ability to receive the message from others. The first two graphic types of *sheng* (𠄎, 𠄏, 𠄐); (𠄑, 𠄒, 𠄓) did not show anything about the identity of the one who was hearing. In contrast, the third graphic type of *sheng* (𠄔, 𠄕) gives us some hint. A component in the image of a standing or bowing person (*ren* 人) was added under the component ear (*er* 耳) in the third type of *sheng* (𠄔, 𠄕). The component “person” (*ren* 人) without any indications of gender and class shows that the subject of *sheng* (聖) was any person who possessed the accurate aural ability to receive and understand the message from others. In the oracle bone scripts, we found that all the subjects of the verb *sheng* were usually the kings and all the objects were either the political or religious activities of the kings simply because the oracle bone scripts were the divination record of the kings of the Shang







dynasty. However, this did not suggest that only kings had the necessary accurate aural ability.

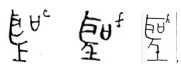

6.3.2 Sheng (聖) in the the Bronze Inscriptions


The textual studies of *sheng* (聖) in the bronze inscriptions were based on the collection of *Jin Wen Gu Lin* (金文詁林), edited by Zhou Fagao, and the academic research on the system of the Zhou dynasty. The textual studies of *sheng* (聖) in the bronze inscriptions revealed that *sheng* (聖) experienced graphic and semantic evolution during this period, which laid the foundation for the use of *sheng* (聖) in its modern sense and appearance.



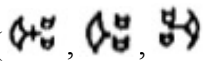

Graphically, the later added component person (*ren* 人) in the character *sheng* (聖, , ) experienced further evolution in the bronze inscriptions by being marked with various strokes indicating a high place made of “earth” (tu 土). In the early bronze inscriptions, we

still found the same structure of *sheng* () with that of the *sheng* () as in the oracle bone scripts. Then we found the character *sheng* was marked with a horizontal stroke

under the sign for a standing person:       indicating a certain place that the person stood upon. Later, another short stroke was added above the bottom

horizontal stroke under the sign for a person (*ren* 人) :  Now it became clear that the image of the component under the ear (*er* 耳) was a person standing/bowing upon earth (*tu* 土), or precisely, a high place made of earth. The combination of the two signs for “person” and “earth” could still be recognized in the seal style of *sheng* () formed in the Qin dynasty. This combination of *person* (*ren* 人) and earth (*tu* 土) actually formed another character, court (*ting* 王).

The character court (*ting* 王) was not found in the bronze inscription but was found in the oracle bone scripts. It had two graphic forms: ²⁴³. The second form looked exactly like the early image of the component person (*ren* 人) marked with a horizontal stroke. That is to say, the component person (*ren* 人) of *sheng* in the oracle bone script

() and in the early bronze inscriptions () was actually a variant of court (*ting* 王) since late Shang dynasty, or was consciously changed into the component court (*ting* 王) to emphasize the place where the person was standing. I prefer the former interpretation because from the very beginning *sheng* ( ; )

²⁴³ <http://humanum.arts.cuhk.edu.hk/Lexis/lexi-mf/search.php?word=%F0%A1%88%BC>

already had the meaning of “court” (庭) as a noun and suggested involvement with the political and religious activities performed at the court (*ting* 王) as a verb. At least, the meaning of court (*ting* 王) had already come to include the various graphic forms of *sheng* ((𠄎, 𠄎, 𠄎) ; 𠄎, 𠄎, 𠄎, 𠄎) but marked it out in various ways during different periods.

The graphic and semantic readings of the component person (*ren* 人) or court (*ting* 王) of *sheng* (聖) are not only supported by the graphic changes found in the various forms of *sheng* in the bronze inscriptions, they are also supported by the rich sources and modern academic research about the ritual system of the Zhou dynasty. Wang Guowei’s *Mingtang Miaoqin Tongkao* helped us understand that the court (廷 / 庭) was the center of the *taishi* 太室, while *taishi* 太室 was the center of *mingtang* (明堂). The traditional exegetical texts like *Maoshi Zhengyi* and the maps about ancestral temples in the Zhou dynasty illustrate that *taishi* (太室) was the most sacred place for a king to offer sacrifices to Heaven, as well as to the spirits of his ancestors, in order to know the will of Heaven with the help of the spirits of his ancestors. The texts of the oracle bones scripts and the bronze inscriptions related with *taishi* (太室) show that performing religious activities was not the privilege of the kings alone but was also the right of the princes of the feudal nations. Therefore in the feudal patriarchal societies governed by the ritual system the person in the character *sheng*

(聖) had been limited to the noble class, although originally it could be any person with accurate aural ability. Thus in the constitution of *sheng* (聖) it is the reverent ritual image of a person rather than the position as a king or prince that was emphasized.

Based on the list of bronze uses of *sheng* (聖) created by Jin Fagao, I examined each and every *sheng* (聖)'s part of speech and its meaning, as well as the historical period in which it was inscribed. I found that all the bronze *sheng* (聖) had changed their part of speech from being a verb or a noun into an adjective, except for two used as proper nouns, the names of the princes of Chu state and Yan state. It had been used either as a predicative adjective or an attributive adjective to describe a person's quality or virtue, mostly related with intelligence or wisdom. It was gender free and could be used to describe a male or a female's virtue, such as *sheng-ji* (聖姬) in no.e and *sheng-jiang* (聖姜) in no.h on Fagao's list. Ji (姬) and Jiang (姜) were the names of queens during the Zhou dynasty. *Sheng* (聖) was also found to modify the gender-free general word "person (*ren* 人)", which was usually translated as "sage" although it could carry a meaning somewhat different than the term carries when expounded by the Confucians. It was often used to praise the great deeds or virtues of the passed or the living kings and queens. It showed that in the early Zhou dynasty *sheng* (聖) was regarded as one of the most desirable virtues used to praise a person but was not yet held to be a rare virtue that few human beings were qualified to possess.

6.3.3 *Sheng* (聖) in the Classic Texts

I next surveyed the usage of *sheng* (聖) in the two representative classic texts: the *Book of the Documents* and the *Book of the Poetry*. They are believed to have been composed in the Zhou dynasty, and edited by Confucius and later Confucians in the pre-Qin period. Therefore *sheng* (聖) in some texts might keep the same usage as found in the Zhou dynasty and some might show changes in its features in the pre-Qin period. *Sheng* (聖) was not found in the *Book of Changes* but in its later commentary book the *Ten Wings* by pre-Qin Confucians.

6.3.3.1 *Sheng* (聖) in the *Book of the Documents*

Sheng (聖) occurred 22 times in the four historical books collected in the *Book of the Documents*. It appeared rarely in the books of Yu and Xia but frequently in the books of Shang and Zhou, 8 and 12 times respectively.

As to the part of speech, *sheng* (聖) was used with more variety in the *Book of the Documents* than in the bronze inscriptions. Like the inscriptions on the bronze, *sheng* (聖) was never used as a verb. About half the usages were employed as adjectives and half as

nouns. All the uses of *sheng* (聖) as an adjective were predicative adjectives. The usage as a noun was derived from the predicative adjective meaning sagacity or sage, that is a sagacious quality or person. The meaning of sage is expressed with two characters: *sheng* (聖) plus person (人) in the bronze inscription, while in the *Book of Documents* the character *sheng* (聖) alone occurred frequently to mean “sage”. In the *Book of Documents* *sheng* (聖) had become a marvelous quality or ability but it was still accessible by people who were not god-like kings.

Sheng (聖)	Yu	Xia	Shang	Zhou
Adjective (8)	乃 聖 乃神		后從諫則聖; 后克聖	曰聖, 時風若; 乃祖成湯克齊聖廣淵; 惟狂克念作聖; 昔在文、武、聰明齊聖; 僕臣諛, 厥后自聖。
Noun 1: sagacity (5)			布昭聖武	睿作聖; 凡人未見聖, 若不克見; 既見聖, 亦不克由聖
Noun 2: sage The sagacious person/ (9)		聖有謨 訓	聖謨洋洋; 惟聖時憲; 良臣惟聖; 聿求元聖; 敢有侮聖言	惟聖罔念作狂; 人之彥聖, 其心好之, 人之彥聖而違之

Table 10. My Tenth Table: Part of Speech of *Sheng* (聖) in the *Book of Documents*

The *Book of Documents* usage of *sheng* (聖) provides a rich context for understanding the meaning of *sheng* (聖). By analyzing the notion of *sheng* (聖) in this context I have found that it showed the following characteristics:

- 1) *sheng* (聖) was related with its original meaning, the ability of listening. It would help a person or a king to be sagacious if he/she was good at a listening to other people's opinions. This could be seen from the relationship between a sovereign and his ministers. The text indicates that the king would become sagacious if he followed his minister's advice (后從諫則聖). A good minister would help a king become sagacious (良臣惟聖). If the servants or ministers of a king were flatterers, he would consider himself sagacious, even though he was not (僕臣諛，厥后自聖). From these examples we can see that listening is related here with knowing the truth. Therefore the accurate aural ability means a kind of wisdom.
- 2) *Sheng* (聖) was an intellectual ability that involved knowing the essence of others subtly and thoroughly. "Hongfan" clarifies the differences of five important virtues or abilities and points out how to cultivate them. These five virtues were: to be solemn (肅), just (乂), wise (哲), deliberate(謀) and sagacious (聖). These virtues could be cultivated by being respectful (恭), obedient (to the Way)(從),

bright (明), acute (聰), and perceptive (睿). It was believed that these five virtues belonged respectively to the five essential fields: bodily demeanor, speech, vision, hearing, and thinking or considering (思). Thinking or considering (思) is the mental activities of mind/heart (心). It has both intellectual and emotional dimensions.

五事：一曰貌，二曰言，三曰視，四曰聽，五曰思。貌曰恭，言曰從，視曰明，聽曰聰，思曰睿。恭作肅，從作父，明作哲，聰作謀，睿作聖。

Therefore, even though the component ear (*er* 耳) was used to indicate the semantic meaning in the constitution of *sheng* (聖), its essence lay in the perception of what one heard rather than the act of listening. Therefore *sheng* (聖) is concerned with the mental and intellectual ability to thoroughly know and understand others.

3) *sheng* (聖) was understood to be an accessible virtue or ability that could be lost as well as cultivated. “Duofang” put “*kuang* (狂)” as its opposite and distinguished them by thinking/considering (*nian* 念) or not. The meaning of *nian* (念) is very

similar to *si* (思). It is not simply an intellectual activity but often involves subtle emotional and ethical elements. The *Zhengyi* (正義) interpreted that “not thinking/considering” meant “not thinking/considering the good”. Thus it had a moral dimension. But as already argued, I hold that this moral dimension is rooted in its intellectual dimension. By analyzing the contexts of *sheng* (聖) in “Duofang” and other texts of *The Book of the Documents*, I have concluded that it meant “not thinking/considering right”, that is, not thinking/considering subtly and thoroughly. If a person cannot think or consider subtly and thoroughly, his/her mind/heart (*xin* 心) loses its ability to distinguish the real from the fake, the right from the wrong, and good from evil. In contrast, if a person learns to think or consider subtly and thoroughly, his/her mind/heart (*xin* 心) will be trained or cultivated to have the ability to distinguish the real from the fake, right from wrong, and good from evil.

- 4) *Sheng* (聖) could be applied to any person as long as that person’s virtue or ability met the required standard, regardless of the person’s gender and class. In *the Book of Documents*, the use of *sheng* (聖) emphasized the quality of being sagacious rather than one’s position in society. Some kings were sagacious, some were not. It was not a term used only for kings or a few ancient great god-like kings, although a king was expected to be sagacious.

Therefore the *Book of Documents* indicates that the character *sheng* (聖) originated from ear (*er* 耳), but is actually an intellectual, emotional and moral state regarding subtle and thorough knowledge of others that, in turn, establishes an appropriate and good relationship with others. *Sheng* (聖) is a marvelous virtue or ability that can be cultivated as well as lost and can even become its opposite *kuang* (狂).

6.3.3.2 *Sheng* (聖) in the *Book of Poetry*

Compared with its appearance in *the Book of Documents*, in the *Book of Poetry* *sheng* (聖) occurred less frequently and had fewer varieties of parts of speech, but had similar qualities. *Sheng* (聖) only appeared here 9 times and in most instances was present as an adjective, except in one case where it might be used a noun derived from the adjective. Among the eight adjective *sheng* (聖), six of them were used as predicative adjectives to describe people of different genders from various classes. Two of them were attributive adjectives to modify “person” (*ren* 人), which created the meaning “sagacious person”. Unlike in the *Book of Documents*, no use of the term *sheng* (聖) by itself was found to be a noun meaning “sagacious person” or “sage”. This was, therefore, very much

like its usage in the bronze inscriptions. As to its features in this particular context, *sheng* (聖) was used in the intellectual sense rather than the emotional and moral sense. It was connected with the real knowledge of a certain situation, or real insight and proper consideration of each and all relevant elements. In “Zheng-yue” it made a strong satire that the self-called *sheng* (聖), a diviner of dreams, actually was not able to distinguish the male and female birds. In “Shi-yue-zhi-jiao”, the author ridiculed the prime minister by calling him “sagacious” and meanwhile criticized him for building the city without considering the poor situation of the king.

6.3.4 *Sheng* (聖) in the pre-Qin Confucian Texts

In this section I explored the characteristics of *sheng* (聖) in the pre-Qin period based on the *Analects*, *Ten Wings* (*Shi-yi* 十翼) and the *Book of Rites* because these texts were the common spiritual source for the understanding of pre-Qin Confucianism.

6.3.4.1 *Sheng* (聖) in the *Analects*

In the *Analects*, *sheng* (聖) occurred only 8 times. Five of them were attributive adjectives to modify “person (*ren* 人)” four times or “s kind of person (*zhe* 者)” one time. *Sheng* as a noun was used three times to mean “sagacity” or “sagehood”. As in the bronze

inscriptions and in the *Book of Documents*, *sheng* (聖) was not used alone as a noun to mean “sage” or “sagacious person”. This meaning was expressed by *sheng* (聖) as an adjective plus person (*ren* 人) or a kind of person (*zhe* 者). From my analysis we can see that the *Analects* focus on the concept of “sagacious person (聖人 / 聖者)” as well as the virtues of sagacity or sagehood.

Term or phrase of <i>Sheng</i> (聖) in the <i>Analects</i>	The part of speech	Frequency	Meaning
Adjective <i>Sheng-zhe</i> (聖者)	Attributive Adjective	1 time	Sagacious one
<i>Sheng-ren</i> (聖人)	attributive adjective	4 times	Sagacious person
<i>sheng</i> (聖)	noun	3 times	Sagacity or sagehood

Table 11. My Eleventh Table: Terms of *Sheng* (聖) in the *Analects*

In the *Analects* we found that Confucius and his students related sages to the Ultimate and the welfare of others including all lives under Heaven. On the one hand it was the Mandate of *Tian* (天) that a sage should always listen to others. On the other hand, a sage should fulfill the mandate of *Tian* (天) and take care of all lives, especially those of the

people, as *Tian* (天) mandated. In pre-Qin Confucianism, any person might establish a direct relationship with the Ultimate and cultivate it via the inborn *xing* (性). However, in the *Analects*, few people were qualified to be called a sage except for a few ancient legendary sage-kings such as Yao, Shun and Yu. Sagacity (*sheng* 聖) is placed at the top of the ideal system in the *Analects*, even higher than the acknowledged cardinal Confucian virtue of humanity (*ren* 仁).

6.3.4.2 *Sheng* (聖) in the *Ten Wings* (十翼)

The *Ten Wings* is the commentary on the *Book of Changes* written in the name of Confucius. But it has been an open and controversial question whether it was, in fact, composed by Confucius himself or just by his followers. However, whether it was written by Confucius himself or just his followers, it has become a very important pre-Qin work and has been accepted as a common spiritual work by later Confucians. *Sheng* (聖) never occurs in the *Book of Changes* but appears no less than 40 times in the *Ten Wings*. Except for one context in which it appears as a noun derived from the adjective, all these *sheng* (聖) characters were used as attributive adjectives. Among these 39 uses of *sheng* (聖) as an adjective, 38 adjective *sheng* (聖) modified the term “person (*ren* 人)” and signified a “sagacious person” (*sheng-ren* 聖人) or a sage. The other attributive *sheng* (聖) modified

“contribution (sheng-gong 聖功)”. Thus we see that no matter how it is used, that is, as either an adjective or a noun, *sheng* (聖) in the *Ten Wings* focused on the “sagacious person” or sage.

Terms or phrases of <i>sheng</i> (聖) in the <i>Ten Wings</i>	The part of speech of sheng (聖)	Frequency	Meaning
<i>sheng-gong</i> (聖功)	Attributive Adjective	1	Sagely contribution
<i>sheng-ren</i> (聖人)	Attributive Adjective	38	A sagacious person
<i>sheng-xian</i> (聖賢)	noun derived from Adjective	1	The sagacious and the worthy

Table 12. My Twelfth Table: Terms of *Sheng* (聖) in the *Ten Wings*

After surveying all the usages the “sheng-ren (聖人)” in their contexts in the *Ten Wings*, I have found that the the *Ten Wings* defines the characteristics of sages (*sheng-ren* 聖人) in clear and intelligible language from various perspectives. This includes a description of their nature, responsibilities, abilities and effect. To sum up, this text showed the correspondence between the three major parties: the sages, the Ultimate, and all the lives under the Ultimate. First, the *Ten Wings* declared the Way of the Ultimate in the forms

of the Way of the *Tian* (天) and the Way of the Earth (*Di* 地). The sages should interpret it correctly, willingly follow it, imitate and take advantage of it. In the *Ten Wings*, there are 13 examples of sages imitating Heaven (and Earth). Second, sages were responsible for taking good care of all lives under the Ultimate, especially those of the people. While interpreting the responsibilities of the sages in the *Ten Wings*, *Tian-xia* 天下 (all under Heaven) was mentioned 22 times, *min* 民 (the people) 8 times, and *wan-wu* 萬物 (all creations or all things) 6 times.

6.3.4.3 *Sheng* (聖) in the *Book of Rites* (禮記)

In the *Book of Rites* (禮記) the character *sheng* (聖) occurred 75 times. Comparable to the *Book of Documents* and the *Analects*, *sheng* (聖) in the *Book of Rites* (禮記) had the most usage as a part of speech. *Sheng* (聖) was used as a noun 12 times to mean sagacity and 6 times to mean “sage”. *Sheng* (聖) was mostly used as an adjective. It was used 56 times as a attributive adjective and once as a predicative adjective. These 56 attributive adjective “*sheng* (聖)” were used to modify either a common person or a sovereign. A sagacious person (*sheng-ren* 聖人) appeared most frequently, 43 times, while a sagacious king (*sheng-wang* 聖王) was the second most common usage, appearing 10 times. If we

examine the contexts of all these usages we see that all of the texts related with *sheng* (聖) were mainly concerned with sages and sagacity/sagehood.

Term or phrase of <i>sheng</i> (聖) in the <i>Book of Rites</i>	The part of speech of <i>sheng</i> (聖)	Frequency	Meaning
<i>Sheng</i> (聖)	Noun 1	12 (6 of them quoted from earlier)	Sagacity/sagehood
<i>Xian-sheng</i> 先聖 <i>Hou-sheng</i> 後聖 <i>Zhi-sheng</i> 至聖 <i>Zhi-sheng</i> 至聖	Noun 2	6	sages
<i>sheng-ren</i> (聖人 43); <i>sheng-wang</i> (聖王 10); <i>sheng-zhe</i> (聖者); <i>sheng-di</i> 聖帝	attributive adjective	56	sagacious
<i>cong-ming-sheng-zhi</i> (聰明聖知)	Predictive adjective	1	Sagacious or intelligent

Table 13. My Thirteenth Table Terms of *Sheng* (聖) in the *Book of Rites*

“Sagacious person (*sheng-ren* 聖人)” was the term that occurred most frequently in the *Book of Rites* (禮記). There were several places that defined the characteristics of sages in terms of virtue (*de* 德), sincerity (*cheng* 誠), and wisdom (*zhi* 智) in three chapters

“Zhong-yong (中庸)”, “Li-qi (禮器)” and “zhong-ni Yan-ju 仲尼燕居”. All these features were related with the Ultimate, *Tian* 天, but not necessarily with the throne. In terms of virtue, “Li-qi (禮器)” states that the Way of Heaven supplies the most perfect teachings, while sages are those with the highest degree of virtue. In terms of sincerity, it insisted that being sincere is the Way of Heaven while becoming sincere is the way of human beings. Sages were the most likely to be sincere without any labor and intellectual exercise. In terms of wisdom, it regarded sages as those who excelled in knowing both *Tian* (天) and human beings, and who knew how to perform the rites governing human beings.

Most of the texts related with *shengren* (聖人) in the *Book of Rites* discussed the responsibilities of sages, the methods of realizing wisdom, and the ultimate basis and intention for the acts of sages. They showed that sages created the rites and music in accordance with the Way of *Tian* (天) and the feelings of human beings. In addition, sages embodied the rites by practicing them in life, delighted in music performance, and taught the rites and music to the people. The sages were in a position to nourish all lives, especially those of the people under the Ultimate, by making, embodying and teaching the Rites and the music system that was rooted both in the divine and the human worlds.

6.3.5 Conclusion of the Textual Studies

By analyzing the part of speech and the meaning of *sheng* (聖) in the contexts stretching from the oracle bone texts and bronze inscriptions to the classic works of the pre-Qin Confucian era, we see that the present usage of *sheng* (聖) experienced a semantic evolution. It originated in the *er* (耳)-*kou* (口) and *er* (耳)-*kou* (口)-*ren* (人) structures in the oracle bone scripts of the Shang dynasty, where it was used as a verb or noun indicating the accurate hearing activity or the information/news that was heard. The unearthed bronze inscriptions of the Zhou dynasty show the graphic and semantic connection between the *er* (耳)-*kou* (口)-*ting* (壬) structure of *sheng* (聖) in the Zhou dynasty and its structures in the oracle bone script in the Shang dynasty, as well as the modern final *er* (耳)-*kou* (口)-*ting* (壬) form. The bronze inscriptions also show that *sheng* (聖) began to be used as both an adjective and a noun, quite different from its usage as a verb and a noun in the oracle bone scripts, but as the same part of speech that is found in the written texts since the Zhou dynasty, i.e. in the classic literature and the pre-Qin Confucian works. Semantically, *sheng* (聖) in the bronze inscriptions tended to emphasize the high intellectual ability or moral virtue derived from the accurate hearing ability in the oracle bone scripts. The religious and moral dimension was encoded in the formation of the character *sheng* (聖) and the cultural system in the Shang and Zhou dynasties, but it was not given major emphasis until

the pre-Qin period. In the bronze inscriptions *sheng* (聖), as was also the case in the classic works, emphasized the intellectual aspect more than its religious and moral dimensions. It was not a mystical and inaccessible virtue. It could be lost or cultivated by any person regardless of their gender and class as long as they were willing to follow the opinions of others in accordance with the Way of *Tian* (天). The pre-Qin Confucian works, such as the *Analects*, the *Ten Wings* and the *Book of Rites*, reveal and expound the intellectual, religious and moral dimensions of *sheng* (聖), which were the foundation of the relation between the Ultimate, the self and others. Therefore the form and use of *sheng* (聖) in Confucianism, rooted in the Shang dynasty, experienced a transitional form in the early Zhou dynasty, and was shaped by pre-Qin Confucians since the time of Confucius.

6.4 The Ultimate, Self and “Others” in Pre-Qin Confucianism

The relationship between the Ultimate, the self, and “others” in pre-Qin Confucianism has already been analyzed in the etymological and textual analysis of *sheng* (聖) in the last two chapters. In the present chapter I have attempted to reveal the nature and roles of the Ultimate, of the self, and of “others”, as well as their connections, mainly from the perspective of the Ultimate.

6.4.1 *The Ultimate in the Transcendent Form and in the Immanent Form*

Both Chinese and western scholars like to emphasize either the natural or the immanent feature of the Ultimate in Confucianism. The New Confucians, for example, Mou Zongsan, held that Confucianism had transcendence like the Judaic-Christian tradition, but it was a kind of internalized transcendence that was different in character from that found in western external concepts of transcendence. However, some western scholars, for example those represented by David Hall, have argued that Confucius had no concept of transcendence at all. Alternatively, a few scholars were aware of the existence of transcendence in Confucianism. By exploring the evolutionary development of *Di* (帝) and *Tian* (天) in pre-Qin Chinese tradition since the Shang dynasty I have attempted to show that Confucius and his students not only inherited the ideas of *Tian* 天/*Di* 帝 as the transcendent Ultimate that was transmitted at least from the Shang dynasty, but also made their special contribution to the understanding of the transcendent Ultimate by emphasizing the rational and moral dimensions of the Ultimate. By surveying the evolutionary process of Nature (*Xing* 性) and the role it played in the formation of selfhood since the Zhou dynasty, I have shown how Nature (*Xing* 性) functioned as the immanent Ultimate which was rooted in the Zhou dynasty, but that fully developed only in the pre-Qin Confucians since Confucius.

6.4.2 *The Authority to Represent the Ultimate*

Since the Ultimate exists in transcendent and immanent forms, the authorities that represent it have both internal and external types, although these different types of authorities sometimes overlap.

6.4.2.1 The External Authorities: The Sages, the Rituals and the People

The transcendent Ultimate in the name of *Tian* (天) or *Di* (帝) did speak directly as we found in the *Book of Poetry* but usually the Will or the Way of the Ultimate was expressed or represented by those who could “hear” and thus understand and follow Him. These people were called “sagacious” people. They made rituals in accordance with the Way of the Ultimate that could help to govern properly the feelings of human beings and could create order on earth. The sagacious people were often witches, diviners and kings, or arose from common people who were without any special position in the society but who knew how to hear the message of the Ultimate. The character *sheng* (聖) from the very beginning was related to accurate hearing ability and then specifically related to the Ultimate as indicated by its component *ting* (听) and the structure of the ritual system in particular.

During the period of the Shang and Zhou dynasties, a rational and moral transition began that moved from the realm of mystical divination to ritual performance, from witches to sages, and from kings to individuals and the people. Although the divination conducted by witches or diviners, and the rituals performed by the kings and the nobles, still played

important roles in the relation between human beings and the Ultimate, the emphasis had gradually been shifted to the intellectual and moral dimensions rather than the mystical, genetic and class dimensions manifest in the relation between the self and the Ultimate. This tendency was evident in the classic works but was most especially and typically expounded in the pre-Qin Confucian works since the time of Confucius. Those works show that it was the sagacious individual, rather than those who held the positions or privilege to communicate with the Ultimate, who could know and willingly follow the Way of the Ultimate and, thereby, help others. The sages established rituals in accordance with the Way of the Ultimate and the feelings of human beings. Unlike the practice of divination, this now allowed the people of all classes to know how to respond properly to the Ultimate, the ancestors, and other people, in accordance with the Way of the Ultimate. After experiencing the revolutions of the Shang and Zhou dynasties, the idea came into being that the kingship was a sacred position granted by the Ultimate in order to take care of all lives under Heaven, including the people. The kings must follow the Mandate of the Ultimate, while the Ultimate would follow the will of the people. Therefore, it was the people rather than the kings that eventually represented the will of the Ultimate.

6.4.2.2 The Internal Authority of the Ultimate: Nature (*Xing* 性)

In this section of my thesis I have outlined the evolution of the core concept of Confucianism “Nature (*Xing* 性)” from its early and not yet fully fixed origins found in the classic works, to its clear use in the pre-Qin Confucian works in the periods of the Spring

and the Fall and the Warring States. Although “Nature (*Xing* 性)” was derived from *sheng* (生) both graphically and semantically, it has turned into a quite different concept that possesses both divine and human attributes immanent within human beings. Due to this new character, the New Confucians like Mou Zonsan have insisted that Confucianism had internalized transcendence. However I think it is more precise to call Nature (*Xing* 性) the immanent form of the Ultimate that serves as the internal authority that embodies the Mandate of *Tian* (天) being absorbed within the life of human beings.

The later pre-Qin Confucian works like *Zhongyong* and the *Great Learning* discussed the inner creative, enlightening and moral power that emanates from Nature (*Xing* 性). In addition, they explained how each individual self could attach itself to the Ultimate and be transformed into a sage by cultivating and nourishing its own Nature (*Xing* 性). Thus, in the view of the pre-Qin Confucians, Nature (*Xing* 性) acted as an inborn divine spring of life that could provide eternal creative, enlightening and moral power capable of transforming the self and others from inside to outside, so long as the self was willingly subordinate to it.

6.5 The Cultivation of pre-Qin Confucian Sagehood

In Chapter Five I discussed the constitution of pre-Qin Confucian selfhood and the ways by which sagehood could be attained.

By analyzing the texts related to the notion of the “self” in pre-Qin Confucianism I concluded that pre-Qin Confucian selfhood was mainly constituted by (a) Nature (*Xing* 性), (b) mind/heart (*xin* 心), and (c) *shen* (身). Each of those elements had an important role to play in the cultivation of selfhood. Nature is the core of selfhood. Mind/heart makes the self act as a free and conscious subject. Body is the basic executive unit that permits the self to fulfill its role in its narrow sense and as the minimal embodiment of the self in its broad sense.

6.5.1 The Constitution of pre-Qin Confucian Selfhood

6.5.1.1 The Core of the Selfhood: Nature (*Xing* 性)

The pre-Qin literature showed that selfhood could not be defined without the Ultimate. Before the Zhou dynasty, only the transcendent Ultimate was found in the written record on the oracle bones. The words of divination on the oracle bones indicated that everything in nature and in human society was determined by the transcendent Ultimate called *Di* (帝). During the Shang and Zhou dynasties, the kings alone, as the head of the people and the Son of the Ultimate *Tian* (天), had the responsibility of offering sacrifices and performing the rituals in order to communicate with the Ultimate and hopefully receive blessings for the people. From the time of the Zhou dynasty, the idea of *Xing* (性) came into being and began to be used. During the periods of the Spring and Fall and the Warring

State the term *Xing* (性) was given great emphasis in the pre-Qin Confucian's theoretical construction of selfhood or sagehood. Due to its divine origin and its human attribute *Xing* (性) was put at the core of human selfhood.

6.5. 1. 2. The Subject of Selfhood: Mind/Heart (*Xin* 心)

Mind/heart (*xin* 心) acted as the subject of Confucian selfhood with its intellectual, emotional/psychological and responsive functions. By analyzing the written texts from the oracle bones to the pre-Qin Confucian works since Confucius we can see that the three functions of mind/heart (*xin* 心) were already rooted in the ancient Chinese tradition. However, this understanding was developed further during the Zhou dynasty, especially by the Confucians since Confucius in the periods of the Spring and Autumn and the Warring States.

6.5.1.2.1 What is Mind/Heart (*Xin* 心) and Who had a Mind/Heart (*Xin* 心)

The original meaning of mind/heart (*xin* 心) referred to the physical organ “heart” of human beings and other animals as we can see from from the graphic image and its meaning on the oracle bones and bronze inscriptions. However, in the pre-Qin Confucian tradition it was more often applied to human beings in the three aspects mentioned above. It occurred 8 times in the *Book of Changes* (not including the *Ten Wings*), 65 times in the *Book of Documents*, and 168 times in the *Book of Poetry*. Regarding the pre-Qin Confucian

works after Confucius, it occurred 6 times in the *Analects*, 20 times in the *Ten Wings*, and 132 times in the *Book of Rites*.

Mind/heart (*xin* 心) was even applied to the Ultimate, the Way of the Ultimate and the people as early as the first classic works, including the *Analects*. Like an individual person, the Ultimate also had a mind/heart (*xin* 心), for example, *Shangdi-Zhixin* (上帝之心), *Dixin* (帝心), *Tianxin* (天心). By examining the three texts with the Mind/Heart of the Ultimate (上帝之心, 帝心, 天心) we found that the Ultimate, like an individual person, had the Mind/Heart to think, feel, discern and make responses to others. The mind/heart (*xin* 心) of a person and that of the Ultimate both reflect the subjectivity of a person and the Ultimate.

The conception of the mind/heart of the Way (*daoxin* 道心) and the mind/heart of the people (*minxin* 民心 or *renxin* 人心) occurred rarely in the classic works. The former occurred only once, while the latter is found 5 times. I would interpret it as a metaphorical use of the heart of an individual person and of the Ultimate. It represented the universal laws of the Ultimate and the collective will of the people.

6.5.1.2.2 The Basic Functions of Mind/Heart (*Xin* 心)

In this section I analyzed the texts, especially the classic texts, to illustrate that the mind/heart (*xin* 心) served as the subject of the self mainly through its intellectual, emotional/psychological and responsive functions.

The intellectual and emotional/psychological functions were the most basic and obvious functions of mind/heart (*xin* 心) and often overlapped with each other in their usage. In the oracle bone inscriptions their intellectual use was the major basic concern. In such classic works as the *Book of Changes* and the *Book of Documents*, each of these two functions was extensively described. Sometimes these two functions mixed or overlapped in the same context. The *Book of Documents* showed that the mind/heart (*xin* 心) of a person and that of the Ultimate both had the intellectual ability to perceive, evaluate and make decisions, and offer judgements. In the *Book of Poetry*, the emotional/psychological function of mind/heart (*xin* 心) occupies a dominant position. It appears 168 times in total, with 153 of the cases expressing various emotional or psychological states such as worry, sorrow, delight, joy, peace and satisfaction. Among these 153 cases, certain kinds of feelings occurred very frequently. For instance, anxiety or worry (*you* 憂) occurred 82 times, including 63 times together with the character mind/heart (*xin* 心) and 19 times with other similar adjective words. It expressed a person's worries and anxieties mixed with sadness and sorrow because of seeing or foreseeing something bad or dangerous on the basis of what he/she observed and thought. Therefore it reflects the similar use of “憂”

(you) as found in the *Book of Documents*. Anxiety or worry (忧) became a dominant theme in the classic works. A major intellectual and emotional/psychological characteristic of Confucian sages was “憂” (you).

The responsive function of mind / heart (*xin* 心) played the key role in making the mind / heart (*xin* 心) the subject of Confucian selfhood. By examining the essential texts I attempted to illustrate the following features of mind / heart (*xin* 心) as a responsive agent of selfhood. In pre-Qin Confucianism, mind / heart (*xin* 心) was capable of reacting to others in multiple dimensions, including other people and things in the world on the horizontal level, to the transcendent Ultimate on the vertical direction, and to Nature (*Xing* 性) inwardly. A person’s mind/heart (*xin* 心) was put at the center of relations readily responding to “others”. Unlike Nature (*Xing* 性), a mind/heart (*xin* 心) is not born to be purely good but to be responsive and able to be influenced. It might perceive or misperceive, feel or be indifferent, empathize or be apathetic, wish to do good or evil. The responsive function of mind/heart (*xin* 心) is typically shown in free will and empathy. Mind/heart (*xin* 心) in pre-Qin Confucianism was capable of choosing certain responses rather than passively making automatic ones. Most importantly, a person’s mind/heart (*xin*

心) was capable of being empathetic and even compatible to the minds/hearts (*xin* 心) of others.

6.5.1.2.3 Body (*shen* 身) as the Basic Executive Unit to Fulfill Selfhood

In this section I attempted to show the semantic evolution of the character *shen* (身) and to describe its unique role in the formation of selfhood. Its semantic evolution from the bronze script to the classic works and the pre-Qin Confucian texts displayed the enlarging process of the extension of *shen* (身). Its size extended from the front side of the upper body in the Shang dynasty material, to the upper body from shoulder to waist, then to what one finds in the upper body (being pregnant), then to the whole body from head to toes, and finally to the entire life or self of a person, including the body and mind/heart in their broadest sense. The derived meanings of *shen* (身) as the body from head to toes and as life or self of person have become the most common uses from the period of the late Zhou dynasty until the present. However, the other meanings, like the upper body and pregnancy, are also found in pre-Qin Confucian works. If we examine this early material carefully we can discern a pattern of life extension that has the upper body as the external center and the mind/heart (*xin* 心) at its internal center. Mind/heart (*xin* 心) as the inner center plays the role of the subject of selfhood, while *shen* 身 (the upper body) acts as the external center extending to realize selfhood.

6.5.2 *The Cultivation of Sagehood*

In this section I discussed the nature of pre-Qin Confucian sagehood and the process of making a Confucian sage.

6.5.2 .1 The Nature of pre-Qin Confucian Sagehood

On the basis of our discussions concerning the etymologic and textual studies regarding *sheng* (聖) and the relations between the self, the Ultimate and “others”, I contend that the pre-Qin Confucian conception of sagehood involved the full enlightenment and the ultimate transformation of the self as well as “others” and was accomplished by his/her willing subjection to the transcendent and the immanent Ultimate. The relationship between the self and the Ultimate was the key to the pre-Qin Confucian sagehood. The willing subjection, the full enlightenment, and the ultimate transformation of the self are the full embodiment of the relationship between the self and the Ultimate from the perspective of the self. In the pre-Qin period, Confucians had rich and creative interpretations of the immanent Ultimate and the ways in which the self should respond to it.

The willing subjection of the self and the enlightenment of the self are different but inseparable concepts in the cultivation of pre-Qin Confucianism. The true enlightenment of the self will lead to the willingness of the self to be subjected to the Ultimate, while the willingness of the self will help the self to be humble and learn how to know the Way of

the Ultimate, as well as how to act properly in relations between the self, the Ultimate and others. They are both involved with functions of the mind/heart (*xin* 心) as the subject of the self to choose, feel, think and respond to the Ultimate and “others”.

Reverence (*jing* 敬) and sincerity (*cheng* 誠) were emphasized in the willing subjection of the self by the Confucians during the pre-Qin period. They were required for the proper state of the mind/heart (*xin* 心) and were encoded in the strict ritual tradition that had long existed. Confucius and his followers pointed them out and thus revealed the spiritual content in the rituals. They became the universal principles when dealing with relations between the self and the Ultimate and also with the interaction with others.

To establish a relationship between the self and the Ultimate is the key to the cultivation of sagehood. In the ancient tradition there were various ways for a person to hear or receive the message from the Ultimate such as the performance of divination, the offering of sacrifices, and the observing of nature. The Ultimate could even speak directly to the sagacious.

During the period between the Shang and Zhou dynasties it was believed that the message of the Ultimate could be delivered by people as long as the sagacious person, usually the king, was good at hearing. It might be expressed by the wise ministers or by the people. With the establishment of the patriarchal-feudal system, kings made it a royal privilege to communicate with the Ultimate via the rituals of sacrifice. Meanwhile the people rather than the king were regarded as the authority to stand for the Ultimate. The king should follow the Way of the Ultimate to take care of the people, while the Ultimate

would follow the will of the people instead of the king. That is to say, a king justified his position as the Son of *Tian* (天) via the satisfaction of the people instead of by the sacrifice he offered to the Ultimate or the genetic relationship that he had with his ancestors.

“Zhongyong” summed up two basic ways for cultivating sagehood in the pre-Qin period: through enlightenment or by way of sincerity. In essence these are just different ways for the self to establish the relation with the Ultimate as well as others. They turn one’s eyes to each individual person and seek to establish the relationship with the Ultimate as well as others. Doing so emphasizes the importance of enlightenment and the sincerity of the self rather than the form of the rituals or divination. Accordingly, it is being pointed out that Nature (*Xing* 性) and mind-heart (*xin* 心) are the universal basis whereby each and every person can establish a relationship between the self and the Ultimate. Thus, sagehood became open and accessible to any person who was willing to pursue this goal.

The result of the cultivation of selfhood is the transformation of the self and others. Sagehood in its final stage is the ultimate transformation of the self and others. In the words of “Zhongyong”, being a sage is being an element in the transformation and nourishment of the Ultimate (Tian-Di, that is, the Heaven and the Earth)

6.5.2 .2. The Process of the Cultivation of the Pre-Qin Confucian Sagehood

On the basis of my analysis regarding the Ultimate, the self and “others”, I have suggested that the cultivation of sagehood in the pre-Qin Confucianism is a complex process that involves two dimensions: the vertical dimension and the horizontal dimension.

In the vertical dimension, Confucian sagehood was not only shaped by being willingly subjected to the external transcendent Ultimate but was also cultivated consciously inside by readily being subordinated to his/her own sacred Nature (*Xing* 性), the immanent Ultimate within a person's own life.

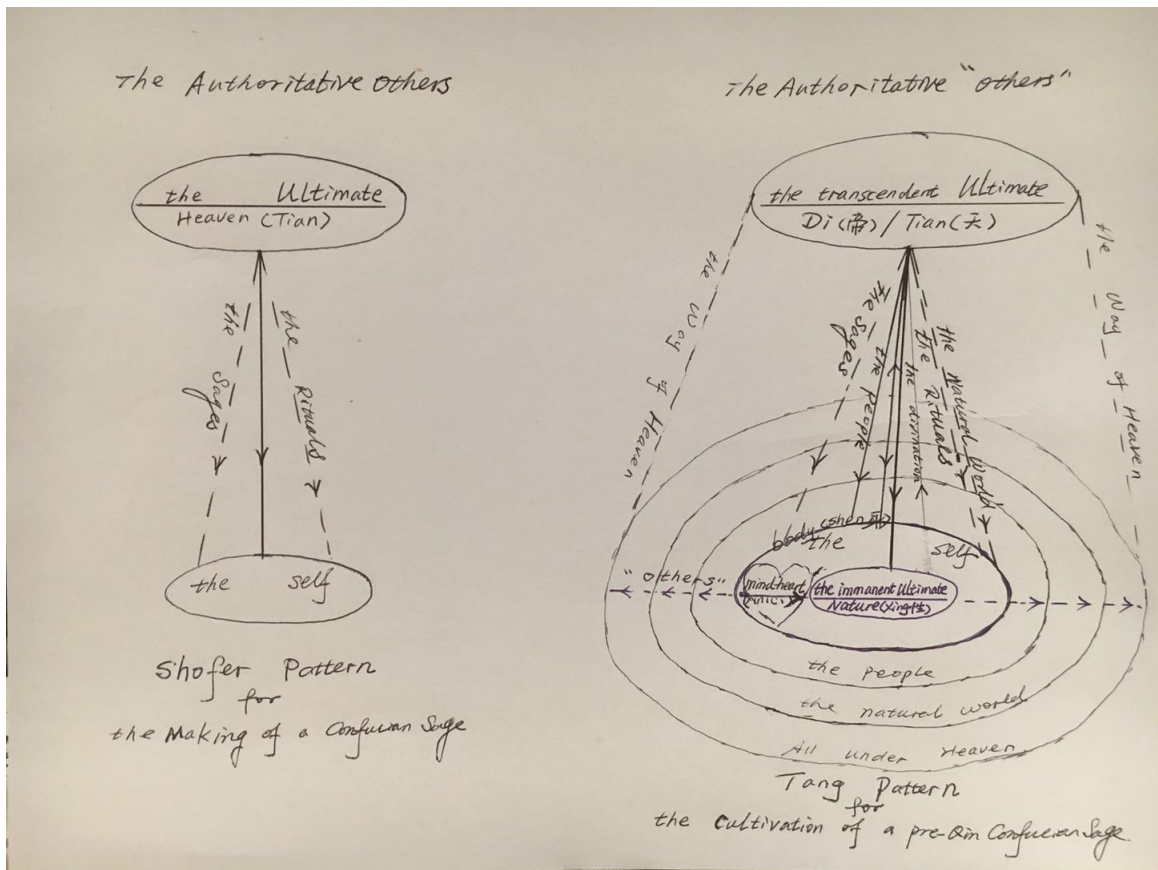
In the horizontal dimension, Confucian sagehood deals with the self, other people and other things. It forms an endless process of enlarging the self from the minimum unit of *shen* (身) to other people and even to all things in the universe. It consists of numerous circles of transformation with *shen* (身) at the center. As indicated in the *Analects* and described in the "Great Learning", the enlarging of the self starts from a person's own *shen* (身), and moves outwards to the family, to the nation and then to all under Heaven. The transformation of the self will, therefore, eventually bring about the transformation of the world in accordance with the Way of the Ultimate.

The process of the cultivation of Confucian sagehood was governed by external and internal rules, that is, by both the ritual system and the pursuit of humanity. The former was the tradition handed down from the ancient times and completed in the Zhou dynasty. The latter was the highest moral principle for human beings and the universal value shared by the self, the Ultimate and all "others" under Heaven. It was rooted in the early Zhou dynasty but fully developed by the pre-Qin Confucians since Confucius.

The process of the cultivation of Confucian sagehood is a dynamic and never ending one for the self and the universe. "Sage" is an honorific title that is applied to an

individual by other people but sagehood is always a ceaseless, unfinished process since the Ultimate is eternally changing and creating and is beyond the full comprehension of human beings. Accordingly, the extending of self transformation will not stop until it has become one with the people, the world and the Ultimate.

The following graphs clearly illustrate the differences between the patterns of the cultivation of pre-Qin Confucian sagehood and the relations that exist between the self, the Ultimate and “others” as understood by Jonathan Schofer and now by me.



Placeholder for the Ninth Illustration about the Patterns of the Cultivation of Pre-Qin Confucian Sagehood.

6.6 The Major Original Contributions of the Dissertation

Methodologically I attempted to let the texts speak for themselves on the one hand while adopting the modern perspective about the Ultimate, the Self and others. At the same time, I surveyed the rediscovered ancient materials, the classic works and the Confucian literature since the time of Confucius. I have examined the etymological, semantic, textual and philosophical evolutions of *sheng* (聖) in their historical contexts, as well as the social and cultural background to its usage. I have also attempted to discern its common features with the idea of sages in the Judaic-Christian traditions, as well as the peculiar features possessed by pre-Qin Confucianism, especially Confucianism since Confucius. While examining the texts I insisted on understanding the traditional logic within Confucianism mainly on the basis of the patriarchal-feudal social and cultural structure, as well as viewing the texts from the modern perspective of selfhood and the modern understanding of the relations between the self, the Ultimate and the “others”.

In this way I came to see (and appreciate) the dual characteristics that run through pre-Qin Confucian sagehood. In contradistinction to what Jonathan Schofer proposed about the universal way of the making of a sage, it is now evident that the cultivation of pre-Qin Confucian sagehood was actually a dual process. That is, it is a process in which the self willingly subordinates itself to the transcendent Ultimate *Tian* (天) or *Di* (帝), as well as the immanent Ultimate embodied by Nature (*Xing* 性). This dual process was understood as being a universal way, accessible to each individual, that would allow each person to cultivate sagehood in pre-Qin Confucianism. At the same time, it did not deny

the justification of the ritual system performed by those strictly according to the degrees in society. This dual process had the *shen* (身) at the center of the transformation, continuously enlarging and extending vertically (upward and inward) and horizontally by responding empathetically to the Ultimate and “others” until to form a coherent whole without losing the particular selfhood of each other.

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CURRICULUM VITAE

